

addenda

The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | March 17, 2025



Posing for a photo March 14 at the Boling University Center are (l-r) Tim Amyx, Vol State registrar and assistant vice president for strategic enrollment systems; Leah Balli, Vol State director of admissions; Mykaela Waterfeld, UTM director of enrollment communications and operations; Dr. Destin Tucker, UTM assistant vice chancellor for enrollment management; Dr. Wendi Tostenson, president of Vol State Community College; Erica Bell, UTM executive director of regional centers and online programs; Emily Short, Vol State vice president of student services; Dr. Meredith Young, Vol State Springfield Center director; and John Barte, UTM Springfield Center coordinator.

Springfield Center officially approved by SACSCOC

The UT Martin Springfield Regional Center was approved in February by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, or SACSCOC.

This officially gives UT Martin six regional centers, with Springfield joining regional centers in Jackson, McNairy County/Selmer, Parsons, Ripley and Somerville.

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission voted for approval of the UT Martin Springfield Regional Center last year on May 22. This center is housed on the Volunteer State Community College-Springfield campus.

The addition of this regional center comes

after a successful partnership between Vol State-Springfield and UT Martin. In November 2023, the campuses entered an agreement that allowed students to pursue post-secondary education in agriculture, education, health care and technology sectors onsite.

“We are providing agriculture business, farm and ranch management and the Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies degree at the Springfield Center,” said Erica Bell, executive director of the Office of Regional Centers and Online Programs.

“We also have a dual-enrollment partnership that began with Robertson County Schools last fall. That allows

students who are interested in ag business or farm and ranch management to start their general education curriculum at Vol State and their concentration degree-specific courses with UT Martin.”

Bell added that students enrolled in dual-enrollment courses through Vol State could complete the remaining year of those general-education courses the year after they graduate high school and then move on to degree-specific courses through UT Martin.

“Basically, it cuts off an entire year,” she said. “In three years, they can walk away with a Bachelor of Science degree from UT Martin without ever leaving Robertson

Continued on PAGE 8

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

Cheyenne Stewart, a senior management major from Centerville completing an internship with **Dr. Lajuan Davis**, professor of business communication, submitted a paper to the Interdisciplinary Student Writing Conference (ISWC), and it was accepted for presentation at this year's conference on April 9.

The title of the paper is "Experiential Learning at Its Finest: Business Communication Students Create an Information Hub for All Business Students."



Davis

The project that yielded the paper was a semester-long endeavor facilitated by Davis and **Dr. Derek Ezell**, assistant professor of marketing.



Ezell

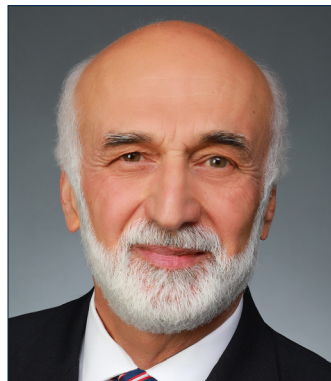
Advanced business communication students participating in the project underwent training to create a SharePoint site to serve as an

information hub for business and potential business students after students enrolled in the class determined that a lack of communication in the College of Business and Global Affairs was deterring students in the college from receiving valuable information about classes, internships, travel study, travel abroad and available jobs.

Stewart is the first business student to submit and have a paper accepted to the ISWC. Her internship is sponsored by the Dunagan Chair of Excellence in Banking, directed by **John Clark**.

Dr. Ahmad Tootoonchi, dean of the College of Business and Global Affairs, was recognized for outstanding service as a volunteer during the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business Deans Conference, held Feb. 3-5 in Las Vegas.

Tootoonchi has been an AACSB volunteer for 12 years and has served on multiple peer review teams as a member and as a chair. He also served on the



Tootoonchi

initial accreditation committee.

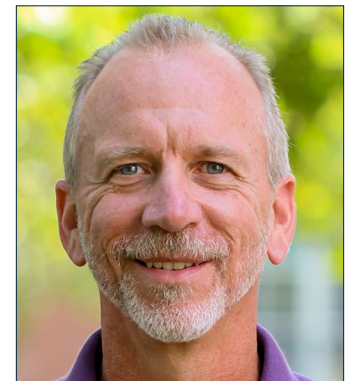
Dr. Jennifer Greenwood and **Dr. Tom Blanchard**, both professors from the Department of Biological Sciences, attended the eighth annual West Tennessee Water Resources Symposium on Feb.

