

addenda

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

Celebration of Generosity dinner held March 19

Noah Melton, a senior meteorology major from Sharon and recipient of the Charles and Bettye Moore Scholarship, speaks to UT Martin scholarship supporters as well as students who have benefited from their generosity at the annual Celebration of Generosity and Gratitude dinner March 19 in the Duncan Ballroom of the Boling University Center. Donors were able to meet students who benefited from individual giving and learned firsthand how scholarships make a positive difference for students. Other speakers included Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. and Vice Chancellor for University Advancement Jeanna Curtis-Swofford.



Captain's Challenge set for April 1

**NO JOKING AROUND,
YOUR GIFT MAKES A
difference!**



Join UT Martin's day of giving!
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1
challenge.utm.edu

The countdown is on, and the UT Martin Captain's Challenge is almost here. The 2026 Captain's Challenge will be held Wednesday, April 1.

This year's Captain's Challenge takes on a special meaning as part of the university's 125th anniversary celebration.

Captain's Challenge is a 24-hour gifting challenge for alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff and fans to support the university. Gifts made during this time support various scholarships, college funds, colleges, departments, athletics and student-support systems across the university.

The goal for the 2026 Captain's Challenge is to raise \$600,000. Last year, Skyhawks were challenged to raise \$450,000, and that goal was surpassed, with a record total of \$579,291 raised by a challenge-record 1,665 donors.

This reputation of record-breaking gifts and donors sets a high bar, and internal strategies are in place to ensure each gift counts.

"Gifts are matched dollar for dollar, meaning donors are able to provide double the impact with their gift," said Matt Borden, director of annual giving, about the gift-matching program.

All gifts are matched for up to \$300. Gifts within the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences are matched up to \$2,500.

Continued on PAGE 2

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff

Dr. Shalmali Bandyopadhyay, and Dr. Pamela Guerrero, both assistant professors of mathematics, have been selected to participate in the Research Experiences for Undergraduate Faculty Workshop, July 27-31, at the American Institute of Mathematics in Pasadena, California.

The workshop brings together faculty from primarily undergraduate institutions to



Bandyopadhyay

collaborate on research projects and develop ideas for engaging



Guerrero

undergraduate students in mathematical research.

The news at
news.utm.edu

[UT Martin receives ACE-Carnegie designation](#)

[SOAR registration is now open for first-time students](#)

UT MARTIN | NEWS

UTM alum now math instructor looks back



Faculty from the UT Martin Department of Mathematics and Statistics pose with Dr. Sarah Eskew, UT Martin alumna and assistant professor of mathematics at UT Southern, following her math colloquium talk, "Life, Love and Math: Looking Back 10 Years Later." Eskew, who graduated from UT Martin in 2016, returned to campus 10 years later to share reflections on her journey from a UT Martin mathematics student to a tenure-track professor and to discuss the research projects that shaped her career. Shown in the photo are (seated) UTM faculty member Dr. Robert DeYeso III, (standing, l-r) former department chair Tom Eskew, retired faculty member Dr. John Schommer, Dr. Sarah Eskew, current UTM faculty members Dr. Amanda Niedzialomski, Dr. Louis Kolistch, Dr. Shalmali Bandyopadhyay, Dr. Robert Neidzialomski, Dr. Brian Wagner, Dr. Ezra Nance and Dr. Charlie Liu.

CHALLENGE from PAGE 1

Donors can specify which program or organization they would like to give to across more than 500 different designations available. If a donor has issues finding their desired fund, there is an option available to write in their desired designation.

People can gift the university by mailing a check as well. Checks should be made out to the UT Foundation and mailed to UT Foundation, Attn: Matt Borden, 1900 Alumni Way, Martin, TN 38238.

Specific gifting targets may be

made in the memo line of the check or in a separate letter or note.

Charitable IRA gifts are also welcome.

For more information about the 2026 Captain's Challenge, visit challenge.utm.edu or email Borden at mborden5@utm.edu.

Upcoming Skyhawk Home Events

Tuesday, March 24

- Baseball vs. Southern Illinois, 6 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Friday, March 27

- *Baseball vs; Lindenwood, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, March 28

- *Softball vs. SIUE (dh), noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.
- *Baseball vs. Lindenwood, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Sunday, March 29

- *Softball vs. SIUE, noon, Bettye Giles Softball Field.
- *Baseball vs. Lindenwood, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Tuesday, March 31

- Baseball vs. Alabama A&M, 3 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.

