

# addenda

The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | April 28, 2025

## Senior Walk is one last trip for graduates-to-be



Graduating seniors take a walk around the UT Martin campus April 24 one last time before graduation. Joined by Captain Skyhawk, seniors were greeted with signs, bubbles and cheers from faculty, staff and students lining the sidewalk from the patio at the Boling University Center to the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Two graduation ceremonies will be held Saturday, May 3, at the Elam Center.

## Adcox to speak at UTM commencement ceremonies

Miles Adcox, a nationally known behavioral health and wellness expert and speaker, will deliver the commencement address Saturday, May 3, during both commencement ceremonies at UT Martin.

The ceremonies will be held at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. Tickets will not be required to attend either ceremony. Doors will open 45 minutes before each event begins.

A 1998 UT Martin graduate with a bachelor's degree in health and human performance, Adcox also earned a master's

degree in human performance and sport studies at UT Knoxville in 2000.

He is the chairman and proprietor of Onsite Wellness Group, a globally renowned brand offering self-development and personal growth workshops, leadership retreats, digital master classes, and residential mental-wellness care.

Onsite operates campuses in Tennessee and California, serving clients from around the globe with mobile and in-person experiences.

Adcox has dedicated his career to helping

people unlock their fullest potential. He has helped redefine the intersection of mental wellness, leadership, and performance coaching, making wellness more attractive to individuals, artists, athletes, teams, and organizations.

His work at Onsite has been featured on 20/20, Good Morning America, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, Dr. Phil, and more. He is the founder of Human School, Onsite Entertainment, Milestones at Onsite, The Oaks, and the Okay Project

**Continued on PAGE 5**



## YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

**Dr. Louis Kolitsch**, professor of mathematics, published a paper, “Partition results related to a special case of Jacobi’s tripleproduct identity,” in *The Ramanujan Journal*, an international journal devoted to the areas of mathematics influenced by Srinivasa Ramanujan Aiyangar.

The article can be found [at this site](#). The paper was published April 3 in Vol. 67 of *The Ramanujan Journal*.

The paper presented some



**Kolitsch**

partition results related to a special case of Jacobi’s Triple Product Identity.

**Dr. Adnan Rasool**, associate professor of political science, was quoted as an expert in the April 2025 issue of *Business Insider* online magazine for an article entitled “Why an \$8.8 trillion slice of the global economy escaped being hit by Trump’s tariffs.”

In the article, Rasool explains why the services sector was not tariffed and the critical nature of that decision.



**Rasool**

**Dr. Richard Robinson**, professor of mass media and strategic communication, was the guest speaker at The Jackson Rotary Club on April 23.

Robinson spoke about how students in the Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communication learn real-world applications to their education.

He also spoke about students’ broadcasting and production work at radio station WUTM (90.3 FM The Hawk).

Carlin Cochran, a junior mass media and strategic communication major from Nunnally, was also in attendance



**Robinson**

at the meeting.

Robinson told the audience about the versatility that a degree in mass media and strategic communication has, citing several different fields that graduates have found jobs in.

## Shepard to speak in UTM Research Series at Martin Public Library

The UT Martin Research Series is heading off-campus for a thought-provoking event at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, May 6, at the Martin Public Library.

**Dr. Derrick Shepard**, assistant professor of counseling, will present “Privilege, Power & Differences: How Social Class is All Around Us,” a talk that draws from his research into social stratification and the power structures that shape our society.

“Structural powers — including economics, education and culture — can lead to systemic inequalities,” said Shepard. “The key question is: Who thrives under these conditions, and why?”

Shepard has taught in UT Martin’s Department of Educational Studies since 2021. He holds degrees from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and Tennessee Tech University, and earned his doctorate in counselor education and supervision from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

While at UT Knoxville, he also served as assistant director of the university’s Academic Success Center.

A nationally recognized scholar and presenter, Shepard has delivered over 40 presentations at international, national and regional



**Shepard**

conferences.

His publication record includes journal articles and book chapters focused on class awareness and training for counselors and counselor educators.

He is a past recipient of the Outstanding Scholarship Award from UT Martin’s College of Education, Health, and Behavioral Sciences.

This event is free and open to the public. It is co-sponsored by the Martin Public Library, the Friends of the Martin Public Library, UT Martin’s Division of Academic Affairs, and the UT Martin Libraries.

The presentation will be held at the Martin Public Library’s downtown location at 410 S. Lindell St.

For more information, contact **Dr. Erik Nordberg**, dean of the Paul Meek Library, at 731-881-7070.