27-28 in Jackson.

Greenwood gave the oral presentation, "Introduction to Diatom Communities at the Deloach Creek Restoration Project Site in Central West Tennessee."



Greenwood



Blanchard

Dr. Roberto Mancusi, professor of voice, was notified in February that he was selected as a finalist for the American Prize in Vocal Performance (men in art song) - The Friedrich & Virginia Schorr Memorial Award.

According to the American Prize website, "The American Prize National Nonprofit Competitions in the Performing Arts is the nation's most comprehensive series of contests in the performing arts. The American Prize is unique in scope and structure, designed



Mancusi

to recognize and reward the best performing artists, directors, ensembles and composers in the United States...based on submitted recordings."

Promote a faculty or staff member by sending a YoUTM to addenda@utm.edu!



Students from the College of Business and Global Affairs who attended the Tennessee Bankers Association Credit Conference on March 6 in Nashville included (front row, l-r) Alyssa Farley, Emily Potts, Paris Hodge, Lacey Williams, Makenzi Reynolds, Anna Batte, (back row, l-r) Van True, Aaron Bartholomew, Sophie Harrison, Rebecca Worley, Cheyenne Stewart, Emily Fields, Daniel Hunt, Mike Schaefer and Mohammad Hason.

Students attend TBA Credit Conference in Nashville

College of Business and Global Affairs students, faculty and staff attended the 2025 Tennessee Bankers Association Credit Conference on March 6 in Nashville.

The TBA Credit Conference involves more than 600 loan officers, loan support personnel and executive-level managers as well as college students from Tennessee universities.

Fifteen students from the UTM College of Business and

Global Affairs were sponsored by nine banks to attend the conference, learn about the credit and lending industry and engage in networking opportunities.

Sponsoring banks include Bank of Milan, Centennial Bank, Commercial Bank & Trust, First Bank, First Citizens, First Farmers & Merchants, Greenfield Banking Company, Security Bank and Simmons Bank.

Additionally, eight of the 15 students attended to meet scholarship requirements for scholarships funded by First Farmers & Merchants, Centennial Bank, Security Bank & Trust and Commercial Bank & Trust.

After attending industry sessions and hearing an inspiring talk from former U.S. Army veteran and Afghan prisoner of war Jessica Lynch,

the students ended the day with two leadership sessions centered around professional development and making industry connections.

John Clark, director of the Dunagan Banking Chair of Excellence; **Dr. Brittany Cole**, assistant professor of finance; and **Traci Crawford**, director of the Mid-South Agricultural Finance Conference, attended the conference with the students.

Brendan O'Bryan, a senior veterinary science major from Murfreesboro, presented his University Scholars project, "All Costs (and Creatures) Great and Small: Price Sensitivity and Livestock Production," at the Southern Agriculture Economics Association annual meeting on Feb. 3.

Dr. Jason Roberts, professor

of animal science, and **Dr. Brittany Cole**, assistant professor of finance, serve as faculty mentors on the project.

The project uses a livestock producer's survey to gauge price sensitivity to veterinary care expenses. Despite the increasing costs and scarcity of large animal service providers, livestock producers are not sensitive to

veterinary care prices.

Livestock producers frequently use veterinary care, with 82% of respondents reporting they used a veterinarian in the most recent three months.

Most producers (91%) have long-term relationships with their veterinarians, admit the emergencies strain the budget more than routine care and feel

veterinary care is priced fairly.

