

NORTH CAROLINA A&T MAGAZINE

FALL-SPRING 2020-2021

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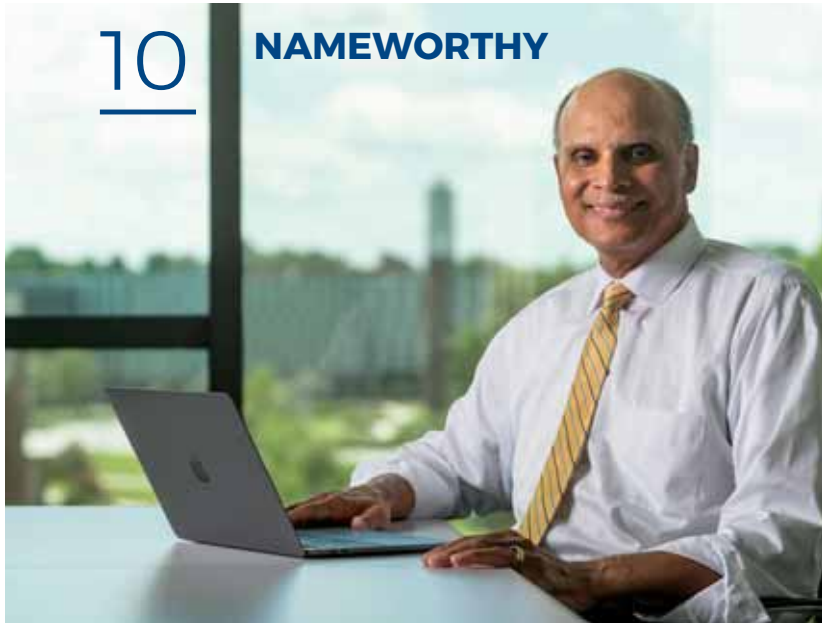
NORTH CAROLINA A&T MAGAZINE
is published biannually by the Office of
University Relations for alumni and friends of
the university. All editorial correspondence
should be directed to the editor at the
address/email below.

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POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:
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A PLACE TO BELONG

America’s history fueled the mission and policies of HBCUs to offer students an opportunity for quality education in a diverse and inclusive environment.



By Sharrice Allen, Ph.D.
Project Director, ADVANCE
Institutional Transformation
(IT) and former Interim
Executive Director, Diversity
and Inclusion

Most historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) were established after 1865 with the sole purpose of educating freed enslaved people because those individuals were not permitted to attend the existing white institutions. HBCUs have not only been a safe haven for their descendants, but they have been a place where all students could be educated.

One of the greatest myths about HBCUs is that they are monolithic. Many believe that only Black students attend HBCUs and that the faculty are all Black. That is so far from the truth.

Upon arriving on any HBCU campus, diversity is apparent—not just in the student and employee populations but also expressed through the lived experiences, perspectives and approaches of each individual. In any higher educational setting, students and employees are all multifaceted individuals showing up with intersectional identities with an expectation of being valued, respected and empowered members of the institution.

We must be intentional about welcoming each new person to the Aggie family because we understand that being diverse and inclusive is not enough. All should feel a sense of belonging as well.

Today, HBCUs must be intentional in employing strategies for opening their doors wider to a more diverse student body. North Carolina A&T, like most HBCUs, engages in diversity, equity and inclusion efforts to create supportive and safe spaces for all students, faculty and staff. At N.C. A&T, diversity and inclusion (D&I) is not

just an initiative or a program for our campus, rather it is a commitment and investment in preparing our students to compete on national and/or global stages.

Diversity is often thought of in terms of race and ethnicity, however, it encompasses much more.

In the University of North Carolina System, diversity is defined as the ways in which individuals vary, including, but not limited to, backgrounds, personal or social identity characteristics, ideas, beliefs, cultures and traditions that distinguish one individual or group from another.¹ Thus, when individuals enter a learning or work environment, they show up expressing multifaceted intersections of their social identities such as race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, religion, language use, socioeconomic status, veteran/military status, etc.

Inclusion can be defined as the enablement of individuals, including those from underrepresented groups, to fully and equitably have access to, and participate in, the university’s programs, services, facilities, and institutional life. Collectively, *diversity and inclusion* are the intentional efforts undertaken to create an institutional culture and a working and learning environment offering acceptance, support and respect for a multiplicity of individuals as they pursue their academic, research and professional ambitions and interests.^{1,2}

Institutions of higher education that are intentional about diversifying their demographic composition can improve the quality of their student



body and workforce and can be the catalyst for a better return on investment. With a diverse campus community comes a diversity of thought—new ideas, different perspectives and approaches to problem identification and solutioning. As a result, students are better prepared to compete nationally and globally.

As N.C. A&T’s former interim executive D&I officer, I was responsible for leading the collaborative campus-wide strategic thinking and planning process to develop a comprehensive diversity and inclusion program for our campus. In this role, I was a change management practitioner helping to intentionally move the culture of our institution to one of inclusive excellence at all levels.

One of the five core values of N.C. A&T is inclusiveness. As an inclusive institution, we are committed

to diversity and to demonstrate inclusiveness as we work together for the advancement of the university and the world. As a demonstration of this commitment, the university engaged in diversity and inclusion efforts throughout the campus.

To further this commitment, the university initiated the comprehensive N.C. A&T Diversity and Inclusion Program. The D&I program is an organizational change initiative designed to cultivate a culture where each person at the A&T is valued, respected and provided a welcoming and inclusive learning and working environment experienced by all. The strength of our program comes from the integration of diversity and inclusion tenets throughout all levels of the organization infrastructure.

Since November 2019, we have focused on developing collaborative partnerships with various focal

groups and guiding the university-wide Diversity and Inclusion Committee through training for identity development and capacity building. In addition, we have been aggressively developing a D&I strategic action plan. The D&I Action Plan aligns with Goals 5.1 and 5.2 of the university’s strategic plan goals and is undergirded by the university’s core values. The framework of the D&I program is supported by four pillars of change based on the goals of the D&I Action Plan: policies, practices and communication; employee education and training; student educational and extracurricular experiences; and assessment and evaluation.

One of my goals as the D&I officer was to bring awareness and understanding around the various tenets of diversity by shifting the mental models of students and employees through training and educational strategies. Another goal was to ultimately affect change in systems, structure and culture of the institution to mitigate barriers to diversity, equity and inclusiveness.

In any organizational culture where D&I is promoted and encouraged, a sense of belonging is birthed. Belonging is a psychological need supported by a culture where people are seen and valued for their authentic selves. Students and employees feel that they can bring the whole of who they are to work so they can be the innovative and creative beings that they are called to be.

We must be intentional about welcoming each new person to the Aggie family because we understand that being diverse and inclusive is not enough. All should feel a sense of belonging as well. Thus, our ultimate desire is to ensure that all “Aggies Belong.”

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¹ 300.8.5 Policy on Diversity and Inclusion Within the University of North Carolina. <https://www.northcarolina.edu/apps/policy/index.php?section=300.8.5>
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N.C. A&T RISES IN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

North Carolina A&T has maintained its position in U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges 2021 as the No. 1 public HBCU in America, a spot it shares this year with Florida A&M. Both universities are tied for seventh overall in the HBCU listings.

N.C. A&T moved up in the prestigious National University rankings to a tie at 272, nine spots up from last year's tie at 281 as part of its best showing ever in a range of important national lists. Only 292 schools made the national numerical rankings, with an additional 89 included in the overall category, but not ranked. A&T entered the National University rankings last year for the first time.

A&T further ranked among America's top 70 national universities in three separate categories, as well as retaining its No. 1 spot among the nation's public HBCUs for the third consecutive year.

"North Carolina A&T's continued rise in the national rankings is the result of the strategic focus of our institution on academic excellence, as well as the dedication and hard work of our students, faculty and staff," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. "We not only want to compete with the very best nationally, we are united as a university in our desire to be transformative in the lives of our students, the communities we serve and the research we undertake."

Of particular note, A&T broke into the magazine's annual ranking of the Most Innovative Schools for the first time. It is the nation's only public HBCU included in that list, with Howard being the only other HBCU to join it. A&T tied at No. 68 with such schools as Penn State, Syracuse, Virginia, North Carolina State and Florida State.

A&T further tied for 61st nationally for universities with the Best Undergraduate Teaching, a list that recognizes institutions with "an exceptionally strong commitment" to the classroom experience.

A&T also earned a spot among the top 50 campuses nationally in social mobility, ranking No. 48 nationally—up from No. 66 last year—in this key measure of how successfully it performs in graduating students who receive Pell Grants compared to its success in graduating non-Pell recipients. Most Pell Grants go to students with a family income of less than \$20,000. A&T tied with the universities of Florida, Houston and West Georgia.

A&T further tied for No. 132 among all doctoral university engineering programs nationwide, a slight move up from last year's tie at 134. A&T produces more African American engineers at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels combined than any university in the nation. The university also ranks No. 210 nationally among best computer science programs.

BANK OF AMERICA GIVES \$1M TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY, ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

North Carolina A&T received \$1 million from Bank of America through the bank's \$1 billion commitment over the next four years to advance racial equality and economic opportunity.

As part of that commitment, Ebony Thomas '93 has joined the bank's Environmental, Social & Governance, Capital Deployment and Public Policy team as the program executive for Racial Equality and Economic Opportunity Initiatives.

Bank of America is directing one-third, or \$300 million, of its \$1 billion commitment to four key areas across 91 U.S. markets and globally, with \$25 million in support of jobs initiatives in black and Hispanic/Latino communities.

These funds will enhance up-skilling and reskilling through partnerships with 10 historically Black colleges and universities and Hispanic serving institutions and 11 community colleges that serve predominately Black and Hispanic/Latino students. Bank of America will work with major employers in each select market to ensure these programs target specific hiring needs.

N.C. A&T is the first institution of higher education in North Carolina to partner with Bank of America in this effort.

"Among our goals is to provide the best and brightest students with access to opportunities that ultimately will result in dynamic careers," said Derek Ellington, Triad market president for Bank of America. "What better way to accomplish that than by leveraging the excellent relationship we already have with A&T, the nation's No. 1 HBCU?"

That relationship is further strengthened by the addition of Thomas in implementing Bank of America's vision. Most recently, she served as bank's human resources executive for market and site human resources where she led activities including talent planning, development and mobility, engagement and diversity and inclusion across all markets. Before serving in this role, she was the head of enterprise diversity recruiting and co-head of global campus recruiting.

"As a doctoral research and modern land-grant institution, we play a vital role in not only the education of future generations of leaders like Ms. Thomas, but also in applied research and, equally, as a major economic driver for the region, state and nation," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr.

"Among our goals is to provide the best and brightest students with access to opportunities that ultimately will result in dynamic careers."



Bank of America also will direct \$25 million in support of community outreach and initiatives, \$50 million in direct equity investments to Minority Depository Institutions, and \$200 million of proprietary equity investments in minority entrepreneurs, businesses and funds.

Martin said the bank's investment in A&T through this significant and historic effort will pay dividends for years to come.

"As a beacon for the future, we sit here in East Greensboro at the intersection of all that Bank of America is committed to through this initiative – talent and job creation, community outreach, wealth creation, and entrepreneurship," he said. "All of these are at the very heart of who we are as a land grant institution."

The Bank of America gift came during the university's capital campaign, The Campaign for North Carolina A&T.

MAKING NEWS

N.C. A&T, CONSORTIUM PARTNERS RECEIVE
\$5.7M TO ADVANCE DIABETES RESEARCH

The National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive Kidney Disease (NIDDK) at the National Institutes of Health awarded \$5.7 million to North Carolina A&T and three North Carolina Diabetes Research Center (NCDRC) consortium partners. The award will support shared technological infrastructure for advancing innovative diabetes research and fostering interinstitutional collaborations in North Carolina.

The award will support four cores that leverage the unique strengths at each NCDRC institution, making resources available to diabetes investigators on all four campuses. N.C. A&T will be home to the Enrichment/Community Engagement Core led by Elimelda Moige Onger, Ph.D., professor and associate dean of research and innovation in the College of Health and Human Sciences.

In addition to the four core research areas, the award will support a robust pilot funding program designed to bring new investigators and young scientists to the diabetes field, enhance connectivity in the research community and foster new advancements in basic and translational diabetes research.



HRSA AWARDS \$3.25M FOR
NURSING SCHOLARSHIPS

Thanks to a \$3.25 million award from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), students in the School of Nursing will have the opportunity to receive full scholarships over the next five years.

North Carolina A&T will receive \$650,000 per year through the HRSA funding secured by Lenora Campbell, Ph.D., dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences. The money comes from HRSA's Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students program, which is designed to increase the number, ethnic diversity and distribution of nurses to remediate the state of North Carolina's shortage of diverse healthcare providers.

The award is expected to provide full scholarships to 25 eligible full-time juniors and seniors in the School of Nursing. This marks the first time the university has received scholarship funds through the HRSA program.

"Our goal is to establish a program that enhances academic success for our students and produces graduates who are commitment to health equity, eliminating health disparities, and serving medically underserved populations," said Campbell.

While the primary focus is to cultivate equity in the nursing workforce, it also will equip nursing students to reduce health disparities which have been illustrated most recently by the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Policies that multiply health inequities have persisted for generations, resulting in long-standing inequities and barriers to good health and, consequently, health disparities. Having a diverse nursing workforce improves population health outcomes, particularly within underrepresented groups. The African American population in North Carolina is 22%, but African Americans only make up 12.5% of the state's registered nursing population.

An important goal of the HRSA award is to increase the number of students from minority and disadvantaged backgrounds who successfully enter and complete the B.S.N. program and are successful on the NCLEX on the first attempt. This will be done by strengthening partnerships with high schools and area Health Career Access Programs to increase recruitment of students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The nursing program at N.C. A&T has experienced significant growth over the last five years and boasted a 97% NCLEX pass rate for 2019.

In spring 2020, the school established a partnership with Cone Health to pilot test the health equity toolkit created by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), AARP and AARP Foundation. The HRSA award further elevates A&T's nationally recognized commitment to both education and health equity.

Criteria for receiving an HRSA-funded scholarship, including financial need, is being determined. Students will be able to apply for a scholarship through the Office of Student Support Services.

A&T's School of Nursing was founded 66 years ago based on nursing workforce equity and first accredited by the National League of Nursing in 1971 and has maintained continuous accreditation ever since then. It offers a Bachelor of Science program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing through 2022. Students can pursue their B.S.N. through three entry options: traditional, accelerated second degree and registered nurse completion for those who already hold an associate nursing degree.

"From its inception, A&T has been one of the largest contributors of African American nurses in North Carolina," said Campbell. "The HRSA award is a game-changer for nursing at A&T and will ensure that we continue the tradition of contributing to a more diverse nursing workforce."

MAKING NEWS



COE FUELS STUDENTS' FUTURES WITH \$3M GIFT FROM DOMINION ENERGY FOUNDATION

The College of Engineering (COE) received a \$3 million investment from Dominion Energy Foundation to increase student workforce readiness in the power and energy sectors.

The six-year HBCU Promise program will provide \$25 million in funding to eleven total institutions in Virginia, Ohio, North Carolina and South Carolina by bolstering scholarships, endowments and meeting essential campus needs. The company will also establish a \$10 million scholarship fund to support African American and other underrepresented minority students across Dominion Energy's service area. North Carolina A&T was the only university in North Carolina selected for the program.

STUDY AIMS TO LOWER COVID-19 CASES, DEATHS IN RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES

A study under way by researchers in the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) aims to reduce the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in residential care facilities, including nursing homes.

Data have established that older adults in congregate living facilities have higher COVID-19 mortality rates than the general population. In addition, guidelines regarding visitation, screening staff for the novel coronavirus, and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) vary widely from state to state.

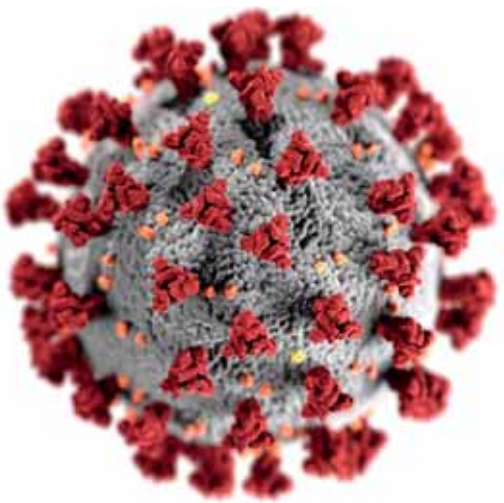
The North Carolina A&T study examines which pre-COVID-19 quality of care measures predict COVID-19 cases and deaths in congregate living facilities, as well as community-level factors that perpetuated or mitigated disparities in the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths among older adults in these residences.

"Community-level risk factors are important because care providers reside in the community and are carriers bringing COVID-19 into congregate living facilities," said Stephanie Teixeira-Poit, Ph.D., an assistant professor of sociology in the CHHS and principal investigator (PI) of the study.

Early December, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that health care and nursing home workers be among the first to receive COVID-19 vaccines as soon as they become available.

Teixeira-Poit is leading the effort with co-PI Vanessa Charbi, a student in the Joint Programs in Social Work of A&T and the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. Their team analyzed data from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services COVID-19 Ongoing Outbreaks in Congregate Living Settings Report, the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services Post-Acute Care and Hospice Provider Utilization and Payment Public Use Files, the U.S. Agency on Healthcare Research and Quality's Area Health Resources File, and county-level COVID-19 records.

As part of the study, researchers conducted community-based participatory research and convened a stakeholder advisory board (SAB). "To ensure the SAB could address the needs of a wide range of diverse constituents, we aimed to assemble a cohort of leaders in the field representing diverse geographical locations, professional



backgrounds, agency settings, income levels, and socio-demographic characteristics," said Teixeira-Poit.

The SAB not only provided feedback on the approach and analysis interpretation, but also help develop actionable recommendations that can be implemented to reduce novel coronavirus cases and deaths in congregate living facilities.

"We will use this information to devise practical strategies that our local community partners, their constituents, policymakers and decision-makers can use to mitigate COVID-19 cases and deaths in these facilities," said Teixeira-Poit. "Our hope is that these strategies can be adapted and implemented in residential care facilities across North Carolina and in other states to slow and stop the spread of COVID-19 among these vulnerable adult populations."

The target completion date for the Predictors and Strategies to Mitigate COVID-19 Cases and Death Among Older Adults in Nursing Homes and Residential Care Facilities study, which received \$75,428 in funding from the N.C. Policy Collaboratory, was Dec. 30.

