

# addenda



The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | April 8, 2024

## The ultimate sunblock



The moon pulled in front of the sun over much of the eastern United States on April 8, bringing about a solar eclipse. The Martin area saw more than 99% coverage of the sun's disk; the only part of Tennessee in the path of totality was the northwestern corner in Lake County. The next solar eclipse that will be readily visible from Tennessee will be on Aug. 12, 2045, when the path of totality moves from California to Florida (it will pass just to the southwest of Memphis). Another campus photo from the eclipse can be found on Page 7.

## ROTC building to be named in honor of UTM grad



Lt. Gen. Dennis D. Cavin (ret.) is shown speaking at last year's Memorial Day Commemoration ceremony on May 26.

The building that houses the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at UT Martin will be given a new name on Friday, April 12, when it is named for UTM alumnus and Martin native **Lt. Gen. Dennis D. Cavin** (ret.).

Cavin received a bachelor's degree in agriculture from UT Martin in 1970 and was commissioned as a distinguished military graduate in Air Defense Artillery.

The naming ceremony will

be held at 2 p.m. at the ROTC building on the east side of Hardy M. Graham Stadium along Moody Avenue. The public is invited to attend.

**Lt. Col. Bernard House**, leader of the ROTC Skyhawk Battalion and professor of military science in the Department of Military Science and Leadership, said he met Cavin, a member of the UTM ROTC Hall of Fame, when he

**Continued on PAGE 4**

# YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

**Dr. Todd Winters**, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, and **Dr. Keith Dooley**, chair of Family and Consumer Sciences, will present a program about UTM in Kenya at the next meeting of the American Association of University Women’s Martin Branch at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 11, in Room 322 of Gooch Hall.

The event is open to the public.

This program can be seen in person or online. Contact Heidi Busch at 731-881-3078 or at [hbusch@utm.edu](mailto:hbusch@utm.edu) to view the program online.

Attendees can learn about service projects and educational advancement via the Kenya UT Martin Travel Study program. Activities and educational projects from previous summers will be shared as well as planned activities and course credit for a trip to Kenya this summer.



**Winters**



**Dooley**



**Long**



**Johnson**

The topic of the latest Go Cloud Careers’ training session offered by **Dr. Jamye Long** and **Dr. Cooper Johnson**, both associate professors of management, was titled “Reading an Annual Report.”

Participants learned about the importance of understanding a company’s financial health through evaluation of annual reports, what an annual report is, an example of an annual report and that annual reports

are one of several financial documents that provide useful information to owners, leaders, employees and investors.

As Long and Johnson explained, from an employee’s perspective, annual reports share how the company is performing. The training also provided attendees with ways in which they can utilize this information to advocate for promotions and other forms of career advancements.

**Dr. Jason Roberts**, professor of animal science, and **Dr. Brittany Cole**, assistant professor of finance, mentored their University Scholar student **Ainsley Watt**, a veterinary science major, for her presentation at the 2024 Experiential Learning Leadership Institute Conference on April 3.

Watt presented her scholar’s project, “Man’s Best Friend or Best Study Buddy? Student Classroom Performance and Canine Interaction.”

Her project studies the value of animal interaction in the classroom and the positive



**Roberts**

influence animal interaction has on student performance.

In her project, students interact with a dog for 30



**Cole**

minutes prior to an exam, and their exam performance is compared to the exam performance for a group of

students who do not interact with a dog prior to the exam.

Students who interact with the dog prior to the finance exam perform up to 24 points higher, on average, on their exams than students who do not interact.

The project results have important implications for how universities can think outside the box to better manage student mental health struggles, anxiety and stress that sometimes accompany exam performance.

Roberts and Cole serve as Watt’s faculty mentors for the project.

**Promote a faculty or staff member by sending a YoUTM to [addenda@utm](mailto:addenda@utm).**

# Beene earns national award for work with students

When it comes to academic tutoring and preparation for the ACT test, perhaps no name is better known in Tennessee than **Alex Beene**.

