

addenda

The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | Feb. 23, 2026

CNN political analyst Van Jones comes home



CNN commentator and political analyst Van Jones, a 1990 UTM alumnus, points to the logo on his windbreaker, letting students in the audience know that it doesn't matter where you come from to become successful. Jones spoke with one of his former instructors, Dr. Jerald Ogg, professor of mass media and strategic communication, during an ENTICE Series program Feb. 19 in the Phillip W. Watkins Auditorium of the Dr. Edward J. and Carolyn Boling University Center. See the Campus Calendar for more ENTICE Series programs scheduled for this week.

Comments sought for new Business Admin. Building

A come-and-go event Wednesday, March 4, will give everyone an opportunity to comment on plans for the new Business Administration Building.

The event will be held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Bill and Rosanne Nunnally Welcome Center in the Dr. Edward J. and Carolyn P. Boling University Center to provide information about the new building.

Through the event, people can:

- Review building plans.
- Give feedback and ideas about the new building.

People will be directed through one entrance to the room, where they can see display boards with information about the proposed building.

Participants will be given stickers to place on the boards that they think would be best suited for the new home for College of Business and Global Affairs.

All are welcome to attend this event.

SAVE THE DATE

March 4, 2026 | 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Nunnally Welcome Center, Room 107,
Boling University Center

Help shape the future of the College of Business and Global Affairs!

- Review building plans.
- Give us your feedback and ideas about the new Business Administration Building.
- Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members are welcome!

UT MARTIN

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

Senior undergraduate researcher Joan West of the UTM The Department of Mathematics and Statistics presented her work at the Nebraska Conference for Undergraduate Wisdom in Mathematics, held Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

West delivered a talk titled “Radio Graceful Cartesian Products of Circulant Graphs,” presenting results from her undergraduate graph theory research project.

She attended the conference with faculty mentor, **Dr. Amanda Niedzialomski**, assistant professor of mathematics and statistics, with travel supported by a College of Engineering and Natural Sciences undergraduate research grant.

The trip included a few memorable travel adventures – winter weather delays, a missed connection that required an overnight stop in Chicago, and



Dr. Amanda Niedzialomski (left) and senior undergraduate researcher Joan West pose for a photo during their trip to the Nebraska Conference for Undergraduate Wisdom in Mathematics.

even a sprint through O’Hare Airport – but the experience was ultimately very rewarding.

Beyond presenting her research, West had the opportunity to connect with undergraduate mathematicians from across the country and learn more about graduate study pathways in mathematics.



Bandyopadhyay

Dr. Shalmali Bandyopadhyay, assistant professor of mathematics and statistics, has been selected as a recipient of the AMS-Simons Travel Grant for the 2025-27 cycle.

This competitive national award provides \$2,500 per year in research travel support, along with an additional \$250 per year to the department and \$250 per year to the university to help strengthen research activity.



Baumgardner

“Up to No Good,” a concerto for bass clarinet and wind band composed by **Brad Baumgardner**, UTM director of retention, was performed Dec. 9 by the Princeton University Wind Ensemble in Richardson Auditorium in Princeton, New Jersey.

Soloist Jacob Jackson and conductor Kade Jackson presented the work as a part of the fall concert series alongside pieces from composers Frank Ticheli, Germaine Tailleferre, Leonard Bernstein and Yasuhide Ito.

“Up to No Good” was written in 2016 as the result of a College Band Directors National Association consortium commission.

The news at news.utm.edu

[Spring Preview Day scheduled for Feb. 28](#)

UT MARTIN | NEWS

Upcoming Skyhawk Home Events

Tuesday, Feb. 24

- Baseball vs. Murray State, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Thursday, Feb. 26

- *Women’s basketball vs. Tennessee Tech, 5:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- *Men’s basketball vs. Tennessee Tech, 7:30 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Friday, Feb. 27

- Baseball vs. Bradley, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, Feb 28

- *Women’s basketball vs. Tennessee State, 10 a.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- *Men’s basketball vs. Tennessee State, 1 p.m., Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.
- Baseball vs. Bradley, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Sunday, March 1

- Baseball vs. Bradley, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

* - conference competition; dh - double-header (baseball and softball); full athletics schedules can be found at utmsports.com.

Dates and times are subject to change.

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

Anne Meek's book of poems to be feature at city library

A book of poems by the late daughter of former Chancellor Paul Meek, Dr. Anne Meek, "Tree Full of Stars," is the focus for the next Friends of the Library book discussion, which will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 26, in the History and Genealogy Room at Martin Public Library.

Jenna Wright, local author and retired chair of the UTM Department of English and Foreign Languages, will lead the discussion and provide insight about poems that highlight themes of family, friendship, social changes and nature.