NEW ENGINEERING COMPLEX TO BEAR MARTIN'S NAME



In honor of a lifetime of contributions to the success of North Carolina A&T, the UNC System and the people of North Carolina, N.C. A&T's new engineering complex will be named upon its opening in honor of Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr.

The Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex was approved at the Feb. 26 meeting of the North Carolina A&T Board of Trustees after trustee and former board chairman Timothy King submitted the nomination earlier last month.

Martin, who assumed his current position with A&T in 2009, is the longest currently serving chancellor in the UNC System and a leader nationally among both HBCUs and land-grant research institutions.

In addition to his prior service as senior vice president of the UNC System and chancellor of Winston-Salem State University, he previously served as vice chancellor for academic affairs of A&T, as well as dean of the College of Engineering, chair of the Department of Electrical Engineering and a faculty member in that department. All told, his academic and administrative career at A&T has spanned nearly four decades.

"Chancellor Martin's relentless commitment to the success of North Carolina A&T has led our university to unprecedented heights over the past 12 years, in which A&T has not only become America's largest HBCU but—by some rankings and evaluations—its very best," said Venessa Harrison, board chairwoman. "He has modeled and required excellence in everything that the university does, and in doing so, he has led a transformation of A&T that will serve it well, many years after we are gone.

"It is fitting and appropriate that the new complex to be occupied by the college where he began his work in service of A&T be named in his honor."

Now in its final stages of construction, the Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex is a \$90 million facility that will dramatically enhance the research and instructional capacities of a college that leads the nation in

graduation of African American engineers. Funded by a statewide NC Connect bond passed by voters in 2016, the ERIC will be home to state-of-the-art laboratories and technology critical to advancing the college's scientific work in heavily competitive STEM research, to fostering innovation that fuels start-up and spinoff companies and to educating engineers who play key roles in the state's economy.

The building will assume its new name as part of the grand opening later this year. While it is slated for completion and occupation in August, the date has not yet been set for that occasion but is expected to take place this fall.

Martin is the first A&T graduate to lead the university. He earned his B.S. (1974) and M.S. (1976), both in electrical engineering, before leaving for Virginia Tech to complete his Ph.D. (1980). Upon graduation, he returned to A&T as a member of the electrical engineering faculty, rapidly rising through the ranks to leadership, first serving as department chair and in 1989 being named dean of the college.

He was promoted to vice chancellor for academic affairs in 1994, and five years later he joined Winston-Salem State as chancellor, leading the university through a reorganization, reaffirmation of its accreditation and launch of seven new master's programs.



In 2006, UNC System President Erskine Bowles tapped Martin to serve as senior vice president for academic affairs, making him the top academic officer of the 17-campus system. Three years later, he was elected the 12th chancellor of A&T.

As A&T's chief executive, Martin has overseen the creation of two successive strategic plans that radically changed the university's direction. A&T was struggling in enrollment when he arrived, facing an uncertain future. The first plan, "A&T Preeminence 2020: Embracing Our Past, Creating Our Future," was created in 2011, with implementation immediately following. By 2014, the university had grown to become the nation's largest HBCU, a position it has not only held in every successive year but expanded upon.

In each of the past five consecutive years, A&T has set institutional enrollment records, expanding to

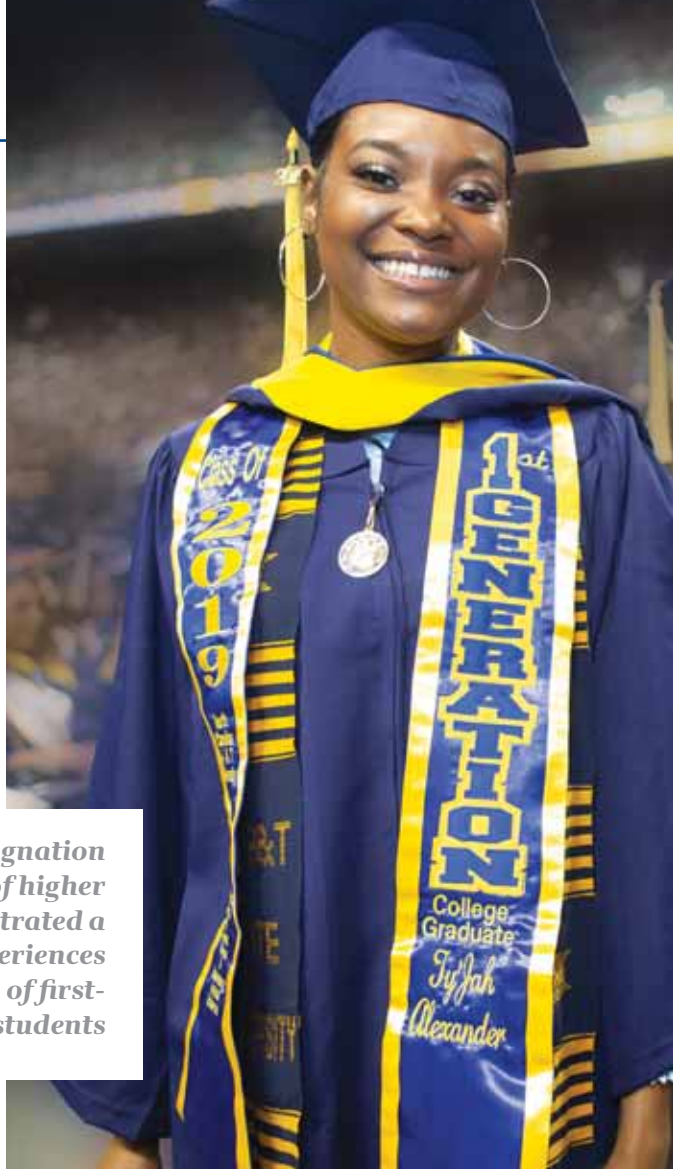
its current 12,753 headcount last fall. The successor to the first strategic plan, "A&T Preeminence: Taking the Momentum to 2023," calls for the university to expand to an enrollment of 14,000 over the next three fall terms—a goal it is widely expected to surpass.

A&T has also moved into the nation's leading universities in a growing list of key academic rankings. U.S. News & World Report lists it among the nation's top national universities and its top 70 in Social Mobility, Innovation and Best Undergraduate Teaching. It also is the magazine's top ranked public HBCU for the third consecutive year, a position it shares this year with Florida A&M.

In Money magazine, the university ranks as the best HBCU in America, one of the nation's top five most affordable universities and an institution whose alumni earn more in early career salaries than those of all but one peer campus in the UNC System.

"There is no doubt that Chancellor Martin's vision and passion for this university have played critical roles in the incredible ascent of A&T," said King. "In no place do we see that more than in engineering, which has been the foundation upon which the university's national reputation has been built since his service as dean 30 years ago. The Martin Complex will serve as a lasting testament to the difference his leadership made."

MAKING NEWS



The First-gen Forward designation recognizes institutions of higher education that have demonstrated a commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes of first-generation college students

N.C. A&T RECEIVES FIRST-GEN FORWARD DESIGNATION

North Carolina A&T recently received designation as a First-gen Forward Institution as part of The Center for First-generation Student Success 2020-21 cohort of First-gen Forward Institutions.

A National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education initiative, the First-gen Forward designation recognizes institutions of higher education that have demonstrated a commitment to improving experiences and advancing outcomes of first-generation college students.

Many of the university's resources and efforts are provided through TRIO Student Support Services. The program provides a range of services addressing academic

and practical skills in an effort to increase persistence, retention, good academic standing and ultimately graduation through tutoring, study skills, financial literacy, summer bridging, advising and academic coaching.

As part of the 2020-21 cohort, N.C. A&T will receive professional development, community-building experiences and a first look at the Center's research and resources. Select faculty and staff will be afforded multiple opportunities to engage with peer and aspirational institutions that are also creating environments that improve the experiences and outcomes of first-generation students.

After two successful years in the program, institutions are eligible to apply for the Advisory leadership designation.

N.C. A&T PARTNERS WITH NBCUNIVERSAL NEWS GROUP FOR NEW JOURNALISM ACADEMY

Multi-year partnership with historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions and colleges with significant Black, indigenous and people of color populations signals Comcast and NBCU News Group's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

North Carolina A&T is among 17 academic institutions across the nation selected by NBCUniversal News Group for its new NBCU Academy, an innovative, multiplatform journalism training and development program for four-year university and community college students.

NBCUniversal News Group announced the \$6.5 million, multi-year partnership on Jan. 14, enhancing its commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion by creating pathways for storytellers in underrepresented groups, including HBCUs, HSIs and colleges with significant Black, Latino, Asian, indigenous and tribal populations, as well as those that serve students with different abilities and from various economic and geographic backgrounds.

"Creating an inclusive culture for journalism that represents the communities we serve is at the very core of what we do," said NBCUniversal News Group Chairman Cesar Conde. "Through NBCU Academy, we have the opportunity to widen our extraordinary legacy by building on-ramps for a talented generation of journalists and storytellers who—for so long—may have been overlooked."

The investment will provide equipment, onsite curriculum and various opportunities for students to engage and learn from NBCU News Group journalists, executives, managerial, production and editorial team members. Additionally, the initiative provides funding for journalism programs and scholarships—including scholarships worth \$3.5 million over the next two years—and will support professors as they develop seminar courses.

N.C. A&T is the only North Carolina-based university represented in the partnership that also includes Borough of Manhattan Community College, Cal State Fullerton, Claflin University, Clark Atlanta University, Dallas College, El Camino College, Florida International University, Hampton University, Institute of American Indian Arts, Miami Dade College, Morgan State University, Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, The City College of New York, University of North Texas, University of Texas at El Paso and Xavier University of Louisiana.

A&T's College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (CAHSS) houses the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (JOMC), which offers three concentrations: mass media production, multimedia journalism and public relations.

"We are delighted to partner with NBCUniversal News Group to prepare the next generation as they explore career aspirations in journalism through hands-on training and professional development," said Frances Ward-Johnson, Ph.D., CAHSS dean. "Our journalism and mass communication department produces exceptional students, who will not only benefit from this opportunity, but will also have much to contribute to the academy. Additionally, the support our professors and the program will receive will further enhance the impact we can make."

This partnership follows several impressive announcements from the college last fall, including the UNC System Board of Governors appointment of Kim Smith, Ph.D., a JOMC associate professor, as a new member of the UNC Press Board of Governors.



Gartner releases its top 25 lists of supply chain management programs every two years. For its 2020 lists, it analyzed 67 universities in the United States and Canada, including 35 MBA programs and 59 undergraduate programs, using corporate input and programmatic results.

RECORD YEAR IN FUNDRAISING SURPASSES \$100M CAMPAIGN GOAL



NSF GRANTS NC-LSAMP \$3.2M TO CONTINUE STEM PROGRAMMING

Along with N.C. A&T, the alliance consists of Fayetteville State University, North Carolina Central University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, University of North Carolina at Pembroke and Winston-Salem State University.

MAKING NEWS

N.C. A&T RECEIVES IBM QUANTUM RESEARCH CENTER DESIGNATION

North Carolina A&T has joined IBM’s new collaboration with 13 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to equip students pursuing quantum computing careers. The IBM-HBCU Quantum Center is a multi-year investment, and N.C. A&T’s proven strengths in ground-breaking STEM research and academic rigor resulted in the university’s selection and designation as one of five HBCU leading quantum research centers in the partnership.

“This is a very exciting partnership as we recognize that quantum computing is an innovative solution to overcome the limitations in computing power we experience with current state-of-the-art computing systems,” said Mohd Anwar, Ph.D., associate professor of computer science in A&T’s College of Engineering and the lead investigator for the university’s quantum research center. “As the No. 1 HBCU and the largest producer of African American engineers, among other notable achievements, our university is positioned to partner with IBM and our HBCU peers as we prepare the next generation to be successful in this area.”

Anwar is joined by Christopher C. Doss, Ph.D., an associate professor in electrical and computer engineering and Raymond Samuel, Ph.D., a professor in biology. Through this partnership, the team will be able to provide opportunities for A&T students from various STEM disciplines.

IBM will invest approximately \$10 million in the HBCU Quantum Coalition over the next five years, providing training and access to the company’s quantum systems. In the first year, the company will establish the center hub at Howard University and provide seed grants to support research and fund an undergraduate cohort, graduate students and postdoctoral positions. IBM will develop plans to incorporate quantum education and prerequisites in STEM courses.

The other IBM-HBCU Quantum Center partners are Albany State University, Clark Atlanta University, Coppin State University, Hampton University, Morehouse College, Morgan State University, Southern University, Texas Southern University, University of the Virgin Islands, Virginia Union University and Xavier University of Louisiana.

In addition to the center partnership, IBM will also provide A&T and 12 select HBCUs that are part of the Skills Academy Academic Initiative with a \$100 million asset and resource donation, which includes access to university lectures, software and faculty training.

Overall, the two initiatives will involve 21 HBCUs. A&T is one of only five to participate in both the Quantum Center and Skills Academy.

M.S. IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM ANNOUNCED FOR FALL 2021

Beginning in the fall of 2021, North Carolina A&T will offer a new Master of Science degree in health psychology through the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS).

Approved by the UNC Board of Governors in March, the two-year program is designed to provide the foundational knowledge and skills for students to work in the health psychology field, said George Robinson, Ph.D., psychology department chairman. It will complement N.C. A&T’s undergraduate psychology degree program, which introduces the ideas and concepts relevant to this discipline, encourage interdisciplinary learning, prepare students for study in graduate programs and entry-level psychology careers as well as train students to conduct both basic and applied research.

This degree will join the Master of Social Work that is offered through a joint program with UNC Greensboro, as the second graduate-level program in the CHHS.

NEW ONLINE CERTIFICATES IN CYBERSECURITY, DATA ANALYTICS OFFERED

Adding to an extensive catalog of graduate certificates, North Carolina A&T is now offering online certificate programs in cybersecurity and data analytics.

Available as online-only options, both programs require 12 credit hours for completion and are constructed to provide technology professionals and those looking to break through in tech fields with more specialized training options without extensive time restraints and potentially increase earning potential.

Certificates can be obtained within one semester and can prepare participants for the Certified Information Systems Security Professional and EC-Council’s Certified Secure Computer User certification exams, as well as many others.

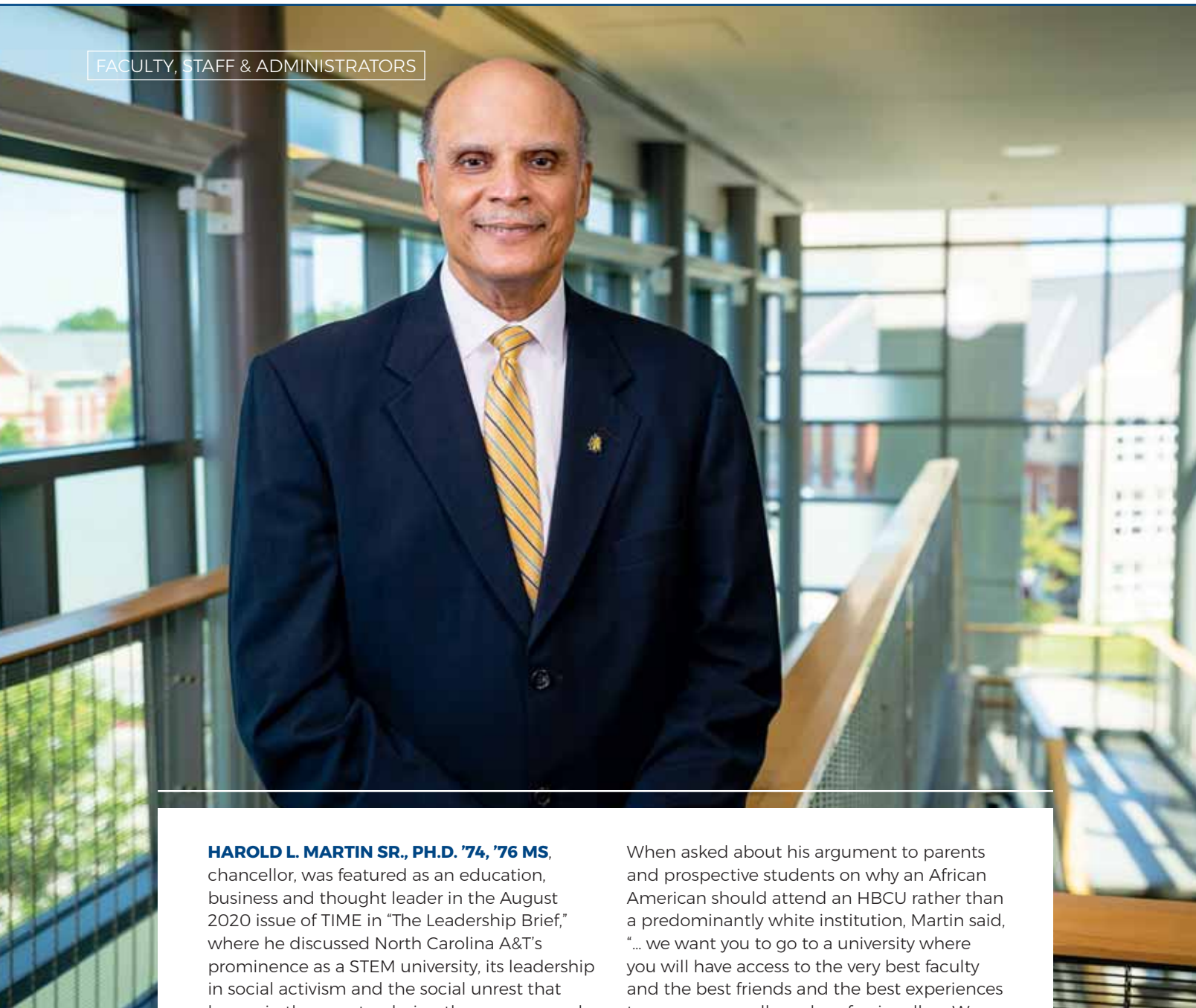
TIKTOK HEALTH HEROES RELIEF FUND PROVIDES \$1M FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

As a continuation of its Health Heroes Relief Fund, TikTok is providing \$1 million to North Carolina A&T to support undergraduate and graduate scholarships for students pursuing medical or other health-related careers, helping to ensure the success of future Black, Latino and indigenous health heroes.

N.C. A&T is one of 10 colleges and universities chosen to receive a portion of \$10 million from TikTok because they serve underrepresented students with programs focused on public health and professions in the medical and health care fields.