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



# UTM public safety officers graduate from academy



Aaron Alden and Michael Reid-Wade graduated in April from the Blount County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Academy and are now Tennessee certified police officers. Pictured at the graduation event were (above photo, l-r) Blount County Sheriff's Office Capt. Josh Blair, Blount County Sheriff James Berrong, UTM Officer Aaron Alden and Dr. Michael O'Neill, UTM director of public safety. In the photo below are Blair, Berrong, Officer Michael Reid-Wade and O'Neill.





# Inventor, entrepreneur Lathan visits UTM campus

Dr. Cori Lathan, the chief executive officer of De Oro Devices and co-founder of Anthro-Tronix Inc., was the guest speaker at a College of Engineering and Natural Sciences STEMinar held April 22.

Lathan has a Ph.D. in neuroscience from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, along with degrees in aeronautics, astronautics, biopsychology and mathematics.

Her work has been featured in *Forbes*, *Time*, *The New Yorker* and *TEDx*. She has been named Maryland's Top Innovator of the Year, one of MIT Technology Review's "Top 100 World Innovators."

The STEMinar featured a Q&A session with Lathan that included students of **Dr. Ashley Owens**, assistant professor of engineering, and Women in STEM students and faculty.

Lathan also spent the morning touring the campus and its science facilities, laboratories and classrooms.

The term "STEM" – short for "Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics" – encompasses a broad range of academic disciplines and career pathways in those fields.

In introducing Lathan to the audience, UT Martin Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs **Dr. Philip Cavalier** – who attended Swarthmore College with Lathan – told students that she is not focused in just one area.

"I think that's important," he said. "I know all of you are learning specific areas of your major, and that's important and fantastic. But, to get to the point where you're an innovator and the CEO of a company and a faculty member and highly recognized, a big part of that is because Cori is interested in a wide range of things, curious



**Dr. Cori Lathan, a noted technology inventor, author and entrepreneur working at the intersection of technology and human performance, is shown speaking with UT Martin STEM students April 22. Lathan also took part in a STEMinar that afternoon in the Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building.**

about the world."

Lathan founded a research and development company, AnthroTronix, which she ran for 20 years and still serves as a board member.

"Biomedical engineering didn't exist as a degree going through college," she said. "That's probably what I would have majored in now, but instead, I took lots of math and neuroscience and psychology and aerospace engineering."

Lathan's work has ranged from developing robots that assist children with disabilities to creating virtual reality environments for astronauts aboard the space station.

Lathan has also contributed to the development of wearable

sensor technology and mobile medical applications for military personnel and clinicians.

Her latest book, "Inventing the Future: Stories from a Techno-Optimist," chronicles her decades-long journey in leveraging technology to improve the world.

**Dr. Lily Pharris**, assistant professor of computer science, was among the UT Martin faculty members to host Lathan on her visit to campus.

"Having Dr. Cori Lathan visit UT Martin was an inspiring experience, especially for students pursuing careers in STEM fields," she said. "Not too long ago, Dr. Lathan was sitting in a seat just like theirs – full of ambition, ideas and a desire to

make a difference. Today, she stands as a powerful example of where following your passions, dreams and heart can lead.

"Through her work as an inventor, entrepreneur and advocate for inclusive technology, Dr. Lathan showed our students that innovation isn't just about building the future; it's about shaping it with empathy, creativity and perseverance. I hope her story leaves a lasting impression, inspiring students to see themselves as the next generation ready to take up the torch and lead us toward an optimistic future."

More information about Dr. Cori Lathan can be found at her website, [inventthefuture.tech](http://inventthefuture.tech).



## Students of Japanese earn awards at Cherry Blossom Festival



The fifth annual Tennessee Video Skit and Poster Presentation Contest Awards were announced April 12 on the main stage at the Nashville Cherry Blossom Festival. Some 37 students from six universities competed this year, and students from UTM's Japanese 122 course won first and third places at the one-year college level. Kyoko Hammond, lecturer of Japanese, made the announcement as a representative of the Tennessee Japanese Event Committee. Shown in the photo are (l-r) UTM students Sean Oden and Cory Shinn; Shunsuke Gokyu, chair of the Middle Tennessee Japan Society; and UTM students Payton King and Skyar Moore.



Miles Adcox, a nationally known behavioral health and wellness expert and speaker, will deliver the commencement address Saturday, May 3, during both commencement ceremonies. A 1998 UT Martin graduate with a bachelor's degree in health and human performance, Adcox is the chairman and proprietor of Onsite Wellness Group, a globally renowned brand offering self-development and personal growth workshops, leadership retreats, digital master classes and residential mental-wellness care.