Varga speaks at Kiwanis Club of Martin



Mike Varga (left), in his third year as head coach of the UT Martin women's soccer team, was the guest speaker at the March 11 Kiwanis Club of Martin meeting. Varga was a four-year starter in soccer at Ashland University, and is that school's leading scorer with 52 goals. After graduation, Varga played professionally in Europe and with the Knoxville Impact of the United Soccer League. He said that he really enjoys being at UT Martin where students can prepare academically in a more relaxed environment for life after graduation. He also said that he is looking for various ways to get athletes on the soccer team more involved in the greater Martin community. Dr. Clinton Smith, past Kiwanis president, presented a certificate of appreciation to Varga and said that a donation will be made in his honor to the Weakley County Prevention Coalition.

Chancellor's Leadership Academy registration still open

Applications and nominations are open for the Chancellor's Leadership Academy.

The Chancellor's Leadership Academy is an eight-month leader and leadership development program designed for the faculty and staff at UT Martin.

Participants will learn directly from Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. and others as they embrace

their own leadership journey and connect it to the higher education landscape.

Nominations are not required. Interested faculty and staff can complete an application without a nomination.

The application deadline is Tuesday, March 31, and selected applicants will be notified in April. This will be the second

cohort for the Chancellor's Leadership Academy.

Classes will be held Sept. 4, Sept. 10, Oct. 1 and Nov. 5 during the fall 2026 semester and Jan. 7, Feb. 11, March 11 and April 1 during the spring 2027 semester.

Except for the kickoff Thursday, Sept. 4 – which will be an all-day event – classes will

begin at 1 p.m. and will last until 6 p.m.

Information as well as application forms and nomination forms are available [at this site](#).

For more information, contact Dr. Jamie Mantooth, executive director of the Chancellor's Leadership Academy, at jmantoo3@utm.edu.

UT System opens DASH grants, research platform

The University of Tennessee System DASH Research Project Team announced the launch of the DASH Research Huron Grants and Agreements (HGA) Virtual Town Hall Series.

These sessions will introduce the new platform that employees will use to submit research proposals, manage grant funding and track research agreements from start to finish.

The series will cover four topics:

- Introduction to Huron Grants and Agreements
- Funding proposals
- Agreements
- Lifecycle actions and integrations

Sessions are open to all university employees and will be especially beneficial to principal investigators, department staff and UT employees involved in research administration. All sessions are virtual, and no registration is required – just click on the

link to join.

The first town hall session, "Intro to HGA," can be viewed from 9 to 10 a.m. Central Time, Tuesday, March 31, and again from 9 to 10 a.m., Wednesday, April 1.

Each session will be posted in the Campus Calendar in Addenda with links to join the town hall sessions.

Visit [the DASH Research HGA site](#) to view session dates, learn more about each topic and access additional resources.

UT Martin D&D Club hosts poster session in library

The Paul Meek Library partnered March 7 with the UT Martin Dungeon & Dragons Club to host a D&D poster session that highlighted the scholarly and creative dimensions of tabletop role-playing games.

The event welcomed special guests from Austin Peay

State University's Dungeons & Dragons Club, fostering a collaborative atmosphere between the two institutions.

Six posters showcased student and faculty research on topics including the use of artificial intelligence in D&D, character development, worldbuilding and the role of improvisation in

gameplay.

Ronne Cox, electronic resources librarian and adviser to the UT Martin D&D Club, presented findings from her ongoing research examining how Dungeons & Dragons impacts students socially, mentally and academically.

The session demonstrated the growing recognition of tabletop role-playing as a creative outlet and a meaningful area of academic inquiry.

The success of the event has sparked enthusiasm for continued collaboration between UTM and Austin Peay in the future.



Listening to Austin Peay D&D Club member Seth Miracle (far left) discuss improvisation in D&D are UT Martin D&D Club members (l-r) Landon Scribner, David Wimsatt, Amelia Casey, Club Co-President Luke Hopkins, Sam Bates and Sam Booker. The UT Martin D&D Club welcomed the Austin Peay D&D Club to a poster session March 7 in the Paul Meek Library.

CRAFTING MAGIC:
A STITCH IN TIME

TUESDAYS, MARCH 31 - MAY 19 | 6 - 8 P.M.
206 GOOCH HALL, UT MARTIN CAMPUS

Learn sewing and mending basics
Guided class with an expert
Registration fee includes all supplies



COST: \$75

UT MARTIN
UNIVERSITY OUTREACH


UT MARTIN PRACTICAL HEALTH & WELLNESS
UNIVERSITY OUTREACH *An eight-week workshop with Lauren Johnson*

THURSDAYS, MARCH 26 - MAY 14 | 6 - 7:30 P.M.
UT MARTIN CAMPUS

Foundational knowledge of the mind, body, and soul

Tools and skills for setting meaningful, personal goals

Encouragement through group discussion & connections



COST: \$150

Click on the boxes for more information about these programs.