TikTok created its Health Heroes Relief Fund in April 2020, pledging \$250 million to support front-line medical workers, educators and local communities affected by the novel coronavirus pandemic with the provision of \$150 million in funds toward medical staffing, supplies and hardship relief for health care workers. These distributions have been focused on local organizations to support local health care workers.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



HAROLD L. MARTIN SR., PH.D. '74, '76 MS, chancellor, was featured as an education, business and thought leader in the August 2020 issue of TIME in "The Leadership Brief," where he discussed North Carolina A&T's prominence as a STEM university, its leadership in social activism and the social unrest that began in the country during the summer and continues to call for justice.

The "Q&A" style interview with TIME journalist Eben Shapiro gave Martin the opportunity to share his thoughts on the importance of HBCUs and the university's fall COVID-19 reopening plan.

TO READ MARTIN'S FULL INTERVIEW WITH TIME, VISIT [HTTPS://TIME.COM/5881105/HAROLD-MARTIN-COLLEGE-REOPENING-CORONAVIRUS](https://time.com/5881105/harold-martin-college-reopening-coronavirus).

When asked about his argument to parents and prospective students on why an African American should attend an HBCU rather than a predominantly white institution, Martin said, "... we want you to go to a university where you will have access to the very best faculty and the best friends and the best experiences to grow personally and professionally. ... We can demonstrate that time and time again, there are very few universities in America that do what we do as well as we do it for African American students."

Martin also discussed A&T's preparedness to bring students back to campus during the COVID-19 pandemic. The university has fared with an average positivity rate lower than the state's and other universities across the state.



CHRISTINA K. BROGDON, a senior management executive with more than 16 years of

experience in higher education, has been named vice chancellor for human resources, effective Sept. 14. Brogdon previously served as assistant vice president of human resources at the University of West Georgia for two years.

Prior to her service at West Georgia, Brogdon held leadership roles in human resources at Virginia Tech, Radford University and Bluefield State College. She holds an MBA from Averett University, a bachelor's degree in management from Virginia Tech and certification as a professional in human resources from the Human Resources Certification Institute. She is a member of the Society for Human Resource Management and the College & University Personnel Association where she serves on the Southern Region Board.

In her new role, Brogdon will develop and implement transformative HR strategy for human capital management, employee engagement and leadership development in collaboration with the university's senior leaders. She will also ensure alignment between N.C. A&T's strategic plan and human resource practices through workforce planning, innovative HR programs and partnership with diverse campus stakeholders.

Brogdon will translate institutional priorities into a vision for human resource programs responsive to the university's needs and serve as a member of the Chancellor's Cabinet, the university's senior executive leadership team.



LENORA R. CAMPBELL, PH.D., dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS),

has been named a member of the newly established Andrea Harris Social, Economic, Environmental and Health Equity Task Force, which is charged with addressing the social, environmental, economic and health disparities in communities of color that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Campbell joins the 35-member task force as the North Carolina historically Black college or university representative. She has more than 30 years of experience in higher education and serves as a member of the Moses Cone Health System Board of Trustees.

Campbell has presented and published widely in areas related to health disparities, child health, mental health and custodial grandparent families. In 2012, she was appointed to the National Advisory Council in Nurse Education and Practice of the Health Resources and Service Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Before joining A&T as its interim CHHS dean in 2016 and assuming the role permanently in 2018, Campbell spent eight years as associate dean and director in the Division of Nursing at Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), where she oversaw the Baccalaureate in Nursing (BSN), Master in Nursing (MSN) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs. She also served in faculty positions in nursing at WSSU and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, held positions in nursing practice and established an interdisciplinary program for custodial grandparents, funded by the WK Kellogg Foundation, the Department of Human and Health Services, and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS

For the academic year 2019–2020, the Division of Research and Economic Development recognized seven faculty members for research contributions to their respective fields. A panel of 15 faculty members considered 29 researchers and selected winners based on rigorous criteria. The winners received stipends and plaques to recognize their achievements.



YI

Interdisciplinary Team Award. **SUN YI, PH.D., SAMEER HAMOUSH, PH.D., and YOUNHO SEONG, PH.D.,** represent three departments in the College of Engineering and collaborated on the Autonomous Robotic Non-Destructive Investigation (ARNDI) team. Non-destructive testing evaluates material properties and ensure structural integrity without causing damage. The team employs new algorithms based on artificial intelligence and uses advanced techniques and novel methods for structural modeling, analysis, robot control, testing, and system evaluation.

Award for Intellectual Property. **LIFENG ZHANG, PH.D.,** nanoengineering associate professor at the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, received two U.S. patents in 2019 and filed three U.S. patent applications. He and his students participated in the National Science Foundation (NSF) i-Corps program, in which the core technology of the project used environmentally friendly bio-binder to



SEONG

surface-modify nanofillers, mixing the bio-binder with a polymer matrix to enhance sustainability and properties of polymer matrix composite materials.

Zhang's presentation on anti-fungal nanotechnologies at the 2019 Opportunity Meets Innovation: Reverse Pitch Challenge, sponsored by the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce and Launch Greensboro, created an opportunity to connect with Core Technology Molding Corp., Hexcel Corp. and BNNano Inc. to promote invention-related new nanotechnologies and facilitate commercial applications.

Senior Researcher of the Year Award. Over the past 16 years, **SALIL DESAI, PH.D.,** industrial and systems engineering professor in the College of Engineering, has established an interdisciplinary research program with active collaborations across many academic institutions, national laboratories and industry sectors. His research focuses on the investigation and development of novel advanced



ZHANG

manufacturing processes with a diverse application base. Desai conceptualized a novel direct-write process, which can deposit droplets ranging from micro- to nano-scale based on laser modulation.

NSF recognized and funded his efforts through a prestigious CAREER award, enabling him to translate his conceptual idea into a viable nano/micro manufacturing process resulting in a U.S. patent. Through the university's spin-off commercial venture efforts, the innovation formed a start-up company seeking to expand his platform technology in the fields of semiconductor electronics, energy sector and biomedical devices.

Young Investigator Award. **DONGYANG "SUNNY" DENG, PH.D.,** associate professor in the Department of Built Environment, College of Science and Technology, studies wastewater treatment, focusing on per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), or a group of man-made chemicals, chemical remediation and



DESAI



DENG

agricultural wastewater treatment. She strives to raise public awareness about emerging contaminants and their impact on the environment and seeks to mitigate the effects of those contaminants, alleviating public concern and benefit millions of people in the United States with clean and safe water.

Deng's research enterprise expanded successfully in only three years at the university. She received four grants and serves as the lead principal investigator for three of them and has three additional grant proposals pending. Deng published a book, has five publications in peer-reviewed journals, two accepted conference proceedings, 15 oral and 10 poster presentations at regional and national conferences among other notable achievements. She also served as a proposal reviewer for NSF and the U.S. Department of Defense and has been invited by the Environmental Protection Agency to review an emerging contaminant proposal regarding PFAS in agricultural wastewater.



BHOWMIK

Rookie of the Year Award. **ARNAB BHOWMIK, PH.D.,** assistant professor in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Design, College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, studies stewardship of natural resources like soil to combat global issues including climate change, food security, human health and environmental health. His research adds to the understanding of soil, plant, and microbial interactions, and of nutrient cycling in terrestrial ecosystems, and addresses grand challenges involving the nation's food security and environmental sustainability. One of Bhowmik's key accomplishments is successfully using biological indicators of soil health as a metric to compare a range of management practices that enhance soil conservation and contribute to greenhouse gas mitigation.

The National Science Foundation awarded a \$200,000 grant to an interdisciplinary team at North Carolina A&T to study the psychosocial determinants of successful remote learning among students from N.C. A&T and other public HBCUs. The team consists of **ADRIENNE AIKEN MORGAN, PH.D.,** assistant professor, psychology, and lead principal investigator; **CHRISTOPHER DOSS, PH.D.,** associate professor, electrical and computer engineering; **ANNA LEE, PH.D.,** associate professor, psychology; **SMRITI SHRESTHA, PH.D.,** statistician, nursing; **STEPHANIE TEIXEIRA-POIT, PH.D.,** assistant professor, social work and sociology; and **JEANNETTE WADE, PH.D.,** assistant professor, social work and sociology.

The study is in response to the COVID-19 disruptions that prompted transitions to remote learning in early spring and continued in the summer. Elements of remote learning are expected in subsequent semesters to ensure the social distancing that's necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among students and faculty.

The study seeks to understand the risk factors for college students and develop effective interventions to prevent disruptions in remote learning success. It also will inform future policies and prevention strategy development to better prepare for future pandemics that make remote and online learning necessary for all students. In addition, the study will produce insights that may be applied more generally to transition to online learning for HBCU students, and students from similar backgrounds. This research will aid intervention development by identifying factors impacting student success under extreme disruptive conditions.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS

A team of undergraduate, graduate and faculty researchers in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) won a highly competitive \$449,052 grant from the Department of the Navy's HBCU/MI program to collaborate with the Navy on improving radio frequency (RF) communication systems.

The team is comprised of **ABDULLAH EROGLU, PH.D.**, ECE department chairman and principal investigator, and five students: undergraduates **FELISSE ALEXANDER, MIKHIAL GUGGEMOS and DORANT SMITH**; master's student **EMILIO RUIZLINARES**; and first-year doctoral student **CLEM SHELTON**.

The research will use gallium nitride (GaN) device technology to create smaller and more efficient solid state-based RF amplifiers. To accomplish this goal, the researchers must develop innovative solutions to expand the power capacity of solid-state semiconductors for the benefit of cutting-edge naval applications. Such achievement could create a ripple effect of new solutions for more powerful communication devices, resulting in the development of optimal devices for the Navy's platforms and other applications.

The Navy uses semiconductor devices to enable a wide range of critical communication devices, including 5G wireless communication systems, logistics, imaging, drone systems and naval detection and radar systems. As the Navy employs an increasing number of smaller devices across the globe, reducing the size of the equipment becomes a necessity, as does increasing the speed and efficiency of the devices.

SALIL DESAI, PH.D., Distinguished Professor of Industrial and Systems Engineering, has been named director of the Center for Excellence in Product Design and Advanced Manufacturing.

Desai's research portfolio has generated more than \$7.5 million in funding support from federal agencies and he has acquired instrumentation worth \$3 million to develop infrastructure support for research and education.

Desai's expertise is in the areas of smart cyber-physical systems, hybrid additive, nano and bio manufacturing, multiphysics modeling, regenerative tissue engineering, product design and realization. Last year, he received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring in recognition of his outstanding efforts to "encourage the next generation of innovators developing a science and engineering workforce."

Desai has extensively published in top-tier journals with more than 130 publications and seven book chapters, patents and invention disclosures. His research portfolio has generated more than \$7.5 million in funding support from federal agencies such as the National Science Foundation (NSF), Department of Defense, Department of Energy, industry and national laboratories. He also has acquired instrumentation worth \$3 million to develop infrastructure support for research and education.

Among the honors Desai has garnered are the UNC Board of Governors Award, NSF CAREER Award, Institute of Industrial and Systems Engineers (IISE) Technical Innovation Award and Outstanding Investigator Awards from the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Department of Defense, and professional societies including the IISE, Society of Manufacturing Engineers, American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the American Society of Education Engineers.



An interdisciplinary research team has received \$550,000 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to establish a Testbed of Connected Autonomous MicroTransit Vehicles. This funding is in addition to the \$235,000 contribution from N.C. A&T's College of Engineering (COE), Downtown Greensboro Incorporated (DGI) and North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), for an overall investment of \$785,000.

This Major Research Instrumentation (MRI) award supports the acquisition of a state-of-the-art autonomous testbed consisting of three self-driving shuttles, along with the required sensing and communication networks. The award will provide a multi-user flexible and configurable research platform that enables fundamental research in development, deployment and validation of Connected Autonomous Vehicle (CAV) technologies. The autonomous fleet will be tested at the one-mile track at Gateway Research Park North.

This research infrastructure will enable partnerships between regional and national collaborators in academia, industry and at national labs in order to advance networks of autonomous vehicles.

The research team is led by **ALI KARIMODDINI, PH.D.**, an associate professor of electrical and computer engineering in the COE who also serves as director of the NC-CAV Center of Excellence in Advanced Transportation Technologies. He is collaborating with COE colleagues **ABDULLAH EROGLU, PH.D.**, **BALAKRISHNA GOKARAJU, PH.D.**, **ABDOLLAH HOMAIFAR, PH.D.**, **STEVEN JIANG, PH.D.**, **JOHN KELLY, PH.D.**, **DANIEL LIMBRICK, PH.D.**, **MAHMOUD MAHMOUD, PH.D.**, and **IOANNIS RAPTIS, PH.D.** Additional researchers include College of Science and Technology faculty members **LEILA HASHEMI BENI, PH.D.**, and **EVELYN SOWELLS, PH.D.**, and Willie A. Deese College of Business faculty member **MARANDA MCBRIDE, PH.D.**

The NSF grant aims to increase research, education and training opportunities for A&T researchers, particularly women and minorities, in transportation-related research. The project will also promote K-12 STEM education through collaborations with high schools in the surrounding community. In addition to increasing awareness of CAV technologies and their benefits to the general public, the researchers will partner with the local community, including downtown Greensboro, for public demonstrations of the testbed in operation in the downtown area.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



CLAY S. GLOSTER JR., PH.D., has been named vice provost of graduate research and dean of The Graduate College after two years of serving in an interim capacity.

As interim, Gloster established the Preparing Future Minority Faculty Members program to enhance graduate student preparedness for academic careers, securing a \$300,000 grant from the National Science Foundation to support this effort. He most recently coordinated the establishment of four new graduate certificate programs slated to begin in the fall.

Gloster has held several roles at N.C. A&T since joining the Department of

Computer Systems and Technology as professor and chairman in 2010. Tapped as the associate dean of the College of Science and Technology in 2012, he led the strategic growth initiative resulting in the M.S. in information technology program becoming the largest master's program at A&T. U.S. News & World Report has consistently ranked the online program as one of the nation's best since 2012.

Gloster's research focuses on reconfigurable computing and he has made substantial contributions to research in technology-based curriculum development and distance education.



SANJUN GU, PH.D., horticulture specialist with Cooperative Extension, received this year's 1890 Institutions Regional Excellence in Extension Award for expansion of horticulture science to all communities. The award is one of five Regional Excellence in Extension Awards presented annually by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), Cooperative Extension and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU). Gu and the other winners were honored virtually on Oct. 28.

Gu is an accomplished researcher, teacher and Extension professional who works with both interdisciplinary research teams and small-scale producers. He has authored or co-authored more than 40 peer-reviewed publications and abstracts, has delivered more than 60 trainings for Extension agents and small farmers, developed and taught three graduate level courses, and has secured nearly \$3 million in grant funding.

In addition to his achievements as a teacher and researcher, Gu has a proven ability to recognize the changing realities of agriculture in North Carolina and to develop programs that fit the current needs of farmers. For example, when industrial hemp was reintroduced as a crop in the state, he developed a program that combines cutting-edge research with hands-on education. In 2019 alone, Gu organized six hemp workshops, two hemp field days, a mini hemp conference, and three hemp in-service workshops that reached more than 800 farmers and 125 agriculture and natural resource Extension agents.

As Extension's horticulture unit coordinator, Gu works collaboratively with a team of four Extension associates, two technicians and students. He has worked with more than a dozen undergraduate and graduate students, including serving as research advisor to five master's students. Many of the students are hired through grant money and work on research projects at the N.C. A&T University Farm.



CHYI LYI "KATHLEEN" LIANG, PH.D., Kellogg Distinguished Professor in the Department of Agribusiness, Applied Economics and Agriscience Education and co-director of the Center for Environmental Farming Systems, and **YEWANDE FASINA, PH.D.**, assistant professor in the Department of Animal Sciences, are part of a multi-university team that has won a five-year, \$10 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to research the sustainability of antibiotic-restricted poultry production. Their portion of the grant is around \$760,000.

USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) awarded the grant through its Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), the nation's leading competitive grants program for the agricultural sciences.

The two College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences faculty members will bring their expertise to a team comprised of researchers from 14 different universities who will examine the issue of antibiotic use in the poultry industry from all angles: the chickens, the humans who consume them and the environmental impacts.

Fasina will test the efficacy of green tea extract, a natural immune system enhancer, as an alternative to antibiotics for the control of necrotic enteritis, a gut disease in broiler (meat-type) chickens. As a poultry immuno-nutritionist, she will work to culture the main causes of the disease in the lab, and then experimentally induce the illness in birds given diets supplemented with green tea extract.

The results could yield the blueprint for an overhaul of the entire industry's approach to disease management, said Liang.

As an agricultural economist, Liang will be involved throughout the project in assessing the economic impacts of the proposed interventions. Using a cost-benefit analysis, she will turn the data generated by the lab scientists into a comprehensive assessment of the costs required, revenue impacts and profitability of the proposed strategies, and identify the factors that influence producers' willingness to adopt those strategies.

Other institutions participating in the grant include North Carolina State University, the University of Georgia, the University of Maryland and Prairie View A&M University.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



ADEME MEKONNEN, PH.D., associate professor in the Department of Physics, served as an editor and section author for the regional climates chapter of the international 2019 State of the Climate report. The peer-reviewed annual assessment is published as a special supplement to the Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society and is compiled by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Centers for Environmental Information.

The report examines global climate indicators, weather events, trends and other related components that may affect the environment. Mekonnen's direct contributions focus on the African region, where most of the continent reportedly experienced above-normal surface air temperatures last year. North Africa and West Africa experienced

extreme rainfall and flooding, causing numerous deaths, property damage and affected croplands.

Mekonnen, who was nominated by peers and invited to serve as the chapter editor, has been in this role since 2015. He also has served as the scientific coordinator of the Ethiopian Country Study Project (1994–2000), a secretary of the Ethiopian Ozone Secretariat (1996–1998) and has authored and edited the Ethiopian contribution to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1998).

Nearly 530 contributors representing 61 countries participated as authors and editors of the State of the Climate Report. To view the full report, visit the American Meteorological Society website.



PAULA GROVES PRICE, PH.D., has been named dean of the College of Education (CEd). Price formerly served Washington State University in various capacities including associate dean for diversity and international engagement; professor of cultural studies and social thought in education; scholar in residence for the Elson S. Floyd Cultural Center; and associate professor in the Department of Teaching and Learning.

As associate dean, Price coordinated international education partnership with institutions of higher education and K-12 schools and districts in Thailand and Japan. She also led numerous diversity and inclusion initiatives across the university.