### ADCOX from PAGE 1

with Jelly Roll.

He serves on several non-profit boards and the Behavioral Health Advisory Council for Metro Nashville. Adcox is an avid outdoorsman and equestrian and a passionate supporter of sports and the arts.

**Dr. Yancy Freeman Sr.**, UT Martin chancellor, will preside over the two ceremonies and confer degrees. David Miller, UT System senior vice chancellor

and chief financial officer, will bring greetings and represent UT President Randy Boyd at the ceremonies. A sign-language interpreter will provide services for the hearing impaired during both commencement events.

The 10 a.m. ceremony will include undergraduate and graduate-degree candidates from the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, College of Business and Global Affairs, and the College of Engineering

and Natural Sciences.

The 2 p.m. ceremony will also include undergraduate and graduate-degree candidates and feature graduates from the College of Education, Health and Behavioral Sciences and the College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

Each ceremony will be livestreamed at [www.facebook.com/utmartin](http://www.facebook.com/utmartin) and [www.youtube.com/utmartin](http://www.youtube.com/utmartin) and archived on YouTube for later

viewing.

As a convenience for commencement attendees, brunch will be served from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Skyhawk Dining Hall in the Boling University Center. The brunch will be \$14.05 plus tax per person and is open to the public.

Contact the UT Martin Office of University Relations at 731-881-7615 for additional commencement information.

## First-of-its-kind survey conducted by Rasool, students

A team led by **Dr. Adnan Rasool**, associate professor of political science, is conducting a Community Needs Assessment Survey for the city of Martin.

This is a first-of-its-kind, comprehensive needs assessment survey conducted anywhere in West Tennessee. The data being collected will essentially lay out the blueprint for Martin's growth for the next 10 years.

"We are trying to understand what a community like Martin wants, and what kind of growth it envisions for itself," Rasool said through an email interview.

A team consisting of Rasool and five of his students – in association with the Tom E. Hendrix Chair of Excellence, Dr. Anthony Delmond – are conducting key personnel interviews in Martin and running an anonymous community survey online [at this site](#).

The students taking part in this assessment study are William Dixon, a senior political science major from Centerville; Parker Ferrell, a senior accounting major from Dresden; Preston Lightfoot, a freshman agriculture business major from Muscle Shoals, Alabama; Trenton Michon, a senior political science major from Chapmansboro; and Emma Perry, a sophomore political science major from Williston.

"The Community Needs Assessment Survey is not just an exercise in figuring out what the long-term needs of our community are, but it is also an excellent experiential learning-based skill development opportunity for our students,"

Rasool said.

"As we interview community members and influential community leaders, our students are learning how to conduct interviews and analyze the data being collected through various sources. This helps them be better prepared for the job market while also helping on a substantial project."

This Community Needs Assessment Survey follows a series of equitable growth focus groups in February 2024 completed by Rasool and five political science students as part of a project funded by Ford Motor Company studying the potential impact of BlueOval City, a joint venture between Ford and SK On as the home of the Tennessee Electric Vehicle Center.

Michon is the only student involved in the BlueOval City project to also work on the current Martin assessment study.

"We are using this Community Needs Assessment Survey to help build local governance capacity in West Tennessee," he said. "Coming off a major community development project for Ford Foundation, the UT System Grand Challenge Grant allowed me to expand the kind of rural development work that we did and help improve our footprint across West Tennessee."

This project is supported through the 2024-25 Grand Challenge Grant that Rasool earned last August worth \$100,000. He was one of three UT Martin faculty to earn the UT System Grand Challenge Grant.

## Remaining Skyhawk Home Events

**Friday, May 2**

- \*Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Saturday, May 3**

- \*Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Sunday, May 4**

- \*Baseball vs. Southern Indiana, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Tuesday, May 6**

- Baseball vs. North Alabama, 6 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Thursday, May 15**

- \*Baseball vs. SIUE, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Friday, May 16**

- \*Baseball vs. SIUE, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

**Saturday, May 17**

- \*Baseball vs. SIUE, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

\* - conference competition.

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

Dates and times are subject to change.



**Read more UT Martin news  
at [news.utm.edu](https://news.utm.edu)!**

## You Tell Me

• **Question** – What is the yellow-flowering plant that's growing in some Northwest Tennessee fields, when will it be harvested and what is the plant used to produce? The fields are beautiful where this plant is being grown.