Tomlinson Lecture features Dr. Kassie Jo Baron

The UT Martin chapter of Phi Kappa Phi will host its 2026 Muriel D. Tomlinson Lecture featuring **Dr. Kassie Jo Baron**, assistant professor of English, who will present research on American labor activism in New England’s early textile industry.

Baron’s lecture, titled “Sarah Bagley Didn’t Write That: Misattribution and Its Consequences,” will begin at 6 p.m., Tuesday, March 31, in the Tennessee Room of the McCombs Center on the UT Martin campus.

The presentation focuses on Sarah Bagley, a “mill girl” who worked in the cotton mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, during the 1830s and 1840s.

Bagley’s experiences with harsh industrial working conditions led her to become a prominent labor activist. However, many writings attributed to her have been misreported or misappropriated.

“In particular, two quotes that have been widely attributed to Sarah Bagley are incorrect,” Baron said. “The misattribution of these quotes has significantly

shaped how factory operatives, their goals and their contributions to abolition and labor organizing have been understood.”

Baron holds bachelor’s and master’s degrees in philosophy, political science and teaching from the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. She earned both her master’s and doctoral degrees in English from the University of Iowa.

Her research focuses on representations of working-class women in early American literature.

In addition to teaching literature and composition, Baron develops digital humanities projects exploring the lives of New England mill workers.

She previously served as



Baron

an editorial assistant for the Walt Whitman Archive. She is also active in professional organizations, serving on committees for the Melville Society and the Society of Nineteenth-Century Americanists, and is the faculty adviser for UT Martin’s chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the international English honor

society.

Phi Kappa Phi’s Muriel D. Tomlinson Lecture is presented each spring by a distinguished faculty member in the arts and humanities. The lecture honors Dr. Muriel Tomlinson, who served as chair of the UT Martin Department of Modern and Foreign Languages from 1959 to 1976 and was a strong supporter of the ideals of the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

The event is open to the public, and light refreshments will be served.

For more information, contact **Dr. Chris Hill**, president of Phi Kappa Phi Chapter 127, at 731-881-7292. Reservations are not required, but may be made through [UT Martin’s Runway Events Platform](#).

Submit a YoUTM or question to addenda@utm.edu!






PHI KAPPA PHI 2026 TOMLINSON LECTURE

SARAH BAGLEY DIDN'T SAY THAT:

MISATTRIBUTION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

DR. KASSIE JO BARON
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

TUESDAY, MARCH 31ST | 6:00 | MCCOMBS CENTER

You Tell Me

- **Question** – The university is in the process of purchasing the vacant church building and property on Lovelace Street, which will become university parking. When will that purchase be final, and when is the new lot expected to be completed? Once completed, how many parking spaces will be available?
- **Answer** – UT Martin acquired the vacant church building and property on Lovelace Street on Feb. 18. The structure will be demolished to create additional parking on the west side of campus. The UT Office of Capital Projects requires that a feasibility study be completed before construction begins. A more definitive timeline and the number of parking spaces will be determined at the conclusion of the feasibility study.

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



Those in attendance for this year's announcement of the OVC Hoops for Heroes members are (l-r) Blake Connstetter, OVC assistant commissioner for championships; Kiel Schaljo, Eastern Illinois; Charles L. Griffin, Lindenwood; John Northcutt, Morehead State; Chase Porter, Southeast Missouri; Ronald Swaim, SIU-Edwardsville; Michael Barrentine, Southern Indiana; Reginald Green, Tennessee State; Charlie Jahr, UT Martin; Rodney Burg, Western Illinois; Katie Risewick, OVC assistant commissioner for compliance and championships; and acting Commissioner Greg Walter, who is also the associate commissioner for football, basketball and baseball. Not pictured are Patrick Dalton, Little Rock, and Kiera Hill, Tennessee Tech.

Jahr named to OVC Hoops for Heroes from UT Martin

Charlie Jahr, the UT Martin safety and emergency management coordinator, was announced as the university's representative in the annual Ohio Valley Conference Hoops for Heroes Initiative.

Jahr served 17 years in the UT Martin Department of Public Safety, from 2006 to 2023. During the last seven years of his service there, Jahr assumed a leadership role in training and department operations.

"My law enforcement career provided a great opportunity to serve as an ambassador for the university while interacting with a wide range of people," he said. "I was fortunate to gain valuable experience and specialized training, and I credit much of that to the mentors I had within the department.