A great deal of her research focuses on the foundations of education, African American education, Native American and indigenous education, critical race theory, critical multicultural and anti-racist education and culturally responsive science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Over the course of her career, Price has secured over \$3 million in grants, awards and other funding opportunities, including a \$2.4 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for Indigenous STEM research and worked on a team for a separate NSF grant of \$1.2 million for women in STEM.

Price is president-elect and program chair of the American Educational Studies Association.

HYOSHIN PARK, PH.D., assistant professor in the Department of Computational Data Science and Engineering, and doctoral candidates **LARKIN FOLSOM** and **JUSTICE DARKO** will explore ways to maximize the data collection and possible flight paths in future storms in a project that aims to improve tropical forecasting and modeling by deploying drones to collect data from the eye of hurricanes. The research is supported by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL).

The team will use early measurements from NOAA when the hurricane is forming to determine the storm's wind-field and other important data. They crew will then know the ideal location to drop up to 10 drones, which will communicate with each other and to their base on the plane, effectively collecting as much data as possible.

The research will also help improve public trust in tropical forecasting. The A&T team members are joined by Hui Sui, Ph.D., principal investigator and JPL Engineering and Science Directorate, Stratosphere and Upper Troposphere; Masahiro Ono, Ph.D., JPL research technologist, Robotic Surface Mobility; and Masashi Minamide, Ph.D., assistant professor, University of Tokyo.



MINDY A. SANDERS, an accountant with several years of financial auditing experience in the public and private sectors, has been named director of internal audit, effective Jan. 25.

Sanders, who holds a B.A. in accounting from the University of North Carolina at Asheville, joins North Carolina A&T after more than five years as an assistant state auditor in the North Carolina Office of the State Auditor working out of the Knersville office.

Sanders was previously an audit associate for Rives & Associates, LLP, in Lexington, North Carolina. Her service and accomplishments include a stint as president of the UNC Asheville Accountancy Association and her receipt of the Joye Haynes-Ganger Academic Scholarship at UNC Asheville.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS

TONYA SMITH-JACKSON, PH.D., senior vice provost for academic affairs, received the 2020 Diversity and Inclusion Award from the Industrial Engineering and Operations Management (IEOM) Society International. Smith-Jackson was honored during the fifth North American IEOM Conference that was held virtually from Detroit.

Smith-Jackson was selected in recognition and appreciation of her achievements, contributions, dedication and lifelong achievement in the industrial engineering and operations management profession.

In 2020, Smith-Jackson was one of 17 members appointed to the North Carolina Department of Commerce Board of Science, Technology & Innovation by Gov. Roy Cooper. With a mission to “improve the economic well-being and quality of life of all North Carolinians advancing science, technology and innovation,” the advisory board explores emerging areas for science and technology and analyzes the state’s competitiveness in industry and research institutions compared with peers. N.C. A&T is the only HBCU represented on the board.

In 2018, Smith-Jackson served at the National Science Foundation for a year as program director of the Computer and Information Science and Engineering Directorate in the Cyber-Human Systems Program before returning to A&T in the role of interim director for the Center of Excellence in Cybersecurity, Research, Education and Outreach.

After working briefly in the private sector, Smith-Jackson joined the faculty of Virginia Tech in 1999. Fourteen years later, she joined A&T as professor and chair of the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering, founded



the Human Factors Analytics Laboratory and later founded and co-directed the Cyber-Human Analytics Research for the Internet of Things (IoT) Laboratory.

Smith-Jackson has long demonstrated a commitment to diversity and inclusion, having served as president of community-based organizations focused on social justice for women and people of color. She served as an EEO federal women’s program manager in Germany, as a multicultural fellow at Virginia Tech, and received faculty awards for advancing women and for advocacy for accessibility rights throughout her career. Today she serves as chairwoman of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee of the Institute for Industrial and Systems Engineers.

A Fellow of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, Smith-Jackson’s research focuses on cyber-human systems, cognitive ergonomics, fairness and inclusion in data science, and mixed data modeling to develop systems that empower caregivers, older people and those with disabilities; provide support for security and privacy; and protect the nation’s cyber infrastructure.



COURTNEY THORNTON, ED.D., has been named vice provost for strategic planning and institutional effectiveness, effective March 15. Thornton joins N.C. A&T from North Carolina State University, where she served as associate vice provost for academic personnel and policy since February 2017 and was an adjunct assistant professor since 2009. Her work experiences span K-12 education, private industry and higher education.

With 15 years of increasingly broad experience and responsibility in higher education administration, Thornton has worked in the University of North Carolina System Office, where she began in 2008 as a research director, became associate vice president for research and graduate education in 2012, and served as associate vice president for academic programs from 2016 to 2017. At the system office, Thornton helped secure external funds totaling nearly \$1 million to support strategic initiatives in research and economic development.

Thornton earned her B.A. in chemistry, B.S. in science education with a chemistry concentration, M.Ed. in higher education with a student affairs concentration and Ed.D. in higher education administration, all from N.C. State. Her work on higher education engagement and student civic responsibility is published in numerous peer-reviewed and other articles, book chapters, institutional reports, conference proceedings and other publications, and she has given many peer-reviewed and invited presentations.

Most recently, Thornton has been recognized by the National Professional Science Master’s Association with its President’s Award (2019), the American Association of State Colleges and Universities/Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities Millennium Leadership Initiative Institute (2014) and the State Higher Education Executive Officers Academy for Higher Education State Policy Leadership (2013). She also served as president of the National Professional Science Master’s Association (2017-18) and member of the N.C. Space Grant Consortium Advisory Board (2008-15).

TOBIN WALTON, PH.D., assistant professor of sociology, and **CAREN COOPER, PH.D.**, associate professor, are leading a research team in the College of Health and Human Sciences (CHHS) that won a \$300,000 planning grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to bring citizen science to the N.C. A&T community.

The Institutional and Community Transformation (ICT) project will use social science to engage students, faculty and Greensboro citizens, groups and organizations in identifying, understanding and addressing local social problems. The project seeks to build the capacity for establishing citizen science communities that engage students in meaningful learning experiences in and around the university with the overall goal of creating communities that sustain human health and well-being.

The project will build the capacity of faculty, students and the surrounding communities to engage with and develop interdisciplinary citizen science projects that more fully involve students and other stakeholders in the scientific process. The capacity building efforts in this project will lay the groundwork for a subsequent larger NSF project that will involve the implementation, rigorous assessment and evaluation of these co-created projects on student learning and community health and well-being.

Other members of the CHHS research team are **ADRIENNE AIKEN MORGAN, PH.D.**, assistant professor of psychology; **ANNA LEE, PH.D.**, associate professor of psychology; **ELIMELDA ONGERI, PH.D.**, associate dean for research and innovation; **SHARON PARKER, PH.D.**, associate professor of social work; **KALYNDA SMITH, PH.D.**, assistant professor of psychology; and **STEPHANIE TEIXEIRA-POIT, PH.D.**, assistant professor of sociology.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



JENORA WATERMAN, PH.D., associate professor of functional genomics in the Department of Animal Sciences, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, was N.C. A&T's 2020 honoree for the University of North Carolina Board of Governors (BOG) Award for Excellence in Teaching.

For more than a decade, Waterman has led students and research at North Carolina A&T in animal science, specifically functional genomics. Her

course content and assessments are hinged on building these two skills. For example, her students create original podcasts, participate in Socratic debates, and analyze relevant non-fiction books to critically analyze, communicate their thoughts, and apply information they learn.

Each Excellence in Teaching awardee receives a commemorative bronze medallion and a \$12,500 cash prize.

A study led by **JIANMEI YU, PH.D.**, research associate professor in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, evaluated whether the protease treatment of peanuts will have an impact on the oxidative stability during storage. Yu's previous study showed this treatment was more effective than others in reducing the allergen content of peanuts.

Raw peanuts are usually stable, and oxidation will not occur if stored correctly in the refrigerator. The lower the temperature, the slower the oxidation rate.

Peanuts are roasted to enhance flavor and reduce or eliminate spoilage microorganisms found in raw peanuts. After roasting, however, the peanuts are stored at room temperature and the oxidation rate accelerates. This acceleration reduces the shelf-life of the peanuts.

The research team found the enzymatic treatment, Alcalase, did not accelerate the oxidation process in the peanuts. In other words, this treatment did not affect the shelf-life, but instead increased the antioxidant activity of peanuts, which would contribute to the storage stability.

Overall, this treatment is beneficial for manufacturers and consumers interested in storing peanuts for longer periods of time at room temperature and ensuring that those with peanut allergies will not be seriously affected if accidentally exposed to the snack.

AIXI ZHOU, PH.D., P.E., professor and chairman of the Department of Applied Engineering Technology, was named a 2020 Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) Fellow. Zhou was selected along with only eight other members in recognition of their achievements in the field and outstanding contributions to society. Since its inception in 1950, the international organization has named only 322 fellows out of its 4,700 members.

Along with other contributions to the society, Zhou has served on two SFPE standing committees focused on research, tools and methods and professional qualifications. He has been a member of the society since 2008.

In 2018, Zhou joined the College of Science and Technology as professor and department chairman. In less than two years, he led the department in creating an industrial fire protection course in addition to revamping the curriculum of a former program and renaming it the B.S. in Automotive Engineering Technology program. He established three strategic research labs, as well as the industry oriented mentoring program for students collaborating with the department's industrial advisory board.

According to a 2020 Stanford University study, seven North Carolina A&T faculty members are among the top 2% cited science researchers in the world:

- **YUH-LANG LIN, PH.D.**, senior scientist/professor of physics
- **MANOJ JHA, PH.D.**, associate professor, civil, architectural and environmental engineering
- **YUSUF ADEWUYI, PH.D.**, professor, chemical, biological and bio engineering
- **LIJUN WANG, PH.D.**, professor, natural resources and environmental design
- **NARAYAN BHATTARAI, PH.D.**, professor, chemical, biological and bio engineering
- **SHENGMIN SANG, PH.D.**, research professor, Center for Excellence in Post-Harvest Technologies
- **KUNIGAL SHIVAKUMAR, PH.D.**, professor, mechanical engineering

The researchers' individual foci range from health, food and nutrition innovation, to environmental waste cleanup and repurposing, and clean water.

For example, Bhattarai's research focuses on design and development of health care-biomaterials that mimic the nano- to micro-scale order found in nature. His team works with grants from National Science Foundation, Department of Defense and the National Institutes of Health NSF partnerships

Sang, a pioneer in the food and nutrition sciences field, is studying bioactive compounds in whole grains, ginger, tea, apple, soy and rosemary for the prevention of colon cancer, asthma, diabetes, diabetic complications and obesity. This year, he received a new three-year grant from the novel food and innovative manufacturing technology program under the USDA National Institute of Food and

Agriculture's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, to develop germinated and false-germinated oats as functional foods to prevent inflammation associated chronic diseases. His previous work has yielded multiple patents, one of which is now commercially licensed.

For the past 20 years, Jha has solved current water quality problems and designed ways to manage watersheds by developing and applying various tools and methods.

Shivakumar says that although much of his research has been used in design guidelines and his research concepts have been used in industrial applications, he is pushing for his work to be adapted to solve both environmental and clean water problems, as well as local manufacturing. In 2018 he was featured for his research into making useful materials out of harmful coal ash that was leeching into a local waterway.

In 2020, North Carolina's interior Alexander, Caldwell, Catawba, Iredell and Wilkes counties were flooded from the remnants of Hurricane Eta, while in 2019 the coast community of Ocracoke was flooded from Hurricane Dorian. Lin's work on mesoscale dynamics and modeling are well received and quoted due to their help in understanding the dynamics and improving forecasting of severe local storms, tropical and extratropical cyclones, especially when they encountered orography.

That these researchers are so frequently cited globally is a testament to the strength of the ongoing research at N.C. A&T and its future capabilities. From health to environment to weather, faculty research at the university covers society's most pressing topics.

STUDENTS



JANEÉ BURCH was awarded a \$10,000 Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCOAB) Scholarship for the 2020-21 academic year. Burch is an accounting major who is also studying applied mathematics. This past summer she participated in four weeks of virtual training as an Embark Scholar while interning with KPMG in Greensboro.

Burch is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, Beta Alpha Psi and Beta Gamma Sigma honor societies, she is a volunteer tutor for the accounting program and is active in the University Honors Program. After earning her B.S. in accounting, Burch plans to pursue her Master of Accountancy at N.C. A&T and pass both the CMA and CPA exams.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 requires that monetary penalties imposed by the PCAOB in its disciplinary proceedings be used to fund a merit scholarship program for students in accredited accounting degree programs. The scholarship can be used to pay tuition and fees necessary for enrollment or attendance at the institution, as well as required fees, books, supplies and equipment for courses. It is awarded through the PCAOB Scholars Program, which seeks to benefit students who are likely to become auditors and to make a difference to students who might otherwise choose a different career path.

Participating educational institutions select PCAOB Scholar nominees from students enrolled in their accounting degree programs. Eligible students must demonstrate an interest and aptitude in accounting and auditing, as evidenced by an overall GPA of 3.3 or higher or being in the top one-third of their overall class, among other criteria.

BRENDA CALDWELL and **JOANNA MARTINEZ** participated in the 2020 Public Policy and International Affairs (PPIA) Junior Summer Institute—the first time two Aggies were chosen for the program in the same year.

Caldwell, political science major and president of the N.C. A&T Student Government Association (2020–21), attended the summer 2020 program at the Heinz College of Information Systems and Public Policy at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

During the 2019–2020 academic year (AY), Caldwell was attorney general of the SGA and worked to increase voter engagement by leading registration drives and requesting the restoration of an early polling site on campus for the 2020 elections. She plans to earn an M.S. and a J.D. in

public policy as she works to improve political engagement among young Americans and marginalized groups.

Martinez, history major, attended the summer 2020 program at the Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota. While serving as vice president of History Scholars in AY 2019–2020, Martinez also served as an ambassador for the A&T Census Committee and the University Honors Program, and she participated in the “People, Not Property: Slave Deeds of North Carolina” project. After graduating from A&T, she plans to complete fellowships and earn a law school degree to work in public interest law, helping to craft policies that help marginalized populations.

Now in its 40th year, PPIA is a not-for-profit that supports efforts to

increase diversity in public service. It focuses on students from groups who are underrepresented in leadership positions in government, nonprofits, international organizations and other institutional settings, recognizing that international affairs are increasingly mixed with local concerns. The Junior Summer Institute is a seven-week fully funded fellowship program that provides student training and financial support for graduate school and facilitates ongoing professional development with classes and co-curricular activities that are structured to introduce or strengthen skills in economics, statistics, policy analysis, writing and public speaking. Among the benefits are GRE preparation assistance and career guidance coaching, along with a stipend of up to \$1,500.

The College of Science and Technology (CoST) selected 26 incoming freshmen to join the second cohort of SciTech Scholars for the 2020-21 academic school year.

The SciTech Scholars Enrichment Program provides two-year renewable merit- and need-based scholarships to high school seniors who plan to study chemistry, physics, mathematics or electronics technology. The program aims to increase the inclusion of underrepresented

students in these areas and ensure success through academic and professional programming, including participation in a one-week summer bridge program, a residential learning community and workshops throughout the school year.

This year’s scholars have an average cumulative GPA of 3.82 and an average math SAT score of 583. They are **LEXINIA ABONZA, JAELYNN ALLEN-SCOTT, S’KHAJA CHARLES, OMAR COUCH, ZOE DIXON, ALEXIS GILLIARD, JOSHUA HARGROVE,**

MARQUISE HARGROVE, TY’ASIA HOLLOMAN, BREON ISHMAEL, CIARA JONES, VANESSA JONES, JACOB LITTLE, KHADEJA LITTLE, EDWARD LOCKLEAR, JAKAYLA MCCREE, BRIANNA MCCULLOUGH, DALE MORGAN, JUSTIN MUCKELVENE, ZION PARKER, JONATHAN ROYAL, ERICA SCOTT, HARVEY STALEY, JOY THOMPSON, KAI WARD and BENJAMIN WOODS.

Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering doctoral student **KENDALL DAWKINS** received the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University Chancellor’s Distinguished Fellowship.

The fellowship aims to increase the number of native Black Americans earning Ph.D. degrees in STEM disciplines at the university. It comes with a \$30,000 award for an academic year and can be renewed for up to four years.

Dawkins earned a bachelor’s degree in physics at the University of Maryland-Baltimore County as a Meyerhoff Scholar. His current research is focused on determining the optimal way to increase absorption of light using nanowires in solar cells through simulation techniques to see how efficient they can be. His Ph.D. studies will expand this research by fabricating photodiodes, photodetectors and potentially solar cells and comparing them with his simulation findings.

Established in the mid-1990s, the Chancellor’s Distinguished Fellowship is funded through a Title III HBGI grant from the U.S. Department of Education and has supported nearly 200 students.

DEJA MAYFIELD, journalism and mass communications student, and **LOVE CAESAR**, political science and history, competed in the #MakeNCCount video competition, sponsored by NC College Compact and NC Counts Coalition. The pair won first and second place, respectively, in the informational category.

Each video begins with a man-on-the-street interview approach, asking Aggies what they knew about the Census as they passed through the Student Center. After a few incorrect answers, Mayfield and Caesar include information that help clear up any misconceptions.

Minorities, immigrants and families without internet access have been identified as some of the populations most at risk of being undercounted. Residents have the option of completing the census by mail, phone or online. Universities, however, will count their students who live on campus. Off-campus students should coordinate with roommates to complete one Census form, counting everyone in that household.

As part of her census fellowship Caesar, who also volunteers on the Complete Count Committee for Guilford County, which is one of 11 counties identified by the NC Counts Coalition as having the lowest participation rate in the state, hosted a virtual event to engage college students on voting and the census.

STUDENTS



In July, **JEFF ROBERTSON II**, a doctoral student in the leadership studies program, joined Majestic Kitchen & Bath Creations Inc. as vice president of manufacturing for the company's Youngsville, North Carolina facility. He will lead Majestic's initiatives to optimize precision, production and first-time right performance standards.

Robertson joined Majestic from GE Aviation. Earlier in his career, Robertson served on active duty in several leadership positions as a member of the United States Army Special Forces Regiment and is currently serving in the North Carolina Army National Guard at the rank of major. He received an MBA from Liberty University, a B.S. in industrial engineering from Clemson University.

Graduate student **PATRICK STANLEY** was accepted as a Transportation Review Board (TRB) Minority Student Fellow for 2021. Stanley is pursuing an MBA with a supply chain management concentration in N.C. A&T's Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics.

