



## UTM listed in several college rankings

The 2024 U.S. News & World Report university rankings were released Sept. 15, and UT Martin is tied for 27th among Southern regional universities.

The annual ranking by the magazine separates college and universities into “national universities” and “regional universities,” the latter being ranked for North, South, Midwest and West regions.

Institutions such as the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, University of Alabama and Duke University are considered “national universities” and are not listed among regional colleges and universities in the South region, so it makes for a more uniform comparison.

U.S. News & World Report takes into account a school’s graduation rate, first-year retention rate, first-generation student graduation rates, student-faculty ratio and peer assessment.

UT Martin tied for 27th among regional universities in the South with the Mississippi University for Women, the University of



West Florida and Johnson University.

UT Martin tied for eighth among regional universities in the South in the best colleges for veterans category and ranked 26th

among regional universities of the South in best value.

Other college and university reviews

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## Kendi to speak at inaugural Dr. Henry H. Parker event

For 33 years, **Dr. Henry H. Parker** was a professor of philosophy at UT Martin. For 25 years before that, he was a professor at the University of Northern Iowa. He served as an instructor at the University of Minnesota-Morris for four years.

Now, Parker is getting recognition for his extensive experience in higher education.

The inaugural Dr. Henry H. Parker Speaker Series and Legacy Luncheon will be held Friday, Oct. 20, at the Duncan Ballroom in the Boling University Center. The luncheon will be held at 11 a.m., and the guest speaker, Dr. Ibram Kendi, will begin at noon. A book signing will take place following the moderated conversation.

There is no cost for the luncheon. A registration form will be made available soon.

Kendi is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities at



Parker



Kendi

**Continued on PAGE 4**

## YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff



Jones

**Dr. ZeVida A. Jones** and **Dr. Derrick Shepard**, both assistant professors of counseling, presented at the Association for Assessment and Research (AARC) in Counseling annual conference on Sept. 7-9 in Nashville.

Their presentation, “Breaking Down Silos in Research Design and Practice: Intentional Cross-Cultural Research Practices,” addressed their experiences intentionally developing a diverse research team, the struggles, and limitations within current cultural research to identify strength-based solutions to move cultural counseling research forward.

The AARC is an organization of counselors, educators and other professionals that advances the counseling profession by promoting best practices in assessment, research and evaluation in counseling.

The mission of AARC is to promote and recognize excellence in assessment, research, and evaluation in counseling.



Shepard

Go Cloud Careers founder and CEO, Mike Gibbs, invited **Dr. Jamye Long**, associate professor of management, and **Dr. Cooper Johnson**, associate professor of management, to participate in a panel discussion titled “Tech Career Planning: How to Fast Track Your Tech Career,” in which the Go Cloud Careers chief operating officer asked questions to Gibbs, Long and Johnson.

Each provided their expertise, input, ideas, advice and tips. The segment allowed for audience questions as well, adding an exciting interactive element to the discussion.

The event was recorded and presented live and has been viewed 700 times.

The live audience had viewers from around the world, including Botswana, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany and the U.S.

Questions involved the different skills seen in high-paying roles, the importance of emotional intelligence to top-level tech positions, the role of communication in successful C-suite positions and advice for developing leadership skills and helping people to be comfortable



Long



Johnson

as a leader. Go Cloud Careers has 53.5k subscribers and this panel conversation is available worldwide.

## Career Fair Week to help graduates find jobs

Career Fair Week is scheduled for Sept. 25-29. There are a record-breaking 95 unique organizations attending over three days with 14 organizations attending multiple fairs.

The fairs will be held at the Duncan Ballroom of the Boling University Center.

The Health and Human Performance career fair will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, while the all-majors career fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

on Wednesday, and the engineering and technical career fair will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thursday.

“Students are encouraged to attend, dress to impress and bring copies of their resume,” said career fair coordinator **Katie Mantooth**. “Faculty and staff are invited to bring students over to the fair and network with visiting organizations.”

Career fairs allow younger students the

opportunity to explore career opportunities and upperclassmen to immediately network to pursue graduate school, internships and full-time opportunities.

Attending organizations can be viewed on Runway and Handshake.

Those wanting more information should contact Career Planning and Development at 731-881-7712 or by email at [career@utm.edu](mailto:career@utm.edu) or [kpmantooth@utm.edu](mailto:kpmantooth@utm.edu).