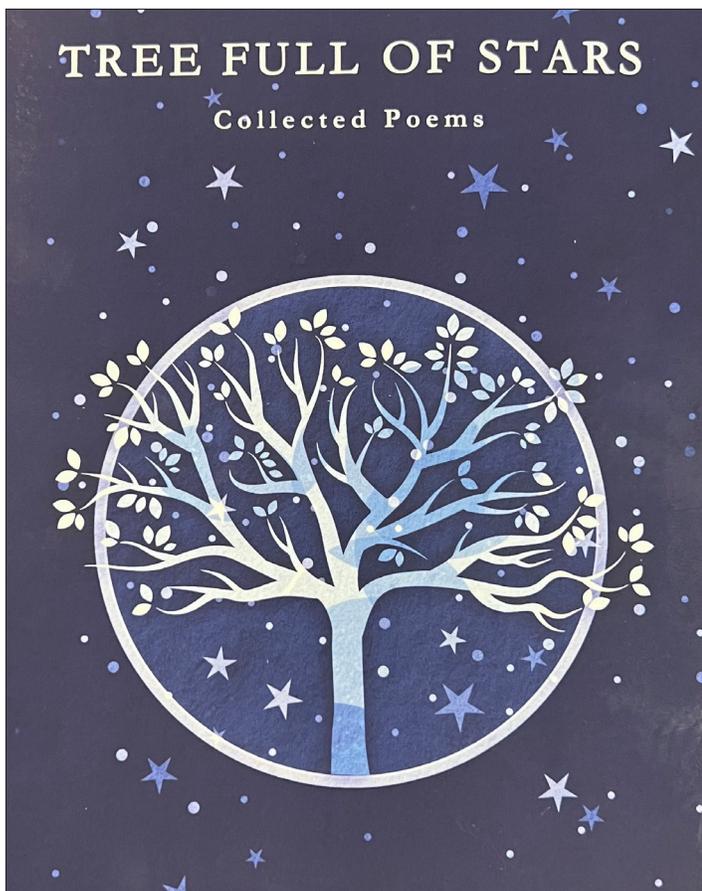
Wright is also a cousin of Meek, who died in March 2022 at the age of 85.

"Local color and Anne's emphasis on the importance of family and education are important components of this book that speak to her as a poet and to us as readers," Wright said.

Meek published more than 60 poems in literary journals before her death. For many years, she lived in Norfolk, Virginia, but always said her roots were in Martin. She is the daughter of Martha Campbell Meek and Dr. Paul Meek, who led UT Martin from 1934 to 1967.

The public is invited to attend this discussion. Refreshments will be available to take home, and a door prize and other surprises are being planned.

Copies of "Tree Full of Stars" will be available at Martin Public Library and the Paul Meek Library. The book can also be ordered through Barnes and Noble.



Dr. ZeVida A. Jones, assistant professor of counseling, published a paper titled "Words that Shape Futures: Unveiling the Impact of School Counselors on First-Generation African-American Students' Postsecondary Aspirations" in The Professional School Counseling Journal, the flagship journal of the school counseling profession.



Jones

The research examines how African-American first-generation college students perceived the influence of their high school counselors on their postsecondary aspirations.

Using a critical race narrative inquiry design, the study included life-story interviews with six African-American first-generation college students who attended public high schools in a large Mid-South metropolitan area.

The findings revealed themes related to limited access to

school counselors, the influence of counselor language on student motivation, and the role of teachers, coaches and family members as alternative sources of support when counseling services were insufficient.

The study emphasizes the importance of authentic relationships, equitable access to college-planning support and equity-centered counseling practices to expand opportunity for African-American students.

The University of Tennessee at Martin Department of Visual and Theater Arts Presents:

2026
The League of Striving Artists
 Student Exhibition

Moving Away From The Artificial

HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

Opening Reception:
 February 10th
 5:00pm - 6:30pm

Feb. 10th - 28th
 Fine Arts Building
 Gallery

Martha Barnett announces retirement



Martha Barnett (seventh from left) was the guest of honor at a retirement party held Feb. 17 in the Tennessee Room of the Holland McCombs Center and Archives. Barnett retired as registrar from the Office of Academic Records after more than 40 combined years of service to higher education and secondary education. Shown in this photo are (l-r) student records specialist Sandy Holland, Banner support specialist Kiara Castleman, assistant registrar Carah Hooten-Dellinger, academic records specialist Catherine Jones, student records specialist Sheri Reynolds, assistant registrar Andrew Larkins, Barnett, transfer specialist Mary Beth Fortner, records administrative specialist Cindy Horn, graduation specialist Tonia Cox, graduation specialist Cheryl Brannon and Janice Parham, who previously retired from the Office of Academic Records.