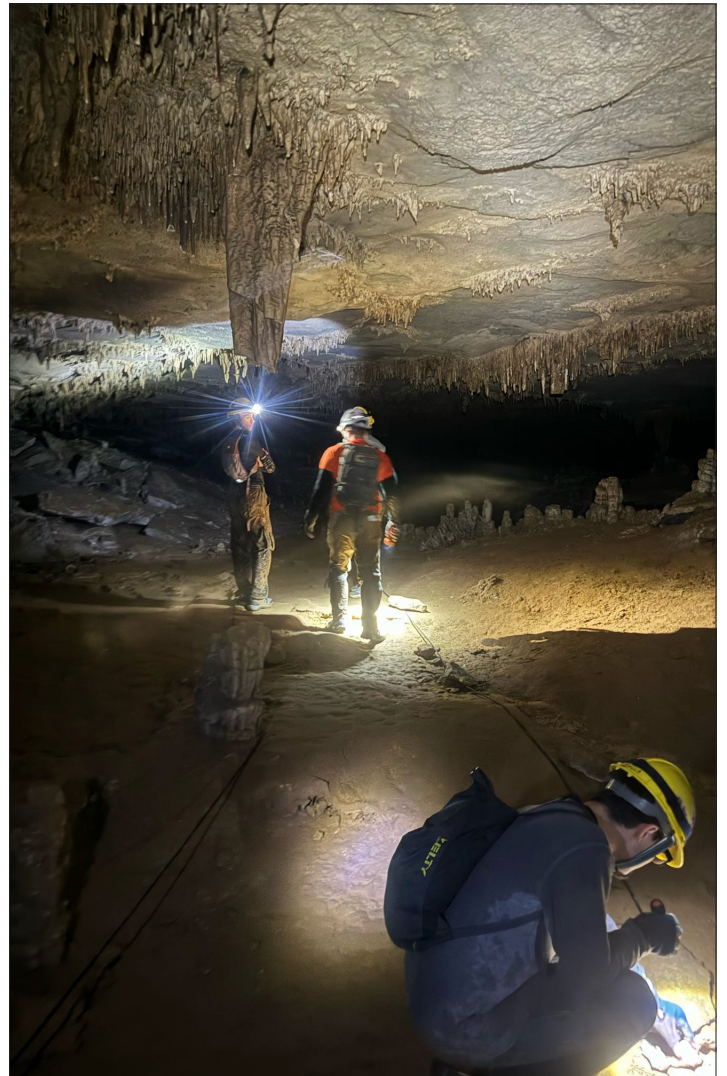
Even though the livestock producers surveyed feel they are sensitive to herd health care pricing, a majority admit to a willingness to pay whatever price veterinarians deem fair in emergency situations.

In fact, 91% report they feel financially prepared to cover all emergency veterinary expenses.

Students take geomorphology trip to northern Alabama



Students in the geomorphology class (GEOL 355) taught by Dr. Stan Dunagan, professor of geology, spent the weekend of Feb. 28-March 2 exploring 2.3 miles of Tumbling Rock Cave in northern Alabama for more than five hours and saw stalagmites, stalactites, columns, a 400-foot dome, salamanders, cave crickets, bats, huge rooms with significant breakdown, underground streams and the remnants of Civil War saltpeter excavations. They also explored the Cumberland Plateau and examined karst and fluvial landforms. Shown at left are (l-r) Angus McCoy, Breylan Hedgecoth and Brooke Parker; navigating a large breakdown pile. In the photo below are Mandi Walker (with headlamp facing), Dunagan (orange shirt) and McCoy (foreground). This location within Tumbling Rock Cave is called the Totem Galley with extensive stalactites, stalagmites and columns.



You Tell Me

• **Question** – How are spring break dates determined?

• **Answer** – The decision about spring break dates is made by the Calendar Committee, a group appointed annually by the university's Committee on Committees. The decision is based on aligning the university's spring break with that of Weakley County Schools. UT Martin spring break will be March 24-30. You can find the current and future academic calendars [at this link](#).

Submit your questions to Addenda at addenda@utm.edu.