For his dedication to helping students improve their academics, he was awarded the President's Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award on Feb. 20.

The award is based on exceptional service and dedication to making a positive impact on society with more than 4,000 hours of public service. It recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a lifelong commitment to volunteerism and have made a significant impact on their communities and beyond.

"This is a great honor," Beene said. "It is great acknowledgement for our programs, great acknowledgement for our students. The great thing is that it has opened up more people to knowing about our programs."

Beene works through the UTM Office of University Outreach and is an adjunct teacher in general studies at some of UT



**Alex Beene is shown speaking at the WestStar ALStar Conference in February. Beene was awarded the President's Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award for his work with ACT Prep and other student assistance programs.**

Martin's regional centers.

"It's been 14 years since I started in education," he said. "Eleven of those years

have been with UTM, and they have been just the best years ever for someone who

**Continued on PAGE 5**

# I-Heart-UTM Week returns to campus next week

There is no week that has so many people showing their dedication to and appreciation for UT Martin than I-Heart-UTM Week.

The 10th annual I-Heart-UTM Week will take place April 15-19, with activities taking place April 13-21.

I-Heart-UTM Week celebrates Skyhawk spirit and community support. UTM Alumni sponsors the week-long celebration with the Student Alumni Council, UTM Flight Crew, Residence Life, Student Government Association and the Care Team.

Throughout the week, the Dunagan Alumni Center will have "Stock Captain's Closet," where people donate nearly-new professional attire for students can find clothes for interviews and other professional needs. Donations can be made at the Dunagan Alumni Center or the Student Life office.

Events on Monday, April 15, include the registration celebration and the Care Team cookout from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Both are student events.

On Tuesday, April 16, seniors are invited to the senior drive-thru at the Dunagan Alumni Center from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to



pick up alumni swag and an Orange Crush and a blueberry muffin.

Dogs Days will also take place that day at the Boling University Center patio, where students are invited to bring their pups for free I-Heart-UTM goodies, while supplies last.

April 16 also brings Fitness with the First Lady, featuring UTM alumna **Rafielle Freeman** in a fun fitness workout at the Rec Center.

On Wednesday, April 17, students are invited to Chill with the Chancellor with **Dr. Yancy Freeman** on the quad from noon to 1 p.m. and enjoy the petting zoo on the quad from noon to 2 p.m.

The Care Team and Campus Rec will

bring Yoga on the Quad from 4 to 5 p.m.

On Thursday, April 18, the Dunagan Alumni Center will be the site for Martin Trivia Night at 6 p.m.

Flight Crew Presents "Aux Cord Wars" can be seen at 7 p.m. at the Skyhawk Fieldhouse, with a high-energy DJ battle and music game show with prizes for students.

Friday, April 19, will bring the Spring Football Game Tailgate Party at Hardy Graham Stadium starting at 5 p.m., followed by the Navy and White Spring Football Game at 6:45 p.m.

These are just a few of the events to be enjoyed during I-Heart-UTM Week. For a full schedule of events or more information, visit [alumni.utm.edu/iheartutm](http://alumni.utm.edu/iheartutm).

# Skyhawk Spirit Awards for March are announced

The winners of the Skyhawk Spirit Awards for the month of March are **Kim Barnett-Stone**, administrative specialist for the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, and **Dr. Dexter Davis**, professor of sport management.

Barnett-Stone was named to the Skyhawk Spirit Innovation Award, which has a \$250 cash award, while Davis was named to the Skyhawk Spirit Award, which has a \$50 cash award.

Barnett-Stone earned her award by creating and implementing the Mentoring Administrative Professionals Program (MAPP) for administrative professionals and other professionals who are new to working at UT Martin.



**Barnett-Stone**

“This program is needed to ensure that new employees have the vitally important support learning to navigate our IRIS system,” said **Michael Washington**, who nominated Barnett-Stone. “Through the MAPP program, employees receive one-on-one mentoring and have access to their mentor



**Davis**

until they are comfortable navigating IRIS independently.