As part of the fellowship, Stanley will write and submit a research paper on the trucking industry and changes in the hours of service (HOS) standards during the COVID-19 pandemic. He intends to analyze commercial vehicle accident data from trucking capacity statistics recorded on government sites and in articles written during the COVID-19 pandemic and compare the information with data from periods of standard operations.

TRB Minority Student Fellowships are for juniors, seniors and graduate students who are pursuing transportation-related degrees and who plan to enter the transportation profession upon completing their education. Each university uses its own selection process in deciding which students to send as TRB Minority Student Fellows.

Stanley received his B.S. in supply chain management from N.C. A&T in 2019.

Thirteen North Carolina A&T students were selected as 2020-21 Woodland Hall Graduate Fellows. The fellowship cohort comprises new master's and doctoral students who have proven their commitment toward excellence in scholarship and leadership.

Chosen from over 80 applicants, the fellows are **LARRY BARNES, LANISHIA BOYD, SHAKIRA COHEN, KEVIN COOGAN, ALEXIS COOPER, SIERRA DIXON, LYNEISHA DUKES, PRESTON ELLISON, KATRINA FUTRELL, KATIE HOWARD, CHLOE LEAVINGS, NIAH SINGLETARY** and **SIDNEY WALKER**.

Each fellow will receive a one-year award that includes a stipend (\$18,000 for doctoral and \$13,500 for master's), full tuition support and coverage of student fees and health insurance.

The fellowship is named in honor of alumnus Woodland Ellroy Hall, who received the first conferred graduate degree from North Carolina A&T in 1941. Hall received his first (he also obtained a second) master's degree in Agricultural Education. His thesis was aptly titled, "A Study of the Needs in Vocational Agricultural Education of Negroes in Gates County, North Carolina."

In addition to the fellowship and program awards, the fellows will participate in the Society of Woodland E. Hall Fellows, a collaborative, interdisciplinary organization that fosters networking, partnership and academic support among past and present fellowship recipients. The society endeavors to increase career readiness and job placement of graduates by providing opportunities to enrich their resumes and CVs with transferable skills and professionalism.

AMANDA GRAY, ALIYAH MCCRAY, FELICIA PARK, MILES STATON and **ERICA THOMPSON** received grants totaling \$34,500 from the Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program (DDETFP). The funds will provide 2020-21 academic school year tuition assistance, a stipend and expenses for the 100th Transportation Research Board's annual meeting.

Gray, McCray, Park and Staton are supply chain management students in the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics, while Thompson is a civil engineering student in the College of Engineering.

The DDETFP local competition is designed to stimulate interest among students attending a minority-serving institution of higher education or community college to conduct transportation-related research, pursue transportation-related degrees, enter the transportation workforce and enhance the breadth, scope and diversity of knowledge of the entire transportation community in the United States. It provides funds for students to pursue associate, bachelor, master and doctoral degrees in transportation-related fields. The awards are given on the basis of merit considering academic records, class standing, GPA, transcripts, transportation work experience and personal recommendations.

The awards were procured under the recommendation of N.C. A&T Transportation Institute and Center for Advanced Transportation Mobility (CATM) Director Maranda McBride, Ph.D., and Education and Workforce Program Manager Teresa McRae.

Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics students—**KIANA WILLIAMS**, who is studying supply chain management, and **PATRICK STANLEY**, who is pursuing an MBA with a supply chain management concentration—presented their research during the Southeast Regional University Transportation Center (UTC) Conference hosted by Florida Atlantic University. They were selected to present their research by the UTC conference board from among 40 submissions representing member universities throughout the Southeast Region.

Williams was awarded first place for her presentation, "The Future of Mobility: Automation," in the Connected and Automated Vehicles session of the UTC Student Spotlight: Virtual Conference. Her research, conducted in 2019, examined autonomous vehicles' impact on the transportation industry. After analyzing a U.S. Department of Transportation study that tested the capability of autonomous vehicles versus human-operated vehicles to prevent traffic collisions, she concluded that although autonomous vehicles present valid safety and liability concerns, they are capable of reducing collisions.

Stanley presented "Detention, Hours of Service, and Supply Chain Management," based on his research as Transportation Review Board (TRB) Minority Student Fellow for 2021 during the conference's Freight and Logistics session. He is analyzing commercial vehicle accident data from trucking capacity statistics recorded on government sites and in articles written during the COVID-19 pandemic, comparing the information with data from periods of standard operations. He presented his research paper again at the 100th annual TRB meeting, which took place virtually in January 2021.



N.C. A&T RECEIVES MEAC’S 2019–20 APR AWARD

North Carolina A&T was awarded the 2019–20 Academic Performance Rate (APR) award, the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) office announced in June.

“The ultimate goal is to develop and graduate our student-athletes. Congratulations to North Carolina A&T State University, including Chancellor Dr. Harold L. Martin, Sr., Director of Athletics Earl M. Hilton III and the administrators, coaches, student-athletes and support staff for winning the Academic Performance Rate award,” said MEAC Commissioner Dr. Dennis E. Thomas.

N.C. A&T was honored academically for the second straight year, posting the MEAC’s highest APR over the past four academic years. The A&T Department of Athletics will receive \$25,000 from the conference.

The MEAC did not name Talmadge Layman Hill or Mary McLeod Bethune All-Sports Award winners for 2019–20, due to the suspension of winter championships and spring sports because of the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The MEAC completed its 49th year of intercollegiate competition with the 2019–20 academic school year. Located in Norfolk, Virginia, the conference is comprised of 11 historically black institutions across the Atlantic coastline: Bethune-Cookman University, Coppin State University, Delaware State University, Florida A&M University, Howard University, University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Morgan State University, Norfolk State University, North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina Central University and South Carolina State University.

BOWLING



TERRELL-KEARNEY HAS FIRSTS

North Carolina A&T women’s bowling head coach **KIM TERRELL-KEARNEY** made history in 2020.

First, she became the first female to coach an all-female team in the Professional Bowlers Association (PBA). Second, her team, the Phoenix Fury, recorded the first win ever in the league by an all-female team.

Terrell-Kearney is staying busy. On top of coaching the Aggies and a PBA team, she was named an assistant coach for Team USA earlier this year.

The collegiate team Terrell-Kearney coaches was excited to see their coach making history. Cameron Strombeck, the 2021 MEAC preseason bowler, called Terrell-Kearney’s actions inspirational.

“Seeing a team full of female bowlers compete against the men was super cool,” said Strombeck. “It showed us (as a team) if you can bowl than you can bowl, it doesn’t matter that you’re female.”

Strombeck and her teammates watched the tournament together through instant messaging because they were not together because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“To even hear the commentators say that coach Kearney’s team should not be underestimated because they’re super talented shows you there is a future for women in bowling. It is no longer just dominated by the men.”

On June 23, the PBA announced two new professional bowling teams that would be comprised of all women. Those teams will join the race for the 2020 PBA League Elias Cup, the association’s top team championship.

Terrell-Kearney said it was a privilege to be one of the first female coaches and the first female coach of a female team.

“The women get a chance to compete with the men, the best in the world, and see where we stack up. We have five girls that believe that they can win. Our goal is to win.”

The Fury and Miami Waves are the first two teams made up of all women in PBA history that dates back to 2013.

The PBA consists of 12 teams split into two divisions. The Fury is in the Carter Division along with Dallas Strikers, Philadelphia Hitmen, Brooklyn Styles, Silver Lake Atom Splitters and Las Vegas High Rollers. On July 7, the

Fury and the Waves each drafted five women for the competition.

The top 35 eligible players based on the 2019 Women’s PBA points list were eligible to be drafted. Three women have been on previous team rosters that consisted of mostly men before this season.

With the luck of the coin, Terrell-Kearney received the first pick. Because of the talented pool, either she nor Waves coach Bob Learn Jr. drafted outside of the top 10.

The five women Terrell-Kearney drafted were all familiar to her. They either bowled against Terrell-Kearney as an opposing coach or when she was an assistant coach for Team USA from 2009–13.

Terrell-Kearney and the Fury made PBA League history as the first women’s team to win a match in the league.

Tom Clark, the PBA commissioner, gave his assessment of Terrell-Kearney’s team.

“O’Keefe won so many PWBA Tour titles in 2019 (five) that she should probably be named the 2020 PWBA Player of the Year despite the cancelation of the season,” said Clark. “Add all-time legend (and 10-time major champion) Liz Johnson, 2018 PWBA Rookie of the Year Jordan Richard, two multi-time PWBA Tour champions Stefanie Johnson and Maria Jose Rodriguez, and this team could find itself hoisting the Elias Cup in its first season.”

Phoenix entered the tournament as the No. 6 seed in the Carter Division and defeated the third-seed Silver Lake 2-1. The Fury won their first game, 243-214, but lost the second game, 216-212. In the sudden-death roll, Rodriguez secured the win with a strike after the Atom Splitters left a 10-pin standing.

ATHLETICS

FOOTBALL

AGGIES VS. EAGLES: THE CLASSIC CONTINUES



The North Carolina A&T and North Carolina Central football series will continue over the next 10 seasons, the two schools announced Dec. 17, 2020.

Starting this fall, the agreement calls for both schools to play each year until 2030. The Aggies and Eagles have been playing each other since 1924, with the Aggies leading the all-time series 52-34-5.

During both teams’ recent run in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC), the game routinely had championship and postseason implications and was played in front of sellout crowds.

Before this announcement, the Aggies’ move from the MEAC to the Big South in the fall (2021) left the rivalry’s future in doubt.

“I know there have been some concerns about whether this great tradition of North Carolina A&T meeting North Carolina Central on the gridiron would continue with our move to a new conference this fall,” said N.C. A&T Director of Athletics Earl Hilton. “I am glad to say that tradition is going nowhere. Our fans look forward to this game each year. Aggies have a lot of friends and family who are Eagles and Eagles have a lot of friends and family who are Aggies. It is truly a family feud.”

The home team will alternate each year, starting with the 2021 game in Greensboro.

Future N.C. A&T vs. NCCU Football Games
(Host Institution)

- **Sept. 25, 2021 (N.C. A&T)**
- **Sept. 3, 2022 (NCCU)**
- **Sept. 9, 2023 (N.C. A&T)**
- **Sept. 21, 2024 (NCCU)**
- **Sept. 20, 2025 (N.C. A&T)**
- **Sept. 12, 2026 (NCCU)**
- **Sept. 4, 2027 (N.C. A&T)**
- **Sept. 2, 2028 (NCCU)**
- **Sept. 1, 2029 (N.C. A&T)**
- **Aug. 31, 2030 (NCCU)**



CAMPBELL CHOSEN FOR NFL FORUM

Assistant athletics director for equipment, **KATRINA CAMPBELL**, was selected as one of the panelists for the historically Black college or university (HBCU) Careers in Football Forum (CFF), hosted by the NFL.

The forum took place Dec. 10, 2020, and consisted of a 30-minute, moderator-led Q&A session followed by a 10-minute student Q&A.

“Personally, to be selected validates my voice and knowledge as being important and necessary,” said Campbell. “It means that I am in the right place to be able to help others. Professionally, to be selected means that my work and work ethic are speaking for themselves. Any and everything I do I put forth my best effort. If my name is attached, I want to make sure it is right!”

Campbell is the only female head equipment manager in the MEAC, and she was also the only equipment manager on this year’s CFF panel. Breaking barriers is nothing new for Campbell.

After graduating from N.C. A&T in 2004 with a Bachelor of Science degree in physical education/fitness and wellness, she served in the Air Force before being medically retired at the rank of captain. Even further, she is an eight-year breast cancer survivor.

“To represent my alma mater to the NFL and a national HBCU event is remarkable,” said Campbell. “This was a chance for me to give back to the university by representing it in a positive and professional light. HBCUs are more than a place of higher education; they are home, they are family, they are an opportunity, they are vital!”

I have gained so much from my alma mater and I was proud to be able to represent North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University.”

Campbell handles the equipment operations and contracts for 17 Division I men’s and women’s sports. She has the responsibility of ensuring all athletics uniforms and apparel for A&T is designed according to conference, university and NCAA rules, as well as proper sizing and fitting techniques to outfit the athletes appropriately and safely.

Her responsibility on the panel was to provide her insights and experiences from her point of view with the assistance of a moderator to help provide a smooth and informative discussion. Topics discussed included: recommendations for internships to take part in while in school and advice to students looking to be involved in college athletics. Campbell got to speak to and encourage the students and give them some insight as to what it is actually like being in college athletics and what it takes to get there.

“Being the only equipment manager on the panel, and the entire forum, was a blessing,” said Campbell. “So often, athletic equipment contributions are rarely recognized. I’ve had moments when student equipment managers were disappointed when equipment is not highlighted like other fields. I encourage equipment managers to always put forth their best effort and know that their work is extremely important. This was an opportunity to represent athletic equipment in a positive light and encourage them to continue towards their goals.”

BASKETBALL

DORSETT PROMOTED



AHMAD DORSETT has been promoted to associate head coach for men’s basketball. Dorsett has played an integral role on the men’s basketball coaching staff since 2018.

“This promotion means a lot to me,” said Dorsett. “I am very blessed and thankful to head coach Will Jones and athletics director Earl

Hilton for the opportunity to be a part of a tremendous institution here at North Carolina A&T.”

Dorsett was recently recognized as one of the top assistant coaches in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) by Jeff Goodman (Stadium).

“Coach Dorsett brings it every day,” said Jones. “He has had success and is one of the best assistants in the country. I appreciate what he has done for our program. He has earned the promotion.”

Prior to his successes at A&T, Dorsett was hanging banners as an assistant at High Point University, where he spent seven seasons. During that time, he aided in four Big South Conference regular-season championships and four postseason berths including the first regular-season championship and a postseason berth in the Panther’s Division I history in 2012-13.

With A&T’s move to the Big South approaching, Dorsett’s successes in the conference could prove to be advantageous for the Aggies.

“I am very knowledgeable on what it takes and what type of recruiting that needs to be done so we are successful in that league,” Dorsett said about the Big South.

One major change Dorsett brought to light between the MEAC and the Big South is the travel between teams and the fact that unlike in the MEAC, when the Aggies move to the Big South, there will no longer be men’s and women’s basketball doubleheaders.

“The biggest difference we will see as a program with travel will benefit us because it will lessen the distance we have to travel and the time we will have to prepare on the day of games not having doubleheaders,” said Dorsett.

Dorsett was recently recognized as one of the top assistant coaches in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC)

With this recent promotion and the imminent move to the Big South looming, Dorsett still has goals he wants to accomplish down the road.

“My goal is to ultimately lead my own Division I program,” said Dorsett. “This is another positive step in that direction. To have the trust of coach Jones ... is huge for my growth, so I will be well-prepared when the opportunity arises.”



TENNIS

U.S. EMBASSY DOESN’T DETER PLAYER’S DREAM

By Marlene Estenssoro Pineda, Student-Athlete

FLORIELVIS HURTADO never gave up her dream of coming to North Carolina A&T.

Hurtado has been playing tennis since she was 8 years old. She started playing in connection with her physical health, as she struggled with easily gaining weight from a young age. Because of that, her parents made the decision to get her involved in a sport and she chose tennis.

What made her come to N.C. A&T?

Hurtado’s native country of Venezuela is experiencing tough economic times, which is why Hurtado and many others leave in search of a better future in other countries.

During her senior year of high school at Unidad Educativa Colegio Yacambú, she began looking for universities in the United States.

“I found A&T because one of my friends from Venezuela recommended it to me. She also helped me get in touch with the women’s and men’s tennis coach, William Crutchfield,” said Hurtado.

The acceptance process is longer for international students. Depending on the school, they must take two or three standardized exams: SAT or ACT and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). International students who do not pass the TOEFL cannot enroll in many English-speaking institutions.

Everything seemed perfect: Hurtado graduated with honors and she won the state, regional and national tournaments in singles before coming to A&T. She passed the



admission exams and all she needed was to process her visa. The U.S. Embassy in Venezuela was closed, so Hurtado traveled to Colombia to process the document. The embassy in Colombia denied her visa.

Hurtado’s teammates and coaches were not expecting that to happen—a student athlete with good academic grades who was well known for her state and country and, most importantly, a girl who had just been offered a full ride. She never understood the reason for the denial.

“I remember all my teammates from A&T texting me they were happy for me to join the team. Even though they knew about what happened with my visa, they kept telling me to not give up. I cried every day but what kept me motivated was all the emotional support that my teammates and coaches gave me,” said Hurtado.

Due to all the support that she received from her teammates and coaches, Hurtado decided to process

her visa a second time. In December 2019, her visa was accepted and the dream of leaving her country in pursuit of a better lifestyle came true.

It should be noted that Hurtado played a good role in the season of 2020 without having trained with the team before. She won three of her doubles matches and was just one point away from winning her first college match against Crystal Nzewi from Longwood University.

“I just want to say that there’s nothing harder than seeing your future destroyed in just a minute. The day that my visa got accepted, I got down on my knees and started crying and praying to God for giving me this opportunity and the strength not to give up and move on. Every day I feel without encouragement to do anything I remember that moment and tell myself that I must do my best all the time. And that is what an Aggie does, isn’t it?

TRACK AND FIELD

O L Y M P I C

HOPE
FULS

By Brian M. Holloway '97

Last March, inside the Albuquerque Convention Center in the high-altitude state of New Mexico, North Carolina A&T track star **TREVOR STEWART** took his extra-large hands and wrapped them securely around a small inhaler, placed it inside his nostril and breathed in gently. Then he placed the inhaler inside his other nostril and repeated the routine.

Stewart was preparing to compete in the 2020 NCAA Indoor Track and Field Championships. Along with Stewart, eight other Aggies were competing for individual, relay and a team national championship.

The inhaler is for Stewart's asthma, a condition the then 23-year-old has had since he was a child. To combat a condition that makes it difficult to breathe at times and can cause awful coughing episodes, Stewart has participated in karate, track and field and practiced discipline.

He has mastered asthma to the point where he was the NCAA runner-up in the 400 meters in 2019. But as he inhaled in New Mexico, there were rumors and whispers throughout the convention center of the national meet being canceled. The novel coronavirus (COVID-19), a respiratory ailment, was developing into a pandemic and it was already starting to impact the sports world from the NBA to collegiate conference basketball tournaments. It eventually canceled March Madness, the annual NCAA Division I men's college basketball tournament that generates billions of dollars.