Let the UT Martin community know about your most recent accolades by submitting a YoUTM to [addenda@utm.edu](mailto:addenda@utm.edu).

# Mehlhorn, Winters to work with NextGen grant

Dr. Joey Mehlhorn, professor of agricultural economics and the dean of graduate studies, and Dr. Todd Winters, the dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, are the co-principal investigators on a grant provided by the federal government to foster the next generation of diverse agricultural professionals across the nation.

The \$262.5 million investment into institutions of higher education is provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture and funded through the Inflation Reduction Act. The share of the grant for UT Martin is \$186,618.

The National Institute of Food and Agriculture’s (NIFA) “From Learning to Leading: Cultivating the Next Generation of Diverse Food and Agriculture Professionals Program” – also called NextGen – will enable eligible institutions to build and sustain the next generation of food, agriculture, natural resources and human



**Mehlhorn**



**Winters**

sciences workforce.

This includes efforts to strengthen USDA’s workforce through enhanced educational support, experiential learning and exposure to early career opportunities.

Eligible institutions include 1890 land-grant universities, 1994 tribal colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Alaska Native-serving and Native Hawaiian-serving institutions and institutions of higher education located in the insular areas, as well as their partners.

The \$262.5 million investment will provide training and support to more than 20,000 future food and agricultural leaders through 33

project partners.

UT Martin is part of a consortium of universities funded by the program led by the Tennessee State University’s College of Agriculture. Other members of the consortium include the University of Tennessee, Knoxville; Middle Tennessee State University; Vanderbilt University; Fort Valley State University; Alcorn State University; the University of Houston; Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; and Chief Dull Knife College.

The responsibilities for the university include:

- Provide travel study and study-abroad experiences for the students in the consortium,

especially in Italy and Kenya.

- With Tennessee State University, provide online coursework in agriculture for students in the consortium so they can better matriculate in four years through the platform that was started last year with Parchment.

- Provide funds and assistance to set up Junior Minorities in Agriculture Natural Resources and Related Sciences (MANRRS) programs at area high schools. This has already begun at the Liberty Tech Magnet High School in Jackson with plans to expand to other West Tennessee high schools.

- Provide workshops in entrepreneurship similar to the Skyhawk Entrepreneurial Venture Challenge Program. This will offer another employability skill for success.

“We are proud to collaborate with Tennessee State and the other partners to build a diverse workforce which will help provide the food, fuel and fiber needs of this diverse world,” Winters said.

This work is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

## This Week’s UT Martin Skyhawks Home Events

Saturday, Sept. 30  
Football vs. Tennessee  
State, 6 p.m. (Hall of  
Fame Game)

Sunday, Oct. 1  
Soccer vs. Western Illinois,  
1 p.m.



**BANNED BOOKS TRIVIA**  
3 - 4 pm  
Monday, October 2  
Paul Meek Library  
Individuals and teams welcome  
Open to students, faculty & staff

## PARKER from PAGE 1

Boston University. He is the founding director of the BU Center for Antiracist Research and a contributor to The Atlantic magazine and CBS News.

“His relentless and passionate research puts into question the notion of a post-racial society and opens readers’ and audiences’ eyes to the reality of racism in American today,” states his biographical extract.

Kendi is the youngest person to receive the National Book Award for Nonfiction for “Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America.” He has authored several books and

produced five back-to-back New York Times bestsellers.

In 2020, Kendi was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time magazine. He received the MacArthur Fellowship – popularly known as “the genius grant” – in 2021.

**Henri Giles**, a lecturer in the UTM Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communication, is coordinating the Dr. Henry Parker Speaker Series.

She said that when she mentions that Kendi is coming to UT Martin as a guest speaker, students and faculty are impressed that a person of Kendi’s stature is coming to campus.

“There are a lot of people

behind the scenes who are pulling things together to make this a nice event,” Giles said. “One of the things that I take pride in is bringing someone of the caliber of Dr. Ibram Kendi to UT Martin.”

Giles said she hoped that some of Parker’s students can attend this inaugural event to celebrate Parker and his teaching career.

“It will be a really nice moment to honor one person who has done such extraordinary work at UT Martin,” she said. “He was here for over 33 years, but more importantly, his higher education tenure spans more than 67 years.

“I don’t know anyone who has taught in higher ed for that long – and specifically, I certainly

don’t know of an African-American who has taught in higher ed that long.”