“In addition to one-on-one training, MAPP also offers periodic, topic-specific training as well, beyond using IRIS, such as navigating K@TE.”

Davis earned his award through his work with students to gain experience in the sport

management field.

“He has taken students to work professional sporting events for the last 11 years,” said **Dr. John Overby**, who nominated Davis for the award. “These events include the Super Bowl, NHL All-Star game, multiple amateur golf tournaments.”

The Skyhawk Spirit Award initiative was announced in January as a way to recognize employee contributions that exceed expectations.

All regular full- and part-time faculty and staff up to the level of director are eligible to receive Spirit Awards.

Those wanting to nominate someone for either of the Skyhawk Spirit Awards should send the nomination to [skyhawkspiritawards@utm.edu](mailto:skyhawkspiritawards@utm.edu).

## This Week's Skyhawk Home Events

Thursday-Saturday,  
April 11-13

- 56th UT Martin Spring College Rodeo, 7:30 p.m. nightly, Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex

Friday, April 12

- Baseball vs. Little Rock, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field (OVC game)

Saturday, April 13

- Baseball vs. Little Rock, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field (OVC game)

Sunday, April 14

- Baseball vs. Little Rock, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field (OVC game)

Full athletics schedules can be found at [utmsports.com](http://utmsports.com).



## ROTC from PAGE 1

arrived at UT Martin two years ago.

“In the two years that I’ve been here, he has done a lot for the program,” he said. “He’s been a guest speaker, he has come by to talk with the cadets and he has been the guest speaker for our Memorial Day ceremony.

“He just stays connected; he stays invested with the program.”

House said that naming the building in honor of a UT Martin alumnus and three-star general would be inspiring for future ROTC students.

“They can walk in, and we’ve got his bio and picture right there in the building so they can walk by and read about him,” he said. “It gives them something to aspire to, that they can see that somebody graduated from this university and achieved such a high rank in the military. That tells them that if that’s something they want to do, they can do it.”

Cavin earned a master’s degree in management from Webster

University in St. Louis in 1982 and is a graduate of the Army Command and General Staff College and the Department of Defense’s Senior Executive Level Education Program of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

Cavin served as a career Army Air Defense Artillery officer in short range and high-altitude air defense artillery for more than 20 years. He has served in command and leadership positions from platoon to Army major commands.

In 1996, Cavin earned his first star in becoming a brigadier general and served as the deputy commanding general and later command general of the U.S. Army Air Defense Artillery Center until 2000.

Cavin served as the commanding general of U.S. Army Recruiting Command at Fort Knox, Kentucky. His final command was as the commanding general of the U.S. Army Accessions Command at Fort Monroe, Virginia.

Cavin joined Lockheed

Martin in October 2004 after completing 34 years of service in the Army. As vice president of international air and missile defense strategic initiatives and vice president of corporate business development (Army and air and missile defense programs), he was responsible for global identification, qualification and pursuit of international air and missile defense programs.

In 1999, Cavin was honored with UT Martin’s Outstanding Alumni Award, and in 2015, the Nashville Business Journal listed him as one of the initial 22 Outstanding Nashville Veterans.

The Skyhawk Battalion includes ROTC programs at UT Martin, Murray State University, Freed-Hardeman University of Henderson, Bethel University of McKenzie, Lane University, Union University and Jackson State Community College of Jackson. The battalion consists of 96 cadets this year. The ROTC program was established in September 1952.

# Well-being summit to be held Friday at university center

The Office of Student Conduct and Care will host a Care Team Collegiate Well-Being Summit from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Friday, April 12, in Room 206 of the Boling University Center.

Admission to the summit is free to UT Martin students, faculty and staff and is \$30 for community members.

Registration is required to take part in the lunch at noon, and that can be done at [www.utm.edu/wellbeingsummit](http://www.utm.edu/wellbeingsummit).

**Priscilla Price**, the interim coordinator of Student Outreach and Support within the Office of Student Conduct and Care, said the summit is “all about prevention and awareness.”