• **Answer** – There are two possibilities when you see a field of yellow; in some cases, it may just be a field of cress-leaf groundsel, also known as butterweed. This is a cool-season weed that often shows up in fields over the winter and flowers in spring. On the other hand, if the field has a more uniform stand of yellow-flowered plants, then it is likely a field of canola. In Tennessee, canola can be grown as a winter crop, much like wheat. It is planted in the fall, flowers in April or May and is harvested in June. Canola is used to produce cooking oil, and the leftover meal is used as animal feed. In addition, canola can be used to produce biodiesel. (Thank you to Dr. Barbara Darroch, professor of plant and soil science.)

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



## UT Martin retired employees honored April 21



UT Martin recognized recently retired employees April 21 during the university's annual retirees dinner held in the Paul Meek Library. The dinner welcomes back past retirees and honors new retirees during an evening of food and fellowship. Pictured above with Chancellor Yancy Freeman (left) are recent retirees (l-r) Karen Roberts, business services; Tracey Mires, university outreach; Dr. Susan Winters, nursing; Rebecca Baker, physical plant; Becky Wilson, regional centers and online programs; and Dr. John Schommer, mathematics and statistics.

## Chancellors gather to honor retiring UTM employees



The annual UT Martin retirees dinner April 21 welcomed two retired chancellors who joined Chancellor Yancy Freeman (center) for a photo in the Paul Meek Library. Pictured with Freeman are (l-r) Dr. Bob Smith, who served as chancellor from 2015 to 2017, and Dr. Nick Dunagan, who served from 2001 to 2007. Both hold the title of chancellor emeritus.





Posing in Times Square with IBS awards are (l-r) Carson Alexander, a junior mass media and strategic communication major from Martin; LeeAnne Morefield, a senior mass media and strategic communication major from Dresden; Katelyn Cohee, a senior mass media and strategic communication major from Thompson's Station; Dr. Richard Robinson and Maddy Kennedy, a junior mass media and strategic communication major from Seymour. Alexander earned the award for best social media director, while Cohee was a national finalist for best production director.

## MMSC students earn awards at IBS conference

Students in the UT Martin Department of Mass Media and Strategic Communication who worked at WUTM (90.3 FM The Hawk) earned several awards at the 57th Intercollegiate Broadcasting System International Media Conference, held March 7-8 in New York City.

**Dr. Richard Robinson**, professor of mass media and strategic communication (MMSC) and faculty advisor for WUTM, made presentations and co-presented with other advisors at the conference.

Awards earned by UTM at the 2025 IBS International Media Conference include:

- WUTM qualified for the 16th consecutive year for a Platinum Award at the conference, a peer-reviewed award for the highest standards of excellence at a college or university radio station.
- First place, Best Sports Play-by-Play, Women's Basketball.
- Best Social Media Director: Carson Alexander, a junior MMSC major from Martin.

Other high rankings attained by the

radio station include:

- National finalist, Best Radio News Feature.
- National finalist, Best Political News.
- National finalist, Best Underwriting Spot for the Weakley County Press.
- National finalist, Best Sports Play-by-Play, Men's Basketball.
- National finalist, Best Sports Play-by-Play, Other: UTM Rodeo.
- National finalist, Best Sports Talk Show: "The Bench."
- National finalist, Best Talk Show: UTM Television.
- National finalist, Best College Radio Program Director: Alex Martin, a senior MMSC major from Trenton.
- National finalist, Best Production Director: Katelyn Cohee, a senior MMSC major from Thompson's Station.
- National finalist, Best Business Director: Carlin Cochran, a junior MMSC major from Nunnally.

Dr. Chet LaPrice, IBS board member, praised WUTM and its staff for its consistent

success at the IBS awards.

"The expertise and enthusiasm of Dr. Robinson and his students contribute to meaningful discussions in our discipline, and they share their insights with aplomb," he said. "Their leadership makes them heavy hitters in the realm of college radio, and Dr. Robinson's guidance transforms his students into the professionals that will guide our industry through its next iteration."

The Intercollegiate Broadcasting System is an organization with a membership of over 1,000 nonprofit, education-affiliated radio stations and webcasters. Founded in 1940, IBS is headquartered in New Windsor, New York, with a legal office in Washington, D.C., and is an organization that supports the students, faculty and staff of college and high school media outlets.

In addition to providing support for establishing and operating noncommercial radio and webcast operations, it frequently represents its members with FCC negotiations, copyright issues and litigation.

### addenda

Published weekly during the academic year and biweekly during the summer by UT Martin, Martin, TN 38238  
Randy Boyd – President, University of Tennessee System • Dr. Yancy Freeman Sr. – UTM Chancellor • David Snow – Addenda Editor  
UT Martin is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA employer. E05-0415-00-001-25