The inaugural Dr. Henry H. Parker Speaker Series was scheduled for Homecoming Week to enable alumni to take part and visit with Parker.

“It’s just a big celebration,” Giles said. “It’s Homecoming weekend, a lot of people will be on campus – a lot of alumni – and of course, the students will be here. It’s one of those events that parents who will be here for that could attend with their children. I think that the more events we can have like that, it will make the educational experience more special to our students, to be able to attend with their parents.”

## RANKINGS from PAGE 1

had similar accolades for UT Martin.

- The Princeton Review placed UT Martin among its top 109 colleges and universities in the South region.

This is not a ranking but a listing of schools “that we consider academically outstanding and well worth consideration in (students’) college research,” according to the education services company.

The 2024 ranking marks the 21st consecutive year for UT Martin to be listed among the top colleges and universities in the South.

- The Online MBA Report

issued its ninth annual ranking and found UT Martin to have the best online Master of Business Administration program in the state of Tennessee, No. 15 in the South region and No. 48 among public colleges and universities nationally.

- In its ninth annual Best Value Colleges study, SmartAsset ranked UT Martin fifth among colleges and universities in Tennessee, using metrics that included scholarships, tuition and retention rate.

UT Martin had the lowest tuition among the top five schools at \$11,224, which was the third-lowest among the top 10 colleges and universities in

Tennessee.

- The EduMed listed Tennessee college and university nursing programs in its RN-to-BSN rankings and found UT Martin to have the No. 6 registered nurse to bachelor of science in nursing program in the state.

It also ranked UT Martin 25th among the most affordable online counseling programs in the nation and 31st among the nation’s best online counseling master’s degree programs.

More information about UT Martin can be found at [www.utm.edu](http://www.utm.edu) or by calling 1-800-829-UTM1 (1-800-829-8861).

## Freeman to host Access & Engagement Town Hall

The second Access and Engagement Town Hall for the fall semester will be held at 3 p.m. on Monday, Oct. 2, in Watkins Auditorium at the Boling University Center.

Access to the livestream production can be found [here](#).

The archived events will be linked for seven days at that site.

## You Tell Me

- **Question** – Since UTM no longer has a tennis team, would it be possible to convert one or more courts into pickleball courts for public use? There is an active group of UTM alumni who play and are looking for more courts.

- **Answer** – Intercollegiate athletics is currently looking at some portable pickleball nets and lining to use on some of the tennis courts for public and student usage. Athletics is maintaining the courts in good shape, and there are many community members and schools that still use the them for recreational and match play.

Submit your questions to Addenda at [addenda@utm.edu](mailto:addenda@utm.edu).

## UT National Alumni Association board meets



The UT National Alumni Association Board of Governors met Sept. 14-15 in Martin, one of board's three annual meetings. The board heard presentations about current UT Martin programs, toured the main campus and shared ideas. UT Martin graduates on the 32-member board pictured with Chancellor Dr. Yancy Freeman (center) are (from left) Dr. Levi Pointer, Memphis; Dr. Jimmie Mancell, Memphis; William Winstead, Memphis; Chancellor Freeman; Dr. Jackie Johnson, assistant vice chancellor of alumni relations and annual giving, Martin; Tanika Lester, Memphis; April Armstrong, Memphis; and Dr. Cindy Brasher, Memphis.

## Revenue deputy commissioner to speak on campus



Lapps

Christine Lapps, a deputy commissioner of revenue with the Tennessee Department of Revenue, will speak at the accounting majors society meeting next week.

The meeting will be held from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 5, in Room BA36 in the Business Administration Building.

Lapps was appointed deputy commissioner in April 2019. She came to the department after working for more than a decade in state and local taxation at Ernst & Young.

While at Ernst & Young, she focused on sales and use-tax issues in the Southeast region and served clients in numerous industries, including manufacturing, technology, health care and retail.

Prior to that, Lapps worked at the Department of Revenue in its Legal and Administrative Hearing Offices.

She was also previously a litigator in the Attorney General's Office, arguing cases as high as the Tennessee Supreme Court.