“We try to identify trends or concerns on campus,” she said. “So, we try to bring awareness to those and bring in

professionals.”

Price said the Care Team held a resource food camp for the faculty and staff last fall to let them know about the resources it provides on campus.

Student Outreach and Support is a nonclinical office that helps students break down barriers.

The Office of Student Conduct and Care is located in Room 215 of the Boling University Center and provides services to students currently enrolled at UT Martin.

The summit will consist of several helpful programs, including:



Price

- 10 a.m.: “Breaking the Stigma in Mental Health,” Emily Jernigan of the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network.

- 11 a.m.: “Combating Compassion Fatigue and Burnout Utilizing Self-Care Techniques,” Jaime Harper of the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

- 12:30 p.m.: “I Have Anxiety (So what?): How to Prioritize Your Mental Health in College,” Wes Woodon.

- 1:30 p.m.: “Opioids, Stimulants and Overdose Prevention,” Melesa Lassiter, Weakley County Prevention Coalition.

- 2:30 p.m.: “The Addicted Mind,” Keith Jernigan, Peer Project Lifeline coordinator.

More information about the summit can be found by emailing [utmcareteams@utm.edu](mailto:utmcareteams@utm.edu) or calling 731-881-7703.

## BEENE from PAGE 1

is an educator because it has allowed me the flexibility to teach ACT, to help the schools with college prep, to be able to assist students with anything connected to going to higher ed or getting into a career.

“I have taught ACT prep through UTM for all of these years, but I have also helped schools and all types of nonprofits and other entities throughout West Tennessee get to where they need to be.”

Beene has been the general studies and test preparation instructor at UT Martin since January 2013 and has been the assistant administrator for the State of Tennessee Adult Education program since December 2023.

Beene has helped more than

7,500 students in his career and earned the 2023 Outstanding Teacher of the Year award from the Coalition On Adult Basic Education.

Beene’s educational achievements have seen him in a wide variety of buildings and facilities, including schools, churches, jails, rehabilitation centers and mental health facilities.

“Some of those have been for people to earn their high school equivalency, or General Educational Development (GED) test, and others have been for career readiness and college readiness, ACT prep,” he said.

Beene’s mother, **Deidra Beene**, came to UT Martin in 2004 and spent a decade as the director of the UTM McNairy

County Center/Selmer. She died in 2014.

Beene said the Office of University Outreach has been responsible for more than \$500,000 in scholarship money obtained by the students it has served.

“That’s through money that students have gained by taking our programs,” he said. “That’s by increasing their ACT score or passing a GED exam – doing something that increases their scholarship amount or their take-home money.”

Beene said that he and Jennifer Cooper, the director of the Office of University Outreach, consider themselves to be “the best-kept secret in terms of increasing wages in West Tennessee.”

“Any dollars that you get to

save through scholarships is money that you’re not going to have to pay back,” he said. “That’s more money that you can keep in your own wallet when you start making money.”

“And, if you’re able to further your education by getting a diploma, that amount of money is infinite in terms of what you can get. We’ve had some people go from making minimum wage, \$7.25 an hour, to now making \$28 an hour, and that’s real money that they can help their families with.”

For more information about the President’s Volunteer Service Lifetime Achievement Award, visit [presidentialserviceawards.gov](http://presidentialserviceawards.gov).

For more information about the UTM Office of University Outreach, click [here](#).

## You Tell Me

- **Question** – What is the process for reporting a university-related death?

- **Answer** – The Office of University Relations is responsible for notifying the university community via email about the death of an active or retired UT Martin employee. Those submitting information should complete the form provided at the university relations page link to submit the needed information for this communication. Every effort will be made to send the email in a timely manner. In addition to the email communication, an announcement will be shared in Addenda.

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

## Ride 'im, Skyhawk!

This photo was taken from last year's Spring College Rodeo and serves as a reminder that the 56th UT Martin Spring College Rodeo will be held April 11-13 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex. Tickets – while they last – can be purchased through [purplepass.com](https://purplepass.com) by clicking [here](#).