While the NCAA basketball tournament is a lengthy three weeks, the NCAA indoors only last three days. Perhaps the brevity of the event will give the Aggies a chance to compete for individual, relay and team national championships.



"Something felt off," said Stewart about the NCAA indoor nationals. "The atmosphere felt off. Normally it's easy to focus on the task ahead, but there was just so much uncertainty all around us."

Stewart continued to stretch and take whiffs of his inhaler as he learned of teams leaving Albuquerque to return home. After stretching, he does a few laps around the track. Something is not right.

"Do you think they are going to send us home," Stewart remembers asking Quincy Hall, a competitor from the University of South Carolina?

His question is soon answered. Yes.

Word spreads that the NCAA has canceled its indoor championship, decision that ended the indoor collegiate careers of seniors like Stewart and his teammates such as **AKEEM SIRLEAF** and **MADELEINE AKOBUNDU**. They will never have a chance to compete for another NCAA indoor championship.

"I will be coming back to (NCAA indoor championships) and of course I have been there before," said Duane Ross, the Aggies director of track and field programs. "But for the seniors, they will never be able to duplicate 2020 no matter how well they do in their careers."

Whereas asthma could not stop Stewart from becoming one of the best 400m runners in the world, there was no amount of karate or discipline slowing down COVID-19.

In a matter of days, the NCAA canceled the 2020 outdoor track and field season. In the latter weeks of May, the 2020 Tokyo Olympics were postponed until 2021. The decision made by Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the International Olympic Committee forced N.C. A&T track and field superstars such as **CHRISTOPHER BELCHER**, **RODNEY ROWE** and national champion KAYLA WHITE to put their dreams on hold.

Current student-athletes like Stewart, Akobundu and sprinters Sirleaf, **CAMBREA STURGIS** and **RANDOLPH ROSS** to do the same.

"I try not to think about what could have been because that just opens up a whole lot of (wounds)," said Akobundu about the cancellation of the NCAA indoor championships. "We were ready, and we definitely had the team to make some noise. Being there for the last time, being so close to it and having it snatched away from you, it hurts."



***Pictured top to bottom:
Randolph Ross (left), Akeem Sirleaf
and Madeleine Akobundu***

When the pandemic first started, Stewart thought perhaps they could wait it out over some time before getting back to work.

“I’m thinking they will delay the outdoor season two to three weeks and then we’d jump back in it,” said Stewart. After all, the Virginia native had dedicated his life to track and field.

“In high school, it was indoor season, outdoor season and then New Balance (outdoor nationals). I’ve been training all that time for an opportunity to compete in the Olympics. It left me wondering, what happens now?”

Deaths, cases and uncertainty are what COVID-19 has introduced to the world. Multiple conferences across the nation canceled or postponed their fall seasons. The hope is an indoor season this winter followed by an outdoor season and then the Tokyo Olympics.

“We can sit here and keep crying, ‘Woe is me,’ or we can use this (time) to our advantage,” said Ross. “We can rest up and let our bodies heal. We can come up with a better training regimen that deals with the excess time we have to get ready. We can’t dwell on not having the 2020 Olympics too much. It’s a year later, so let’s make the best of it.”

That is the attitude of Sirleaf, who qualified for the Tokyo Olympics in July 2019 for the country of Liberia. The Ivory Coast native lived in Liberia from birth until age 5 before moving to Minnesota.



The 2019 outdoor season was tremendous for Sirleaf after he ran a personal record 10.55 in the 100m and a personal record 20.37 in the 200m. Both those times earned him a spot on the Liberian Olympic team. He also advanced to NCAA nationals in three different events including the 400m, the 4x100 and the 4x400.

But the 2020 indoor season did not go as well, as Sirleaf spent most of the 2020 indoor season injured. He made it to NCAA nationals as a member of the 4x400 team, but he was not having the season he wanted because of the injury. However, those multiple cancellations may turn out to be positive for him.

“COVID is difficult, but it might be a blessing in disguise,” said Sirleaf. “I don’t think I could have competed to the best of my ability because I was hurt.”

Sirleaf said at the time he qualified for the Olympics he was in the best shape of his career. With the injury, he had second thoughts about whether he was good enough to compete in the Olympics.

“I was doing everything right, but I still got injured,” he said. “I was stretching, eating right and getting eight hours of sleep, but my body wasn’t recovering like it usually does. Looking back on it, I’m glad we’re getting this time off because I get to refocus my mind and body to get ready for this upcoming season.”

For seniors like Stewart, Akobundu and Sirleaf, time is an issue when it comes to collegiate action. Young superstars like Ross, a freshman out of Garner, North Carolina, and rising junior Cambrea, their legacies are still being written.

Ross had a tremendous career debut. He went to the NCAA indoor nationals with the second-fastest time in the nation in the 400m. He also had a chance to win a national title in the 4x400 relay after the team recorded the second-fastest time in the nation at the University of Arkansas in February 2020.

After competing at the NCAA indoor nationals, Ross was looking forward to his first outdoor season, hitting the mark to make Olympic Trials and perhaps winning MEAC and national titles. The coronavirus halted what appeared to be the best freshman season in school history.

“I still feel like I’m going to compete on a lot of big stages after this (virus) is over,” said Ross.

Still, Ross can only imagine what it would have been like to see the Aggies compete for a national title with the amount of talent they sent to New Mexico.

“Not competing at indoor was like having the best thing that ever happened to you in life taken away in a

matter of seconds. It’s not something you can describe. It happened so fast. You’re reminded of what you missed out on every time you go into the office and see all those NCAA trophies from previous years. But it’s not completely a bad thing. (The time off) is allowing your body to recover and rest.”

Sturgis, who went into the NCAA indoor nationals ranked second in the nation in the 60m and ninth in the nation in the 200m, agrees the rest and recovery have been good, but the pandemic has wreaked havoc on motivation.

“It was tough at first because there was no outdoor, there was no Olympics. There was nothing to look forward to,” said Sturgis. “There was no one around to say you’ve got weights, you’ve got practice or you’ve got meetings. There was no Coach (Randolph) Ross around to keep you motivated.”

But now Sturgis and the others see hope on the horizon.

The Olympics are still a possibility in 2021. Ross will be training his athletes toward making the Olympic trials with the hope that if they are hitting Olympic Trial marks, the school meets will take care of themselves. In the meantime, it’s just a matter of getting back to work.

“With Coach Ross as our coach, getting back into shape is not a worry,” said Akobundu. “Every summer we come back not in the best shape and then coach gets us, and all of sudden we’re back in shape.”

Stewart says he is doing abdominal workouts throughout the day and lifting 50-pound bags of clothes for conditioning until the team gets back on campus. His asthma pump is on the shelf for now, but he may soon have to pull it out again because his coach has a message for him and all the Aggie Olympic hopefuls.

“Take care of your bodies,” said Coach Ross, a former Olympian. “I struggle with my student-athletes sometimes because of what they are putting in their bodies. Our society is based on getting everything quick, grabbing a hamburger instead of making the meal yourself.

“You can’t train and compete at the Olympic level unless you’re taking your craft seriously. When you show up at the Olympic Trials, the competition you’re facing is doing it for a living. They’re doing it to pay their mortgage and take care of their families. That’s the type of motivation you’re facing, so you better have your mind right and your body right.”



VOLLEYBALL

PANDEMIC HALTS TEAM’S TRAVEL TO ITALY

The North Carolina A&T volleyball team was set to travel to Italy in March 2020, to visit historic cities such as Milan, Pisa, Florence and Rome. Those plans came to a sudden halt when university officials stopped all international travel because of the deadly novel coronavirus virus (COVID-19) that would eventually take more than 200,000 American lives.

Each player was sent back to their respective hometowns as they lamented on the cancellation of a dream trip. The players’ and coaches’ efforts of fundraising, practicing and preparing for the trip left everyone involved with the program disappointed.

“It’s one of those opportunities that don’t come along very often,” said N.C. A&T head volleyball coach Hal Clifton. “For them to have that experiment

and be able to visit another country and immerse themselves into another culture for a week, I was excited to share that with them.

“It’s extremely disappointing to know they won’t be able to experience that. When you have the excitement building up for over a year and everything comes crashing down, it’s pretty hard for everyone.”

At the outset of the pandemic, Italy was one of the hardest-hit countries in the world. By the end of March, Italy had more than 105,000 cases of the virus.

While saddened by the university’s decision, there was a wide range of understanding as to why the decision had to be made. Like other schools across the country, N.C. A&T canceled the remainder of the 2020 spring semester.

“We had to go with the flow and whatever life gave us we had to take it and make something out of it,” said senior setter Edie Brewer, the reigning co-Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) player of the year.

Brewer, who was also a first-team All-MEAC selection in 2019, said she found a way to fill the time away from the court and classroom.

“I was able to spend three months with my (three) sisters and dad. My mom lives in Vegas, so I wasn’t able to see her. Being with all of them was super cool since we all live across the country.”

For the Aggies’ other first-team All-MEAC honoree, senior Courteney Pitt, the idea of not going to Italy was one thing. The idea of not having a season in the fall was another.

“For me, it did not hit me at first that we possibly wouldn’t have a season,”

said Pitt, who came into 2020 with a chance to become the Aggies all-time kills leader.

She may still have a chance to make program history. There is a chance the Aggies will participate in the MEAC’s 2021 spring schedule. There is also a chance the NCAA will give volleyball players an extra year of eligibility for the spring.

Months after hearing their trip to Italy was canceled, the Aggies are back to work in Moore Gym. They are not going to let the trip cancellation stop their drive and determination to get better. They’re going to use the fall to train, workout and rest.

Even though this was not what the team or coaches expected, they are happy to be able to be back in school and practicing with one another. Yet, the team realizes COVID is still an issue. Junior first-year transfer student Amelie Rupertova, a Czech Republic

native, gave insight on the traveling restrictions that hindered her from arriving at the university early.

“I was able to go home, but I had to quarantine for 14 days before I was able to spend time with my family and enjoy myself there,” said Rupertova. “But I did not know if COVID would allow me to be able to come here. We did home workouts and prepared ourselves for if we could come. A few days before classes started, I got the news that I would be able to come to the United States. I had to adjust to things superfast when I got here.”

While they wait for the spring season, the Aggies are taking safety precautions during this time of COVID to prevent any more disappointment in the future.

SENIOR
MOMENTS



North Carolina A&T athletics entered its final season in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) before heading to the Big South Conference for the 2021-22 season.

While senior student-athletes are expected to finish their careers in the MEAC, the National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) determined at the end of August to allow the opportunity for student-athletes to return for another season for the fall sports that includes cross country, volleyball and football.

Volleyball seniors **EDIE BREWER** and **COURTENAY PITT** were looking to finish the season by the end of 2020, but the MEAC decided to postpone the fall season to the spring season.

The decision to repeat their senior season is a difficult one. After graduating by the summer in 2021, the duo will need to enroll in graduate school before playing in the fall of 2021.

"Originally, before corona, I was going to take the second semester off and go to grad school, probably closer to

home to save money and take care of my mom," Pitt said. "But now that I have another year, I have no idea."

Pitt finds herself 26 kills short of 1,000 career kills, a feat that only two Aggies have accomplished. The Farmville, North Carolina, native is coming off her best season with 383 kills, which ranked seventh in school history for a single season. She also recorded 32 kills against Western Carolina last season, the second most in school history.

Brewer was named the 2019 MEAC Co-Player of the Year at the end of last season after recording eight triple-doubles, the second most in the NCAA, and starts this spring season as the MEAC Preseason Player of the Year.

The West Chester, Ohio, native ranks in the top-10 five categories in school history in her career. The right sider hitter and setter ranks 4th in assists, 243 assists to move into 2nd place and ranks 10th in kills with 626. She also ranks 7th with 146 block assists, 9th with 680 digs ad 7th with 109 service aces.

As Brewer looks forward to graduating this summer, she has to decide whether to come back for another year and enroll in graduate school.



"I've learned not to take any moment for granted," Brewer said. "I'm grateful to be practicing in the gym with my friends. I love A&T. I love our coaches and my teammates. If we get a chance to play, then great. You can't expect anything these days, so I just take it day by day."

As of this writing, the Aggies are set to start the MEAC schedule on Sunday, Jan. 31, facing the three teams in the Southern Division—North Carolina Central, Florida A&M and South Carolina State—before having a chance to play in the MEAC Championship, April 2-3. The top two teams in each division will have the opportunity to play in the championship.

AVERY COUNTY GROWERS NAMED 2020 NORTH CAROLINA SMALL FARMERS OF THE YEAR

By Lydian Bernhardt

“WE COULDN’T IMAGINE
DOING ANYTHING ELSE...
THIS IS WHAT WE
LOVE TO DO.”

AMOS NIDIFFER



IT TOOK A BAD CAR ACCIDENT FOR AMOS AND KACI NIDIFFER, THE OWNERS OF TROSLY FARM IN AVERY COUNTY, TO COMMIT TO FARMING.

“We were lucky to survive,” said Kaci. “The day after we crawled out of the wreck, I said, ‘I’m quitting my job and we’re going to farm full time.’ That was our eureka-type moment when we realized what’s really important.”

On Sept. 30, Cooperative Extension at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University presented the 2020 North Carolina Small Farmers of the Year award to the couple during an online ceremony.

“They live and breathe this business, and they work it constantly,” said Avery County Cooperative Extension

Agent Bill Hoffman, who nominated the Nidiffers for the award. “They make it look easy. Everybody who comes out here is impressed.”

“We couldn’t imagine doing anything else,” said Amos. “This is what we love to do.”

On less than five acres, the Nidiffer family grows greenhouse products such as lettuces, greens and tomatoes, and livestock such as hogs and pullets. The farm is also home to the family’s dairy cow and some pet goats for their three children.

Trosly Farm is named for Trosly-Breuil, a French town that was home to Catholic theologian and philosopher Jean Vanier. Vanier founded communities around the world for people with disabilities based on his beliefs about community and the worth of every individual.

The Nidiffers call Vanier a hero figure to them. They strive to bring a similar sense of community and neighborliness to their farming.

“One of the biggest things I see is their willingness to share what they do with their neighbors,” said Hoffman. “They are very free with sharing what they know. Extension has had a couple of workshops here, and they really enjoy

teaching the community how to be small farmers.”

As their farming know-how has increased, the couple has tried to move toward lower-tech farming, with hand operated tools replacing machinery when possible.

They are also proponents of Community Supported Agriculture, a system in which people in the community pledge to support a farm operation, making it the community’s farm. Growers and consumers provide mutual support and share the risks, and benefits, of food production.

Amos said that after several years of focusing on agricultural skill-building, they spent the past year focusing on the community.

“We had a couple of days scheduled for the CSA members to come and see where their food is coming from, and what we’re doing here,” he said. “That has become really important.”

When people ask questions about what they do, it helps them remember why they grow food for their family and their neighbors, said Kaci.

“Loving other people and recognizing everyone’s ability

to contribute to society, and celebrating life together as much as possible,” said Amos. “That’s what we want to do.”

The Nidiffers were presented with a plaque, monogrammed jackets and \$1,500 during the Sept. 30 event. The Small Farmer of the Year Award is usually presented in March on the N.C. A&T campus during Small Farms Week, which recognizes the small-scale producers of North Carolina. This year, the award presentation was delayed due to COVID-19.

Small Farms Week 2021 marked the program’s 35th year.

SPREADING JOY



ONE CUPCAKE AT A TIME

Success is sweet for marketing student Alexandria Marrow.

By Jackie Torok

In the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics, marketing student Alexandria Marrow is “a true leader, academic superstar and visionary,” says Joseph R. Huscroft Jr., Ph.D., chair of the Department of Marketing and Supply Chain Management.

But across North Carolina A&T and beyond, Marrow is best known as the cupcake creator of Sweets by Alexandria.

Receiving an Easy Bake Oven at age 4 ignited Marrow’s love of baking. At 16, she opened a kiosk to sell her homemade, high-end confections made from scratch at the Streets at Southpoint Mall in Durham, North Carolina, her hometown. Today, customers can buy her cupcakes at Elements, A&T’s campus convenience store, or online through sweetsbyalexandria.com.

As her business has grown, so has the attention she and her business have received. In addition to coverage by local and state media, she was featured on the YouTube channel of Marc Lore, president and CEO of Walmart eCommerce, on his Aug. 11 episode of “Startup Standup.”

Made with help from her family at a commercial kitchen in Durham, Marrow’s cupcakes boast fresh ingredients that are locally sourced and organic whenever possible. She prides herself on delivering both a quality product and a satisfying sensory experience.

“This is something I do because I want to make other people happy. I want people to feel good about eating my cupcakes, to enjoy them as much as I enjoy baking and decorating them,” she said.

Even the novel coronavirus pandemic has not diminished the appetite people have for her cupcakes, which are crafted to “spread joy with every bite,” Marrow said. She has seen a steady flow of orders from across the country as treats for socially distanced and virtual celebrations.

“The pandemic has caused us to take extra precautions when baking, handling and transporting the products,” she said. “With everything that’s happening in the world right now, I think everyone can appreciate a small taste of joy and a bit of indulgence that my cupcakes represent. I hope they inspire people to share love with each other.”

With everything that’s happening in the world right now, I think everyone can appreciate a small taste of joy and a bit of indulgence that my cupcakes represent.

Alexandria Marrow, student entrepreneur

The youngest of three daughters, Marrow decided to follow her parents’ path to A&T after she toured the campus during an open house hosted by the Deese College. “That sealed the deal,” she said.

Since becoming an Aggie, Marrow has maintained a superior GPA, served as president of A&T’s American Marketing Association student organization in 2019-20, interned with Ashley Stewart in New York for two summers and most recently completed a marketing internship with IBM.

In 2018, she received both a Finding Ashley Stewart Scholarship and a GoSkills Be the Boss Scholarship. The next year, she was one of 12 Aggies and 21 college students in the state to earn a Transportation Scholarship Award from the North Carolina Department of Transportation Office of HBCU Outreach.

Having celebrated the sixth anniversary of Sweets by Alexandria on June 28, and on track to graduate in May, Marrow’s long-term goal is to establish a storefront bakery.

“The timeless aspects of Sweets by Alexandria and the support I’ve received from my family, friends and community, including my A&T family, are what motivate me to succeed,” she said. “These are things that will never go out of style.”





EPA'S LEADING MAN

N.C. A&T alumnus Michael S. Regan '98 joins President Joe Biden's Cabinet as head of the Environmental Protection Agency.