"One of my top priorities was building strong relationships with students, faculty, staff and the community, and that is something I always tried to instill in new officers as well."

In 2023, Jahr became the safety and emergency management coordinator for the university, where he is responsible for emergency planning and response for the

campus. In that position, he also focuses on overall campus safety to help ensure that students, faculty, staff and visitors have a safe place to live, work and learn.

Jahr earned his bachelor's degree in university studies from UT Martin in 2006 and graduated with a master's degree in criminal justice from UT Martin in 2023. He also obtained a graduate certificate in emergency management from UT Martin in 2024.

Other members of the 2026 OVC Hoops for Heroes group are Kiel Schaljo, fire department lieutenant, Eastern Illinois University; Charles L. Griffin, Navy veteran, Lindenwood University; Patrick Dalton, Navy veteran, University of Arkansas at Little Rock; John Northcutt, assistant fire chief, Morehead State University; Chase Porter, Marine Corps veteran, Southeast Missouri State University; Ronald Swaim, Army veteran, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville; Michael Barrentine, Army National Guard, University of Southern Indiana; Reginald Green, Navy veteran, Tennessee State University; Kiera Hill, police department, Tennessee Technological

University; and Rodney Burg, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, Western Illinois University.

Previous UT Martin Hoops for Heroes honorees included Lloyd Thomas (2025), Roy Wiley (2023), Chuck Hammer (2022), Joe Exum (2020), Marcus VanCleave (2019), Led Symmes (2018), Terry Ward (2017), Corey Scates (2016), Ed Baker (2015), Jenny Harrison (2014), Wayne Alexander (2013), Vincent Newsome (2012) and Col. Bill Kaler (2011).

The Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) of each OVC member institution selects a Hoops for Heroes representative and invites that person to attend the OVC Basketball Championships, where they are honored as a group during the tournaments.

Begun in 2011 and now in its 15th year, Hoops for Heroes is an initiative that was created jointly by the Ohio Valley Conference and SAACs at member institutions in order to honor military men and women in OVC communities. In 2025, first responders who also serve the universities' communities were included in the honor.

Read more UT Martin news at news.utm.edu!



Eight UT Martin employees graduated from the Administrative Professionals Academy on Jan. 21 in Nashville. Those graduates were (l-r) Adrienne Rutledge, Office of Campus Recreation; Donna Clanton, Honors Programs; Teresa Hibbard, Office of Housing; Shelly Long, Department of Mathematics and Statistics; Dawn Dill, Department of Computer Science; Susan Lemond, Department of Accounting, Economics and Finance; Elizabeth Vickers, Office of Housing; and Jordan Gardner, Division of Student Affairs. Registration for the next APA session (July through December) is now open.

Registration for APA certification is now open

The Administrative Professionals Academy is a six-month professional development program designed to build skills, strengthen connections, and elevate the impact of administrative leaders across Tennessee.

From July through December, participants meet once per month in person in Nashville for engaging, hands-on sessions focused on leadership, communication and professional growth.

APA brings together a diverse group of professionals, including:

- Executive and administrative assistants

- Human resources and finance managers
- Specialists and technicians
- Supervisors and individual contributors

This dynamic mix creates rich discussions, practical insights and a collaborative learning environment that reflects today's workplaces.

Scheduled training dates for this session are:

- Wednesday, July 15
- Wednesday, Aug. 12
- Wednesday, Sept. 16
- Wednesday, Oct. 21
- Wednesday, Nov. 18

- Wednesday, Dec. 16

The graduation ceremony will be held Wednesday, Jan. 27, 2027.

The tuition is \$2,500 per participant, and includes all program elements, such as training materials, assessments, and a graduation celebration.

Organizations that register five participants can receive the fifth tuition free when the full \$10,000 is paid in a single check.

Registration can be done through [this site](#).

For more information, email hr@utm.edu.

Campus Calendar

March 24-26

- UT Innovative Technology Symposium, Knoxville Convention Center.

Tuesday, March 31

- DASH Research Huron Grants and Agreements town hall, "Intro to HGA," 9-10 a.m. CT, virtual (no

registration needed), click [here](#) to join the session.

- "Maintaining Balance in Life," sustaining mental, emotional, and physical health while meeting life's demands, 3-4 p.m., virtual via Cisco WebEx, register [at this site](#), led by speaker

and motivator Cathy Richards.

Wednesday, April 1

- DASH Research Huron Grants and Agreements town hall, "Intro to HGA," 9-10 a.m. CT, virtual (no registration needed), click [here](#) to join the session.

Monday, April 6

- Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee 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).

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. E05-0415-00-001-26