## Captain's Challenge draws over 1,400 donors

The 10th annual Captain's Challenge took place April 3, and one of the main focuses of the annual gifting drive was increasing the number of people making gifts to the university.

This year, there were 1,441 donors in the Captain's Challenge, 20.1% above the goal of 1,200 donors.

Those donors gifted \$428,527 to UT Martin.

**Matt Borden**, the associate director of annual giving, said that ranks third among donations made during the Captain's Challenge, and added that the number of donors is equally impressive.

"Especially coming off an extremely successful RISE Campaign last year, the increased donor count is critical to long-term UTM fundraising success," he said. "More donors engaged with UTM helps immensely with areas such as programming and event planning."

Borden said focusing on the number of donors was "strategic," helping to grow the annual giving base.

To make a donation to the university, department or program, visit [giving.utm.edu](https://giving.utm.edu). Prospective donors can select from several areas of support at that site.

For more information about giving to UT Martin, call the UT Martin Alumni Association's Martin Office at 731-881-3611.

## UTM, JSCC enter dual enrollment agreement

UT Martin and Jackson State Community College entered into a dual-enrollment agreement on April 3, providing a seamless pathway to transition from JSCC to UT Martin.

Dual admission for first-year students is available to students who meet admission guidelines

for both schools, have a 3.0 or better high school grade-point average (GPA) or a 2.7 high school GPA and a minimum ACT score of 21 or SAT score of 980.

Students can transfer from JSCC to UT Martin with a completed associate degree at

JSCC or have completed 60 hours at JSCC with a minimum 2.0 GPA.

"We are thrilled to partner with Jackson State Community College," said **UTM Chancellor Yancy Freeman**. "Students have an incredible opportunity for training, gaining credentials and getting degrees in West Tennessee."

JSCC President Carol Rothstein said the agreement was years in the making.

"Over the years, we have seen more than 1,000 students transfer from Jackson State to UT Martin successfully," she said.

"We are here today to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to support student success and community prosperity by renewing and reconfirming this partnership."



UTM Chancellor Yancy Freeman shakes hands with JSCC President Carol Rothstein on April 3 following the announcement of the schools' dual enrollment agreement.

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

# Campus patrols to increase around crosswalks

Officers with the UT Martin Department of Public Safety will increase their patrols to ensure safety at the university’s crosswalks.

Public Safety Director **Michael O’Neill** said that his office has received several calls regarding close calls between pedestrians and street traffic.

There are signs along the roads at crosswalks that flash when a pedestrian enters the sidewalk just before stepping onto the street.

“The lights are very visible and are located on University Street, and one is in front of Student Rec on Mt. Pelia,” he said. “Drivers should slow their speed during the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. to make sure they are able to react if someone enters the crosswalks.

“Drivers should be prepared to stop when they see someone on the sidewalk in front of the crosswalk. If the driver in any way encroaches the crosswalk with a pedestrian in the crosswalk or just stepping into the crosswalk, they are in violation and subject to be stopped.”

Pedestrians also have a responsibility to enter the streets cutiously.



O’Neill

“They do not need to be looking at their phones or computers,” O’Neill said. “If wearing headphones or earbuds, at least one ear should be exposed to hear outside sources.

“Pedestrians should always do what their mother told them prior to crossing the street: Look both ways and be prepared to move out of the way if needed.”

O’Neill said impatience or inattention is not worth hurting someone else.

“The value of life far outweighs being late, answering a text or phone call, adjusting a radio station or being in your own thoughts,” he said. “Slow down, pay attention and make sure everyone on the road gets to where they are going safely.”

## Lights out in Martin



Students and faculty took time to stop and watch the sun disappear – not behind clouds, but behind the moon. Martin witnessed its second near-total solar eclipse in seven years on April 8, with 99.1% of the sun’s disk covered by the moon. Some skywatchers noticed Venus and Jupiter near the spectacle after the moon covered up almost all of the sun.

### addenda

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