By Todd H. Simmons and Jordan Howse



Previous page: U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris (R) conducts the ceremonial swearing-in of Michael S. Regan (3rd L) as EPA administrator in the Vice President's Ceremonial Office in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, next to the White House in Washington, D.C., on March 17, 2021. Also pictured are Regan's father Zeb Regan Jr. (L), mother Mavis Artis Regan (2nd L), wife Melvina Thomas Regan (4th L) and son Matthew Regan. (Photo by MANDEL NGAN/AFP via Getty Images)

Michael S. Regan receives a reassuring hug from son Matthew following his confirmation hearings before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee on Feb. 3, 2021. (Photo: UPI)

It was a tender moment in an arena where humanity can be hard to come by:

Michael S. Regan, President Joe Biden's nominee to serve as administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, getting a hug from his young son, Matthew, as his confirmation hearings before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee adjourned on Feb. 3.

Regan had just completed his testimony in what all agree was a successful Senate debut. Six days later, he would be affirmed 14-6, and his nomination forwarded to the Senate for full confirmation.

"I am confident that Michael Regan is the right person to lead EPA. He is a man of deep faith who believes that we have a moral obligation to be good stewards of this planet," said committee Chairman Tom Carper. "Mr. Regan has experience bringing people together to solve our most pressing environmental issues and make sure no community gets left behind in the process."

"I'm confident he will bring his sterling record of public service to lead the EPA with integrity and compassion."

It was a critical precursor to a confirmation that concluded on March 10 in a 66-34 Senate vote. On March 17, Vice President Kamala Harris swore in Regan in a room so full of historical firsts, there was hardly room for the press: First Black man and graduate of a historically black college or university (HBCU) to lead the EPA; his oath administered by the first Black, woman, Asian American vice president, herself the first HBCU graduate to serve in the federal government's No. 2 role. For Black America especially, the groundbreaking sight of graduates of North Carolina A&T and Howard facing one another in this history making setting was a sight few will ever forget.

Leading to this historic moment, Regan has been a champion of environmental justice for North Carolina and the country. Prior to his confirmation, Regan worked as an environmental regulator for the EPA, Southeast director of the Environmental Defense Fund and most recently, served as North Carolina's secretary of the Department of Environmental Quality.

During his tenure as secretary, he created the DEQ's Environmental Justice and Equity Board which is tasked with protecting North Carolina's natural resources, economic interests and communities "so that ALL North Carolinians will have clean air and clean water for today, tomorrow and future generations to come," Regan said.

His experience in North Carolina includes his settlement with Duke Energy to organize the cleanup of nearly 80 million tons of coal ash as well as fining Chemours for allowing GenX/PFAS (also known as "forever chemicals") in the Cape Fear River.

Much of Regan's career has its roots in work he started in college. While at A&T, Regan spent much of his time in the College of

"Careful stewardship of the environment is more than just passing down traditions to the next generation. It's about learning from the past and being prepared to combat challenges that our future generations will face."

**— MICHAEL REGAN '98,
Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency**

Agriculture and Environmental Sciences assisting Godfrey Uzochukwu, Ph.D., in setting up the Waste Management Institute (WMI), the university's environmental sustainability waste management program.

"Michael was a leader with a big environmental vision, even as a student," Uzochukwu said. "I depended on him to get many things done, and he was held to a high level of excellence in terms of ethics and leadership, as well. I predict that he will do very well leading the EPA."

WMI's mission to enhance awareness and understanding of waste management issues and develop programs that protect the environment and improve the quality of life closely relate to what Regan says he wants to do as the administrator of the EPA.

"Preserving our natural resources isn't something just to balance with the economy. It's essential for economic growth, along with protecting public health and our way of life," said Regan. "Careful stewardship of the environment is more than just passing down traditions to the next generation. It's about learning from the past and being prepared to combat challenges that our future generations will face."

A native of Goldsboro, North Carolina, he enrolled in 1994 at North Carolina A&T, where he met his future wife, Melvina Thomas. She earned her B.S. in psychology from A&T in 1999, and

today is the global talent acquisition operations manager for Hong Kong tech giant Lenovo.

The two married in 2002 and had two children: Michael Jr. (deceased) and Matthew, now in first grade.

As the family adjusts to their new life in Washington, Regan faces a challenge of "massive reconstruction and building," according to The New York Times, in an agency that suffered greatly under the Trump administration. Expectations are significant: "No agency will be more fundamental to the politically sensitive work of actually reducing United States planet-warming emissions than the EPA." Regan will be chiefly responsible for fulfilling President Biden's agenda of achieving net-zero admissions by 2050 and eliminating fossil-fuel emissions from the power sector even earlier, 2035. With a narrow partisan split in Congress making legislative solutions complicated, those tasks will become top priorities on Regan's to-do list.

His commitment to meeting those challenges was evident in a speech he gave in December, shortly after being announced as Biden's EPA choice.

"We will be driven by our conviction that every person in our great country has the right to clean air, clean water and a healthier life," said Regan, "no matter how much money they have in their pockets, the color of their skin or the community they live in."



\$45M

N.C. A&T RECEIVES HISTORIC \$45 MILLION GIFT

Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott makes unprecedented private investment in equity at N.C. A&T

By Jackie Torok

MacKenzie Scott, a leading philanthropist with a deep commitment to making an impact on longstanding inequities across the country, has made a historic donation to North Carolina A&T, one that will lend significantly to the university's initiatives to enhance student success and support outstanding academic programs.

"We are deeply grateful to MacKenzie Scott for this vivid illustration of faith in our university and its historic and abiding commitment to academic excellence and to the African American community," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. "Her singular generosity stands out among the many investments in our university this year as one that will play a transformative role in the potential of A&T, serving Aggies far into the future."

In December, Scott announced a total of 384 organizations across the country today who have received a total from her of more than \$4.158 billion. N.C. A&T's portion is \$45 million. The university will invest the money in four major areas:

"We are deeply grateful to MacKenzie Scott for this vivid illustration of faith in our university and its historic and abiding commitment to academic excellence and to the African American community," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr.

Student Success. This includes programs that promote the enrollment, retention and timely graduation of students, as well as direct support for students in financial need.

Preparation for the Workplace. This area focuses on developing workplace-ready skills that enhance graduates' success in first-destination jobs and advancement over the course of their careers.

Civic Responsibility and Engagement. Consistent with A&T's history of activism and engagement and the spirit of Scott's support, funds will be devoted to expanding initiatives that encourage students to give back to their communities, engage in the broader world and assume a mantle of leadership as graduates.

Academic Programs. Significant funding will go to further development of A&T's outstanding academic programs that have already positioned the university to make significant contributions in areas of critical national need, including professions in STEM, humanities, business, health, education and agriculture.

\$45M

N.C. A&T RECEIVES HISTORIC \$45 MILLION GIFT

Scott narrowed her focus on investment from an initial group of 6,490 to the 384 announced on Dec. 15, making it clear that her choices were made on the potential of her gifts for high impact and for capacity of the organizations and their management teams to make best use of the funding.

"We hope that Scott's philanthropic leadership will inspire others to invest in North Carolina A&T, its students and its future," said Martin. "We will strive to fulfill the promise of this gift and repay it to the communities and individuals we serve many times over."

As part of philanthropist MacKenzie Scott's historic donation to A&T, three of the university's colleges have partnered to provide new full scholarships that will be available to eligible students, beginning fall 2021, delivering immediate impact for Scott's visionary investment.

The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Education and the College of Health and Human Sciences are using part of Scott's \$45 million gift to establish the February One Scholars program.

The program is named for the day in 1960 that four A&T students (The A&T Four) energized a national sit-in movement by refusing to leave a segregated lunch counter in downtown Greensboro without being served.

February One Scholars awards will cover tuition, related fees, room and board, and participation in University Honors Program activities and enrichment. The awards will be renewable for four years, provided the student maintains satisfactory academic progress to remain in the program.

"Through the generosity of MacKenzie Scott's incredible gift, we can ensure that more high-achieving scholars will receive the opportunity to pursue their education at our university," said Martin. "These scholarships speak to the guiding principles behind Ms. Scott's philanthropy and demonstrate our continued commitment to academic excellence. Ultimately, they will benefit the communities we serve as our graduates produce innovative solutions to global challenges and move into those communities as leaders."

The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Education and the College of Health and Human Sciences are using part of Scott's \$45 million gift to establish the February One Scholars program.

A&T has promised to use Scott's award to fund programs such as the February One Scholars that promote and encourage academic achievement, civic responsibility and engagement, preparation for the workplace and student success.

Each of the three colleges will be awarded five February One Scholars per freshman class.

Students who want to apply for the February One Scholars program must be incoming freshmen planning to enroll in the upcoming fall semester, carry a minimum weighted 3.75 cumulative GPA, be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen, submit an application for admission to A&T, and demonstrate exceptional characteristics of leadership and service. They also must hold a minimum scholastic score of 1270 on the SAT or 27 on the ACT, though the tests are optional for the fall 2021 applicants.

A&T attracts the nation's top college-bound students, including those named Cheatham-White Scholars and Dowdy Scholars. The addition of February One Scholars aligns with the university's mission to advance knowledge through scholarly exchange and transform society with exceptional teaching, learning, discovery and community engagement.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FEBRUARY ONE SCHOLARS PROGRAM, INCLUDING HOW TO APPLY, EMAIL THE UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM AT NCATHONORS@NCAT.EDU.

ALUMNI NOTES

1960s

On Sept. 25, 2020, the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame Foundation (NBCAHOF) inducted **U.S. REP. ALMA S. ADAMS '68, '72 MS** into its annual hall of fame in the Government and Law category.

Each year, graduates of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are inducted into the hall of fame for significant contributions they have made in their respective fields. The NBCAHOF promotes the viability of HBCUs and highlights the accomplishments of their alumni.

Adams began her political career and lifetime commitment to effecting social change as the first African American woman to be elected to the Greensboro City School Board in the 1980s. In 1994, she was appointed to serve in the North Carolina House District 26 seat, which she went on to represent for 10 terms.

In 2018, Adams was elected to her third term representing the 12th Congressional District of North Carolina. She serves on the House Committees for Education and Labor, Financial

Services and Agriculture, is the chairwoman of Higher Education and Labor Subcommittee on Workforce Protections and is vice chairwoman of the Agriculture Committee.

Adams is the founder and co-chair of the first Congressional Bipartisan Historically Black College or University Caucus. In 2019, she was the bill co-signer for The FUTURE Act that provides federal funding to HBCUs indefinitely. She is also co-founder of the Black Maternal Health Caucus.

In addition to her graduate and undergraduate degrees from A&T, Adams earned her Ph.D. in art education and multicultural education from The Ohio State University.



1970s



'71 Glover

WALTER GLOVER, CPA '71 received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics.

Glover is executive vice president and chief operating officer of the U.S. Olympic Endowment, and he was recently elected to the YMCA of the USA Board of Directors. He has been with the endowment for three years after spending more than 15 years at the U.S. Olympic Committee as chief financial officer and other roles. He also spent 20 years with Philip Morris USA in financial management positions and is an Air Force veteran.

Glover is the immediate past chairman of the YMCA of the Pikes Peak Region and is a board member of Ent Federal Credit Union, Colorado Springs Sports Corp. and Cheyenne Mountain Zoo. He has an MBA from Virginia Commonwealth University. His B.S. in accounting is from N.C. A&T.

On Sept. 25, 2020, **LEROY THORNTON EDWARDS '72** was inducted into the National Black College Alumni Hall of Fame (NBCAHOF) in the Business category.

Each year, graduates of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) are inducted into the hall of fame for significant contributions they have made in their respective fields. The NBCAHOF promotes the viability of HBCUs and highlights the accomplishments of their alumni.

Edwards is owner and chief executive of The Edwards Company, a Detroit-based business that is a distribution firm for beers, wines, snack foods and petroleum. Under Edwards' leadership, the company built its Eagle Snacks business into one of the largest in the United States and has received national awards for sales and performance. Additionally, the company owns 40 franchises of Taco Bell, KFC, Pizza Hut, Subway Restaurants, and Shell Petroleum products in and around Chicago and Michigan.

From 1996 to 2001, Edwards served on the Michigan Natural Resources Commission, appointed by Michigan Gov. John Engler. In 2007, the Michigan Department of National Resources honored and recognized him as the first African American member to serve on the commission in its 75-year history. Through this commission, Edwards helped lead in developing opportunities for youth to enjoy outdoor activities and played a key role in establishing a committee to focus on technology, information, marketing and education issues.

Edwards is a member of the N.C. A&T Board of Visitors and was instrumental in developing the Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in its infancy. After receiving his bachelor's degree with honors from A&T, Edwards earned an MBA from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.



'75 Moore

PHYLLIS MOORE '75 received the 2020 Howard C. Barnhill Distinguished Service Award from the North Carolina A&T Office of Alumni Relations.

In November 2014, Moore retired from Giant Food LLC where she had a 32-year career in the transportation department. As a member of the executive management team, Moore developed and implemented programs to reduce cost and manage efficiencies of the daily operations. She was instrumental in coaching and mentoring young women to help them reach their desired goals in the company. She also served on the Network of Executive Women Mid-Atlantic Region Registration Committee and Giant's Women Adding Value Steering Committee, Women's Resource Group.

After returning to North Carolina, Moore became very active in the N.C. A&T Gate City Alumni Chapter where she currently serves as president. She volunteers for several organizations including Southern Alamance Food Empowerment, Greensboro Urban League Ministry, Allied Churches and the Food Bank ministry at her church. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. and is a graduate of Leadership Prince George's Inc. Her B.S. in business administration is from N.C. A&T.

1990s



'90, '96 Foster

In a response to the need for personal protection equipment (PPE) during the earlier months of the novel coronavirus pandemic, **GEOFF FOSTER '90, '96 MS** and his Core Technology Molding Corp., an advanced, precision manufacturing firm, committed to supplying 800,000 protective face shields for use in hospitals and military bases around the country through a contract with the Gilero medical device company in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Core Tech is located at Gateway Research Park, which is led by N.C. A&T in conjunction with UNC Greensboro. Core Tech serves clients around the world, from BMW to Rubbermaid, but with the demands of this contract, it is focusing heavily on North Carolina needs during the pandemic.

Ernst & Young recently named Foster an Entrepreneur Of The Year® 2020 Southeast Award winner. He was also named 2020 Entrepreneur of the Year by the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce's Launch Greensboro initiative.



'96 Bennett

JABBAR R. BENNETT, PH.D. '96 received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Science and Technology.

Bennett is vice president and chief diversity officer at Michigan State University. He most recently served as the inaugural associate provost for diversity and inclusion and chief diversity officer at Northwestern University.

Bennett received his Ph.D. in biomedical sciences from Meharry Medical College and his B.S. in biology and Spanish from N.C. A&T. His postgraduate work includes fellowships at Harvard Medical School, Northeastern University and Harvard University.

JELANI M. FAVORS, PH.D. '97 received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

Favors is an associate professor of history at Clayton State University. He has received major fellowships in support of his research that includes an appointment as a Humanities Writ Large Fellow at Duke University in 2013, and he was an inaugural recipient of the Mellon HBCU Fellowship at the John Hope Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke in 2009. In 2014, Favors was invited to co-teach the course, "Citizenship and Freedom: The Civil Rights Era," alongside Pulitzer Prize winning historian Taylor Branch at the University of Baltimore.

Favors' essay, "Race Women: New Negro Politics and the Flowering of Radicalism at Bennett College, 1900-1945," won the R.D.W. Connor Award as the best article published in the North Carolina Historical Review for 2018. The following year, his first book, "Shelter in a Time of Storm: How Black Colleges Fostered Generations of Leadership and Activism," was published by the University of North Carolina Press.

In 2020, "Shelter in a Time of Storm" received the Museum of African American History (MAAH) Stone Book Award and the Southern Regional Council and University of Georgia Libraries' Lillian Smith Book Award and was a finalist for the Pauli Murray Book Prize from the African American Intellectual History Society. His research and commentary have appeared in media outlets, including CNN, C-SPAN, The Washington Post, MarketWatch, The Atlantic, The Chronicle of Higher Education and The Conversation.

Favors has a Ph.D. in history and an M.A. in African American studies from The Ohio State University, and a B.A. in history with honors from N.C. A&T. The Winston-Salem, North Carolina, native currently resides in Atlanta, Georgia.



'97 Moore

The advisory board of the American Haiku Archives appointed **LENARD D. MOORE '97 MA** as the 2020-21 honorary curator of the American Haiku Archives at the California State Library in Sacramento. Moore is an internationally acclaimed poet and anthologist. He is a former president of the Haiku Society of America, has been chairman of the North Carolina Haiku Society since 1994 (currently serving as executive chairman) and is the founder and executive director of the Carolina African American Writers' Collective.



'98 Regan

MICHAEL S. REGAN '98 received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. The Goldsboro, North Carolina, native has an MPA from George Washington University and a B.S. in earth and environmental science from N.C. A&T. Read the article, "EPA's Leading Man," on pages 54-57, for details about Regan's accomplishments.

2000s

BERVETTE CARREE has been named ABC11/WTVD-TV Raleigh Durham's news director. Carree is an award-winning journalist whose career spans nearly 20 years working in various top 10 television markets and cable news networks including CNN. She most recently worked as executive producer at WXIA-TV, the NBC affiliate in Atlanta, Georgia. She also managed the "Voices for Equality" franchise, which includes content focused on underrepresented voices within the community.

The North Carolina native has also worked at WGHP-TV (High Point), WRAL-TV (Raleigh), WCNC-TV (Charlotte) and WITN-TV (Greenville) and WCAU-TV (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).



'00, '03 Klugh

DARRYL KLUGH '00, '03 MS received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Engineering.

After graduating from N.C. A&T, Klugh began a career focused on wireless technology and digital signal processing. He completed the requirements to become a licensed Professional Engineer and became an entrepreneur when he started an engineering firm that specialized in government contracting. After growing the company for over eight years he sold the company in an amiable acquisition.

Klugh was inducted into A&T's Sports Hall of Fame in 2014. He uses his Hall of Fame distinction and connections to continue to support the growth and direction of A&T by providing valuable opportunities and resources for future Aggies. In addition, he stays connected to the university through speaking engagements and other activities. He was the 2017 Fall Convocation speaker, has served on the Alumni Board of Directors and is the current chairman of the Electrical and Computer Engineering Advisory Board and the Curriculum Committee.

In 2017, he created the Darryl M. Klugh Jr. Engineering Endowed Scholarship to support future Aggies in their pursuit of degrees in engineering. He's passionate about entrepreneurship, especially for engineers, and has helped create an Engineering Entrepreneurship Seminar Series within the College of Engineering to inspire and empower students with innovative energy.