View photos  
online at  
[utm.edu/photo](http://utm.edu/photo)

## Tenure, promotion and faculty reception held Aug. 31



Those on hand for the tenure, promotion and faculty awards reception on Aug. 31 were (front row, from left) Caren Nichter, Tomi McCutchen, Dr. Kelle Alden, Dr. Abigail Shelton, Dr. Rachna Tewari, Dr. Ben Le, (middle row, from left) Sam Richardson, Dr. Greg Nail, Dr. Chris Hill, Dr. Phillip Shelton, Dr. Qing Wang, Dr. Will Kang, Dr. Joe Ostenson, (back row, from left) Dr. Matthew Braddock, Dr. John Glass and Dr. John Cole. Not pictured are Dr. Amanda Batts, Dr. Jody Blake, Dr. David Dietrich, Dr. Anton Garcia-Hernandez, Dr. Renee LaFleur, Dr. John Oelrich and Dr. Bethany Wolters.

## New faculty, staff attend Welcome Dinner



Those attending the Welcome Dinner for new faculty and staff on Sept. 7 at Hardy M. Graham Stadium were (from left) Ronnie Jones Cox, Dr. John LaDue, Hannah Crawford, Megan Hilton, Paul Pharris, Macaela Carder, Dr. Jeffrey Bibbee, Dr. Stephanie Jones, Lauren Johnson, Dr. Clay Awsumb, Laura Kepler, Caroline Partin, Maria Reedy, Sidney Church, Dylan Ingram, David Snow, Dr. Michael Gurley, Dr. Mary Giles, Nicki Moore, Jennifer Cooper, Dr. Paula Moore, Allan Farmer, Sydney Roney, Sydnee Kalisishian, Anita Cannedy, Dr. Yancy Freeman and Austin Ferrell.

# Applications being accepted for WestStar class of '24

Applications are now being accepted for the UT Martin WestStar Leadership Program's class of 2024.

The WestStar program is the largest and oldest regional leadership program in Tennessee, boasting 945 graduates and welcoming its 34th class.

Application forms are available at [www.utm.edu/weststar](http://www.utm.edu/weststar). The application deadline is Oct. 13. Anyone can apply to participate; nominations are accepted but not required.

The program includes eight sessions addressing contemporary issues important to West Tennessee's development, including agriculture, economics and public policy, transportation, education, tourism and technology.

Each session takes place over one-and-a-half days and is held across the region except for a March session in Nashville. The program begins Dec. 7 with an opening one-day retreat and ends June 18, 2024, with an evening graduation ceremony.

WestStar's mission is to "identify, encourage and equip community-minded people who want to become involved in West Tennessee's economic success and are willing to accept leadership roles."



Shown are members of the WestStar class of 2023. The WestStar Leadership Program is accepting applications for its class of 2024 through Oct. 13. The WestStar program is the largest and oldest regional leadership program in Tennessee, boasting 945 graduates and welcoming its 34th class.

Participants learn leadership skills and develop strategies to help communities solve problems and maximize their potential. Participants also become part of a growing network of fellow alumni and community leaders who help shape West Tennessee's future.

WestStar is committed to advancing the regional and global community through outreach and service.

For more information, contact the WestStar Leadership Program at 731-881-7298 or visit [utm.edu/weststar](http://utm.edu/weststar).

## Burkhart to discuss chemistry of hemp at Fall Faculty lecture

**Dr. Amanda Burkhart**, assistant professor of chemistry, will present the fall Phi Kappa Phi faculty lecture at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 3, in Room 206 of the Boling University Center.

Her presentation, "The Buzz Around  $\Delta 8$ -THC: A Dive into the Chemistry of the Legal Hemp Products in Tennessee," will review the legal status of marijuana and hemp products both federally and in the state.

Burkhart will discuss current challenges associated with the popular cannabinoid called  $\Delta 8$ -tetrahydrocannabinol, more commonly known as THC.

"We'll take a dive into the chemistry of such cannabinoids as well as the current state of research on easily accessible store-bought  $\Delta 8$ -THC

products," she said.

Burkhart joined the faculty in Fall 2021. As an assistant professor at UTM, she teaches forensic science and analytical chemistry courses as well as maintaining a research group devoted to forensic chemistry research.

The event is hosted by the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

The event is open to the public, and free parking is available in the Boling University Center parking lot off of Mt. Pelia Road.

For more information, contact **Dr. Chris Hill**, President of Phi Kappa Phi Chapter 127, at 731-881-7292. RSVPs are not required but may be made through UT Martin's Runway Events Platform.



Burkhart

### addenda

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