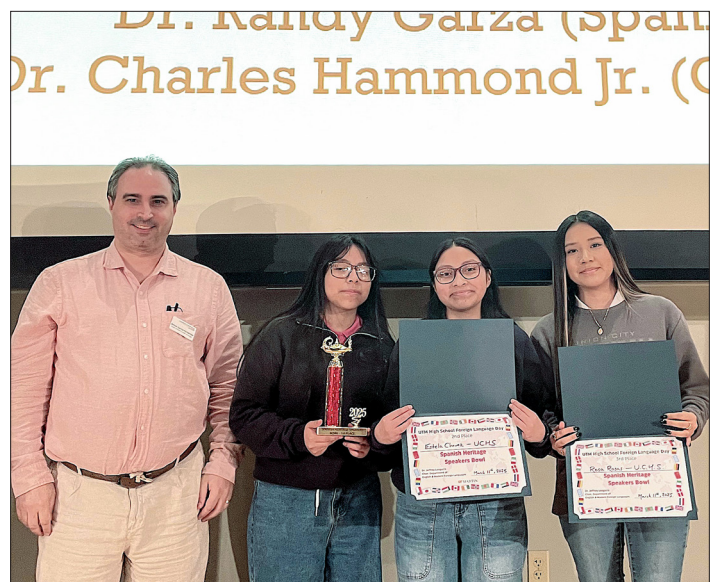
UTM Spring Rodeo tickets go on sale March 18



Junior Ryanne Frecker of Lizton, Indiana, shows her skill at barrel racing in last year's UT Martin Spring Rodeo. Tickets for this year's Spring Rodeo will go on sale at noon March 18. The rodeo will be held April 17-19 at the Ned McWherter Agricultural Complex. An exclusive link to purchase tickets can be found [at this site](#). The action will begin at 7:30 p.m. each night. All tickets are reserved seating, as the price is \$12 on Thursday and \$20 for each of the Friday and Saturday sessions. Children age 5 and under get in free, but must sit in an adult's lap. Due to increasingly high demand, fans are encouraged to buy tickets early, as sellout crowds are once again anticipated. There is a six-seat limit for each nightly session per login. For the fifth consecutive year, the performance rounds of each session will be streamed live online for \$10 per night. Streaming access can also be purchased at the ticket link above. The UT Martin Spring College Rodeo is annually considered one of the largest-attended events on campus and has consistently been named the "Rodeo of the Year" in the Ozark Region.

Modern Foreign Language High School Day held March 11

The Department of English and Modern Foreign Languages hosted the annual Modern Foreign Language High School Day on March 11. About 100 high school students and teachers participated in the event. High school students competed in language quiz bowls, postcard art and video skit competitions, among other fun activities. Slade Robertson, a UTM alumnus with a major in music and a minor in Japanese, and Sarah Del Valle, a cell and molecular biology major, performed Japanese and Mexican songs at the welcome ceremony. Pictured are Dr. Anton Garcia-Fernandez, professor of Spanish, with the Spanish Heritage Bowl winners, (l-r) Antonia Chavez, Union City High School, first place; Estela Chaves, Union City High School, second place; and Rosa Rosas, Union City High School, third place.



Scenes from the March 12 town hall meeting



A faculty and staff town hall meeting was held March 12 in Watkins Auditorium of the Boling University Center to enable Chancellor Yancy Freeman (above left) to hear thoughts and opinions related to the most recent McLean Employee Engagement Survey. The online survey asked questions about employee satisfaction and workplace environment. The town hall was streamed live to the UT Martin regional centers so those employees could participate as well. Freeman described the town hall as “an opportunity for open dialogue, shared perspectives, and collaborative problem-solving.” The survey was directed by Petra McPhearson (above right), senior vice chancellor for finance and administration.



Karen Elmore (above photo), senior library assistant, and Judy Sandefer (right photo), executive assistant to the chancellor, speak at the March 12 town hall meeting. Both were among several people to speak at the meeting, which was well attended. Faculty and staff expressed their ideas and opinions and listened to Freeman’s responses.



UT President Boyd attends Generosity and Gratitude celebration



UT System President Randy Boyd was among the 186 people who attended the 2025 Celebration of Generosity and Gratitude on March 13 in the Duncan Ballroom in the Boling University Center. The event began in 2017 and honors scholarship supporters who met with students and learned how individual giving makes a positive difference for students. In addition to remarks from President Boyd, other speakers included Chancellor Yancy Freeman and Chancellor Emeritus Nick Dunagan.



President Boyd speaks with Sade Currie, a sophomore criminal justice major from Ripley, who was the recipient of the Randy and Jenny Boyd UTM Promise Scholarship Endowment.