Klugh has earned two degrees from A&T: a B.S. in electrical engineering with high honors and an M.S. in electrical engineering with a 4.0 GPA.



'03 Holmes

BRAD HOLMES '03 was recently named general manager of the Detroit Lions National Football League (NFL) team. Holmes previously served as director of college scouting for the Los Angeles Rams where he spent his entire 18-year NFL career, working his way up in the organization—from public relations intern (2003) to running the team's past eight drafts.

Holmes will oversee the Lions' football operations and report directly to principal owner and chairman. He is only the second HBCU grad to lead a major U.S. pro sports team as General Manager, the first being fellow Aggie Al Attles with the Golden State Warriors of the NBA..

Holmes has a B.S. in journalism and mass communications with a concentration in public relations. He was a standout student-athlete under football coach Bill Hayes.

Powell has been a member of the N.C. A&T Alumni Association, Washington DC Chapter, since 2011. Shortly after joining the chapter, she volunteered to serve on the Membership Committee and was selected as membership chairperson (2012–present). She was also elected as the chapter's corresponding secretary (2012–present), and she has happily served in many capacities while implementing several activities/events to solicit and ignite membership growth. Some of her other accomplishments include Annual A&T Four Sit-in Prayer Breakfast fundraiser (chair, 2017–present); Aggie Midnight Bowling (chair, 2019–present); Membership Orientation Breakfast and Lunch (2014–present); Aggie Circles events (2012–14); Aggie Santa/Secret Aggie Yearlong Secret Santa gift exchange (2012–16); Aggie Black History Read-in (2020); Aggie Celebrate First Responders (2020); SAFE Night - Feed The Homeless (2020) and Voter Registration Initiative (2020).

Outside her alumni service, Powell is certified to register residents to vote in the state of Maryland. She is a member of Shalom Ministries Christian Center where she has served as Girl Scout Troop leader, usher, women's ministry lead, and audiovisual team member. She also holds memberships in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Nu Zeta Omega Chapter and Ivy and Pearls of Southern Maryland Community Charities, where she currently serves as recording secretary and technology chairman. She is a founding member of the "Sisters In Spirit" Book Club, where she served as administrator. Her affiliations also include actively participating in her daughter's many activities as a toddler mom.

Powell is a cum laude graduate of A&T with bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communication, broadcast production concentration. She is a native of Clinton, Maryland, and currently resides in Waldorf, Maryland, with her daughter Summer, whom she envisions will follow in her family's Aggie legacy.

SYDNEY STINSON POWELL '06

received the 2020 Velma R. Speight Young Alumnus Award from the North Carolina A&T Office of Alumni Relations.

Powell is a personnel security specialist for Department of Defense (DOD) Central Adjudication Facility, now the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency. During her tenure, she has been awarded DOD Personnel Security Adjudicator Certification, Due Process Certification, Team of the Quarter, and individually listed as the third Highest Producer on the highest production team in the organization. Her broadcast production experience includes internships at American Advertising Federation (AAF), Black Entertainment Television (BET), Entercom Communications 102 JAMZ Radio Station, and CBS Radio 95.5 FM Radio Station.



'06 Powell



'07 Clark

LANGSTON CLARK, Ph.D. '07

received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Health and Human Sciences.

Clark is an associate professor at the University of Texas at San Antonio in the College of Education and Human Development. He has over 20 research publications and has participated in 40 national and international research presentations. For his accomplishments as researcher, Clark has received the Mabel Lee Young Professional Award and the Leroy T. Walker Young Professional Award, which recognizes the commitments of young scholars dedicated to social justice by the Society of Health and Physical Educators of America.

In addition to his scholarship, Clark is committed to increasing the quality of the Black experience in higher education as an Alumni Fellow in The Heman Sweatt Center for Black Males at UT Austin, where he is mentoring Black males through higher education. The dedicated alumnus of N.C. A&T has founded From A&T To PhD, a community of support for Aggies in the doctoral pipeline.

Clark is the founder and host of Entrepreneurial Appetite, a podcast series dedicated to building community, promoting intellectualism and supporting Black businesses. Additionally, he has been a featured guest on several podcasts including What's New in Adapted Physical Education, BAME PE, Black + in Grad

School, and Playing with Research in Health and Physical Education.

Clark completed his Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction with a concentration in physical education teacher education (PETE) at The University of Texas at Austin. His M.A. is in adapted physical education from The Ohio State University and his B.S. in physical education is from A&T. Given his experience as an undergraduate at a historically Black university, Clark has developed a passion for the continued development and elevation of minority serving institutions. His research focuses on the training of Black physical educators and kinesiologists at HBCUs. Clark's other research interests include the intersections of athletics, race and education.

2010s



'11 Revelle

VICTORIA REVELLE, MPH, CHES® '11

received the 2020 Julia S. Brooks Achievement Award from the North Carolina A&T Office of Alumni Relations.

Revelle has established success in her profession while making a notable difference in the global community. As a Certified Health Education

Specialist (CHES®) and an experienced public health practitioner, she is dedicated to reducing health disparities and increasing health equity through promoting the highest attainable level of health and well-being for all people. A champion for healthy living, she addresses the social determinants of health, advocates for underrepresented communities and educates students with an unwavering commitment to excellence. She has addressed health equity and the social determinants of health internationally in Paris, Rome and Madrid.

Passionate about sickle cell education, Revelle's research aims to raise the consciousness of the country by bringing attention to the plight of the suffering. In 2018, she presented this research at the annual meeting of the American Public Health Association (APHA) and became the first African American to win the APHA International Health Section's inaugural Young Professional Award.

A co-author of "Achieving Health Equity in the United States," an in-depth policy statement adopted by APHA, Revelle has demonstrated a commitment to achieving health equity by active ly working to impact the culture of health education in southern and rural African American communities. Her work in this field has been featured in print and broadcast media. In 2015–18, she received national recognition for presenting innovative and educational webinars in honor of National Health Education Week.

Revelle is an active alumna of the university. She has been the Raleigh/Durham Regional Representative for the N.C. A&T Young Alumni Council since 2018, and she has served as class reunion coordinator. Additionally, she has demonstrated service to the community with the Durham, Atlanta and Halifax-North Hampton chapters of the alumni association.



'14 Cherry

DE'ANDRE JAMES CHERRY '14

received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, an academic collaboration between North Carolina A&T and UNC Greensboro.

Cherry is a Boeing engineer responsible for analyzing and planning workflows to improve the manufacturing efficiency of the Space Launch System (SLS). Commissioned by NASA, the SLS rocket will be the primary launch vehicle for deep space exploration missions, carrying the crewed lunar flights of the Artemis program and future manned missions to Mars. Prior to joining the SLS

manufacturing team, he was a materials and process engineer in Boeing's Research & Technology organization, where he was awarded two U.S. Patents, the Knowledge Management Award for "Environmental Impacts of Aerospace Batteries," and published in the 2019 Boeing Technical Journal.

In addition to his functions as an engineer, Cherry is the professional development chairman for the BSC Black Engineer Association (BBEA), an executive board member of the Summerville YMCA and a devoted BSC Dream Learners volunteer and community outreach leader.



'15 Christie

SHELBY CHRISTIE '15, founder of Shelby Ivey Christie, made the Forbes 30 Under 30 list for 2021, in the category of Art and Style. A fashion and costume historian who focuses on Black fashion history, Christie has worked in the fashion industry for 10 years at influential magazines such as W Magazine and InStyle.

Christie has been featured in Business Insider, Teen Vogue, CFDA (Council of Fashion Designers of America), the Dazed 100 and NBC. She recently skyrocketed to popularity on Twitter where she engages her followers with topics of Blackness and class and culture, as related to the history of fashion.

The New York University master's student earned her B.A. in liberal studies at N.C. A&T. While at A&T, Christie started the Bombshells in Business student organization, which aimed to help students with necessary experience and career readiness. Her hope is that being named to the Forbes 30 Under 30 list will open doors for other Aggies.



'18 Pride

NICOLE M. PRIDE, PH.D. '18 received the 2020 Alumni Achievement Award from North Carolina A&T's College of Education.

In August 2020, Pride became the 12th president of West Virginia State University. Pride began her career in the corporate and non-profit sectors, and left industry to begin her service in higher education at N.C. A&T, where she most recently served as vice provost for academic strategy and operations. She also served as chief of staff and chief communications officer.

Prior to joining A&T, Pride was vice president for development and communications for Child Care Services Association in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. For nearly a decade, she served in numerous capacities at IBM including marketing program manager, corporate learning division and manager of corporate community relations and public affairs. In addition to her professional appointments, Pride has served on numerous boards and committees. Her research interests are in the areas of board governance and leadership.

Recent awards and honors include the Triad Business Journal's 2018 Outstanding Women in Business award and PR News' 2017 cohort of Top Women in Public Relations in the nation.

Pride earned bachelor's degrees in business management and economics from North Carolina State University, a master's in corporate and public communications from Seton Hall University, and a doctorate in leadership studies from A&T. The Orange, New Jersey, native is mother to grown sons, Turner Jr. and Todd, and a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc.

IN MEMORIAM

ALUMNI (2019)

Phyllis Arnette-Shuler '75, Nov. 6
Lynn Baldwin '72, Nov. 13
Alonzo Blount '63, Nov. 26
Stacy Brown '91, Nov. 28
Harold R. Carrillo Sr. '60, Sept. 27
Bobbie Chavis '60, Dec. 28
James Feggins '72, Nov. 7
Jerome Gilbeaux '73, Dec. 4
Nicole Gordon '95, Nov. 1
Jerry Hogan '63, Nov. 8
Melvin Johnson '85, Nov. 5
Michael Lefaiwe '95, Nov. 06
Brenda Moore '83, Nov. 06
Grafton Payne '52, Dec. 6
Shenan Robinson '97, Nov. 16
Daniel Smith '47, Nov. 9
William Taylor '99, Nov. 3
Charles Williams '87, Nov. 1

ALUMNI (2020)

Richard Barber '62, April 3
Pernell Belcher '58, Jan. 23
Esau Blake '79, May 18
Angela Brice '49, Jan. 14
Julia Shiver Brooks '44, May 8
John Brown '51, April 25
Ronald Brown '81, June 22
Jacquelyn Browning-Reed '69, June 30
Gilbert Casterlow Jr. '71, Dec. 2
Craig Chasten '84, April 20
Terrence Christian '20, Aug. 10
LeeAndre Coltrane '14, July 30
Thomas Conway '76, May 15
Luther V. Dye, Feb. 2
Guy Edwards '76, June 11
Roland Eller '57, May 16
John Evans '56, Jan. 21
Michelle Florence '78, July 26
Velma Friende '61, May 27
George Gant '62, June 17
Roosevelt German '71, May 24
Cora Gerren '39, Jan. 6
Marvin Graeber '49, June 26
Prentice Graves '07, July 31
Roslin Hicks '89, June 30
Clayton Holloway '67, Jan. 28
Grady Humphrey '54, March 4

Barbara Jackson '58, April 22
Helen Jenrette '72, Jan. 26
James King '52, Feb. 5
Yvonne Marrow '52, July 24
Henry McKoy '68, Jan. 4
Joy McLean '96, June 22
Tony Mitchell '70, April 1
Michael Murrell, May 5 (?)
Walter Odom '94, July 30
Zuriel Overby '18, June 4
Beverly Parker '64, June 8
Grady Peterson '80, June 5
Arthur D. "Sam" Purcell, Aug. 18
Warren Reynolds '81, Jan.
Eva Roberts '56, April 23
Arthur Southerland '52, May 11
Virgil Spaulding '64, May 20
Jeremy Stovall '16, Jan. 26
Henry Thomas '83, Jan. 10
Tom Thornton '55, Feb. 9
Tamika Walker-Samon '97, May 25
Michael Wallington '87, Aug. 14
Luther A. Watlington '64, Feb. 8
Alexander Watson '52, Feb. 6
Edward Wells '56, June 20

STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES & OTHERS (2020)

Jalen Dunston, undergraduate (nursing), Nov. 15
Vanessa Y. Hawkins, undergraduate (economics), Sept. 13
Anubis Wells, undergraduate (computer science), Oct. 17

STUDENTS, EMPLOYEES & OTHERS (2021)

Kurt Taylor, Cooperative Extension associate, Jan. 20
Michael Ryan Bowie, undergraduate (civil engineering), Feb. 27
James C. Renick, ninth chancellor, Jan. 3

DESTINY UNFOLDED

Serendipitous events (and a professor's good advice) lead alumnus Dexter Mullins to Netflix.

By Alana V. Allen '07

If there was a formula for success in journalism and media, **DEXTER MULLINS '10** has definitely cracked the code. His résumé comprises roles at NBC News, The Wall Street Journal, Al Jazeera Media Network, CBS News and NowThis. In 2017, he landed a major role at Netflix, based in Los Angeles, as a global originals creative producer.

"I have always been committed to everything that has come my way, giving a 100% effort of myself," said Mullins. "I am always striving to work extremely hard and I never look at any obstacle as being too big."

When Mullins was a student at North Carolina A&T, he was active in several organizations ranging from being freshman class treasurer (then president), sophomore class chief of staff, editor-in-chief for the A&T Register and The Ayantee Yearbook, a resident assistant, orientation counselor and a member of the senior delegation for the University Association of Student Government. On top of that, he interned at the Greensboro News & Record, Pace Communications, and worked in retail.

"My senior year, I couldn't find a job in journalism, so I took the GRE and applied to three graduate schools: Columbia University, University of Maryland College Park and The City University of New York (CUNY). My dad suggested that I move home to Charlotte after graduation, but I knew I had to make my own way," said Mullins.

"I had applied to Columbia University and I kept saying to myself there is no way a kid from Sacramento, California, who went to an HBCU is going to get into an Ivy League school."

Mullins was accepted into all three schools and decided to go with Columbia due to the financial support and benefits the school provided.

"Attending grad school challenged me in ways, academically, that forced me to work harder than I ever expected in my life," said Mullins. "I became a serial overachiever and, against my school's recommendation, I secured an internship with The Grio, (a division of NBC News) thanks to fellow Aggie, Kyle Harvey."

Mullins was a full-time intern working 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at NBC and a full-time grad student taking classes in the evening.

"One day, I walked into work and I was a few minutes late, so I was a bit flustered as I HATE being late. Kyle came by and told me that I needed to go meet with one of the producers for the Brian Williams show, the Nightly News. I didn't know what the meeting was about, but I went. I later found out I was recommended by Kyle and our Grio staff to work as a production assistant for the show," he said.

"I spent most of the day talking to the staff, taking an edit test, and learning about the role. I was a bit fidgety because I was running short on time to get back uptown for my evening class. That evening my professor, Walt Bogdanich, a New York Times reporter, pulled me aside and asked me if I wanted to intern for him at the Times. I couldn't believe it—two job offers in the same day!"

With a bit of encouragement from his professor, Mullins decided to take the job opportunity at NBC. "I specifically remember Professor Bogdanich saying to me, 'Don't be stupid. Take the job! They're going to pay you, haha.' He and I still keep in touch to this day." He worked his way up and managed everything from overseeing the new interns, training the other PAs, helping producers write scripts and he even helped produce video packages.

"I stayed in the role for about two years until my contract expired and NBC couldn't extend it. My dad thought I was crazy to remain in New York without a job, but I had faith it was all going to work out. I made finding a job my full-time job."

In 2012, Mullins secured a job with The Wall Street Journal as a multimedia producer, then went on to work for Al Jazeera Media Network as an online news producer in 2013, CBS Interactive as an associate producer in 2014, and left CBS to fill a role as a senior producer for news at NowThis in 2016.

"In 2017, I was looking for a change and wanted to move back to California. I found two roles at Netflix that interested me, and I reached out to my network to see if there were any connections I could leverage. Fortunately, I had a contact at Netflix from my days at Al Jazeera, and within 48 hours I was being recruited aggressively for the position I now hold," he said.

In his role as a global originals creative producer, Mullins works with a dedicated team to launch original shows, series and films. He also produces all of the trailers and art directs the artwork for the shows he supports.

"Netflix has provided me with freedom and flexibility to do what I want such as ... mentor students and spend time with family. I still miss the adrenaline rush from national news, but I am enjoying my newfound work, life and balance."

Mullins received his bachelor's degree in journalism and mass communications with a concentration in print journalism from N.C. A&T in 2010, and his master's in digital media from Columbia in 2011.

FAMILY AFFAIR

By Jordan M. Howse

North Carolina A&T alumni **THOMAS** and **BERDENIA STANLEY'S** relationship with the university precedes their relationship with each other.

Although they met at N.C. A&T as members of the National Society of Black Engineers, both Thomas '88 and Berdenia '87, '89 MS have family members who attended the university, and the couple wanted to mark their family's legacy with a gift that would benefit students for generations to come.

In 2019, the Stanleys created The Stanley and Walker Endowed Scholarship (\$50,000) for students in the College of Engineering to assist in times of hardship.

"We're excited about what the university is doing, and we want to make sure that we continue to support students who are enrolled but may get into a financial situation that could prevent them from graduating," Berdenia said.

Giving to A&T is a family affair for the Stanleys: Thomas and Berdenia contributed \$250,000 to name the Thomas & Berdenia Stanley Ideation Lounge in the new Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex; Berdenia's mother, Queen Walker, contributed \$150,000 toward the commissioning of a sculpture in front of the building; and Berdenia's cousin, Chris Brooks '93, who sits on the university's board of visitors, established The Clay-Nelson Endowed Scholarship (\$108,000)



"Aggie Pride is real. HBCU pride is real."

BERDENIA STANLEY '89

and contributed \$25,000 to name the Brooks-Brown Conference Room there.

"We love A&T and we've always supported the university," Thomas said. "Our daughters (two are Aggies) have had plenty of opportunities, but we know many students don't have the same advantages. ... We want our scholarship to help those students who wouldn't be able to stay (enrolled) without it."

In addition to their monetary giving, Thomas and Berdenia have given of their time and talents on behalf of the university. In their first jobs after graduating from A&T, they worked for large corporations where they made

a point of making their employers aware of the university's talented pool of Aggie students and graduates when considering new hires.

Berdenia, who earned her Ph.D. at Georgia Tech, continues to laud A&T for her education and advocates for STEM education for young black children. Thomas made a name for himself in information technology and continues to work for a private tech company.

"A&T provided a great foundation for us," Berdenia said. "Aggie Pride is real. HBCU pride is real. We want to help the university continue to serve the needs of the students."

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