Campus Calendar

Monday, Feb. 23

- ENTICE Series, Abby Phillip, CNN anchor and author, 6 p.m., Phillip W. Watkins Auditorium, Dr. Edward J. and Carolyn P. Boling University Center.

Tuesday, Feb. 24

- DASH training, "Compensation Actions," 10-11 a.m., virtual program via Teams.
- UT Research Foundation, informational assistance with research growth, intellectual property commercialization, innovation disclosures, and tech transfer, walk-in sessions at 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m.; presentation, Q&A and boxed lunches, noon; 101

Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building; [RSVP](#).

Wednesday, Feb. 25

- Human Resources, "Progressive Discipline Procedures: Building a Culture of Fairness and Responsibility," 11 a.m.-noon, virtual program via Teams.
- "Hawk Break" luncheon, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., Nick and Cathy Dunagan Alumni Center, \$9 each.
- Human Resources, "Progressive Discipline Procedures: Building a Culture of Fairness and Responsibility," 3-4 p.m., in-person program, 101 Latimer-Smith Engineering and

Science Building.

Thursday, Feb. 26

- DASH training, "Compensation Actions," 11 a.m.-noon, 101 Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building.
- Human Resources, "Progressive Discipline Procedures: Building a Culture of Fairness and Responsibility," 3-4 p.m., 101 Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building.
- ENTICE Series: Student pop-up art event featuring artwork created by UTM students that embraces the "Come Together" theme of the series, 6 p.m., Nick and Cathy Dunagan Alumni Center.

Monday, March 2

- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee 4 p.m., 124 Gooch Hall.

Tuesday, March 3

- Coffee and Conversation with the Chancellor, 10 a.m., Center for Student Engagement Suite, Dr. Edward J. and Carolyn P. Boling University Center, for Boling University Center and Student Recreation Center employees.
- Intercollegiate Review Board, 4 p.m., 124 Gooch Hall.

Events are subject to cancellation; dates, times and sites are subject to change. Send free-admission, on-campus events to [Addenda at addenda@utm.edu](mailto:addenda@utm.edu).

Fifth annual ELLI Conference set for April 9

The fifth annual UT Martin Experiential Learning Leadership Institute Conference, known as ELLI, will be held Thursday, April 9, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Discovery Park of America in Union City.

ELLI is an offshoot of the Society for Experiential Education, a national organization. Both organizations were formed with the intention of supporting hands-on learning in the classroom.

The theme of this year's conference is "Teaching Students the Way They Learn: Experiential Learning In and Outside the Classroom."

Each year, the ELLI conference features a guest speaker with experience in the field of hands-on instruction, which will be announced by the planning committee.

Dr. Lajuan Davis, professor of business communication and ELLI Conference co-chair, invites faculty, students and administrators from educational institutions at primary, secondary and post-secondary levels to showcase their work at the conference.

"Presentations can be research-based content, best practices in teaching or learning, travel study or travel abroad experiences, entrepreneurship opportunities, internships, events, capstone projects and numerous other topics or activities," she said.

Alongside quality exchanges of



information, lifelong relationships are formed through the fellowship and valuable networking that occurs during the ELLI Conference.

"Everyone looks forward to seeing colleagues and students who have attended ELLI in the past as well as meeting new participants," Davis said.

In the five years this conference has been held, the venue and the scale of the event have evolved significantly. At its origin, the conference was held in the Boling University Center and was primarily attended by UT Martin faculty and students.

The event has grown to include wider

regional audiences and moved its venue to the Discovery Park of America in Union City, a world-class experiential learning facility.

The ELLI Conference is open to any educator, administrator, student or community member who wishes to attend or present their own research or experiential learning experiences. Registration for participants and attendees of the ELLI Conference is open at [this site](#).

The deadline for registration and proposal submission is March 15. For more information about conference registration and fees, contact elliconference@utm.edu.

You Tell Me

• **Question** - With the Civil Rights Conference transitioning to ENTICE - Evolving Narratives: Tennessee Initiative for Civic Engagement - what is its relationship with the other civic engagement initiative on campus, UTM Engage?

• **Answer** - UTM Engage and ENTICE serve complementary but distinct roles in the university's civic-engagement efforts. UTM Engage is a series of informal, lunchtime gatherings held each semester in which students, faculty and staff come together to organically discuss current events. It is typically geared toward main-campus participation. ENTICE, on the other hand, is a more structured, thematic programming opportunity that has expanded beyond a month-long conference to a year-round initiative with broader reach - including programming at the university's regional centers and opportunities for community participation beyond the main campus. While the two do not currently co-sponsor any events, UTM encourages collaboration across departments and initiatives. Real potential is seen for these efforts to complement one another in fostering deeper student and community engagement.

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

addenda

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