The University of Tennessee at Martin
03/19/2025, 3-4 PM CT


Keynote Speaker
Dr. Adnan Rasool

Innovating Math and Stats Education:
 Partnering with the Center for Teaching and Learning

This discussion explores how the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) can support the Department of Mathematics and Statistics in improving student engagement, integrating technology, and enhancing instructional practices. Key topics include active learning in STEM, inclusive teaching, effective assessments, and faculty development.

[The University of Tennessee at Martin]

1st Weekly Colloquium (LS 311)
 Department of Mathematics and Statistics



SPRINGFIELD from PAGE 1

County.”

UT Martin is also working in partnership with the University of Tennessee Highland Rim Ag Research and Education Center in Springfield.

Dr. Wendi Tostenson (pronounced “TOSS-ten-son”), president of Volunteer State Community College, said the addition of UT Martin is a boon for people in and around Robertson County who want to earn a four-year degree.

“It’s all at Vol State, so I think the addition of the UT Martin courses and having the availability of a four-year degree at the Springfield Center is a game-changer for Vol State and the community,” she said. “The partnership provides our students with seamless pathways to continue their education from dual enrollment to an associate’s degree to a four-year bachelor’s degree, and they don’t have to leave the region. That’s really important.

“This partnership directly addresses the workforce needs in our area and it provides educational offerings at home, which make that very appealing to our Springfield and Robertson County students and, really, for all of Vol State. We have students on the Gallatin campus who could then transfer and continue to take

those courses at the Springfield campus because of the proximity of those locations.”

Tostenson added that UT Martin’s dual-enrollment agreement with Robertson County Schools is another asset for the Springfield Center.

“Our dual-enrollment students finish high school in Robertson County, they have a clear pathway with Vol State and then, with UT Martin and the Springfield Center specifically, those students are able to get an associate’s degree and transfer seamlessly,” she said. “And, there’s not that fear in the transferability. Often, students who get an associate’s degree and seek a four-year degree have some concern when they try to navigate a new system, a new school, a new process.

“I believe that the work we’ve done with UT Martin provides that stability for those students, where they don’t have to be concerned or scared. They just know that they’re taking the next class. Any time that we can make pathways in education easier to navigate and maneuver, the better it is for our students. By keeping students local, we not only support their academic and career goals but also strengthen the workforce pipeline for Robertson County, ensuring that our region continues to grow and thrive.”



Tostenson said that the agreement with UT Martin and Vol State goes beyond an educational opportunity.

“For the Springfield Center, this expansion strengthens its role as a higher education hub in Robertson County,” she said. “It will attract more students, increase engagement with local

businesses and industries and support regional economic growth by developing a more skilled workforce.”

For more information about the UT Martin Springfield Center, contact the university’s Office of Regional Centers and Online Programs at 731-881-7089.

This Week’s Skyhawk Home Athletics Events

Tuesday, March 18

- Baseball vs. Union (Tenn.) (dh), 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Wednesday, March 19

- Beach volleyball vs. North Alabama (dh), noon, Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex.

Friday, March 21

- *Beach volleyball vs. Eastern Illinois, 2 p.m., Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex.
- *Baseball vs. Southeast Missouri, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.
- *Beach volleyball vs. Morehead State, 6 p.m., Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex.

Saturday, March 21

- *Softball vs. Eastern Illinois (dh), noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.
- *Baseball vs. Southeast

Missouri, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

- *Beach volleyball vs. Lindenwood, 4 p.m., Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex.
- *Beach volleyball vs. Tennessee Tech, 6 p.m., Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex.

Sunday, March 22

- *Softball vs. Eastern Illinois, noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.
- *Baseball vs. Southeast Missouri, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

* - conference competition
Full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com.
Dates and times are subject to change.

• Watch “Skyhawk Sports Talk” each week, archived at utmsports.com! New episodes are posted each Monday.

Campus Calendar

March 24-28

- Spring break.

March 27-29

- The Wildlife Society Southeastern Conclave, several sites on campus.

Wednesday, April 2

- Captain’s Challenge, all day; visit challenge.utm.edu.

Thursday, April 3

- ELLI Conference, Discovery Park of America, Union City; visit www.utm.edu.elli.

April 7-11

- I Heart UTM Week.

Events are subject to cancellation; dates, times and sites are subject to change.

addenda