

addenda

The University of Tennessee at Martin Faculty and Staff Newsletter | April 20, 2026

125th anniversary state tour promotes UT Martin



Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. and other UT Martin representatives made a statewide tour April 13-17 to celebrate and promote the university's 125th anniversary. The tour began in Chattanooga and made several stops on its way to Memphis. Shown at the April 13 stop in Chattanooga are (l-r) Anne Hewitt, chief retail officer with UT Federal Credit Union; Alyssa Pettit, UT Martin dual enrollment operations manager; Audrey Cochran, UT Martin dual enrollment director; Ava Abad, assistant director of alumni giving; Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr.; Dr. Jackie Johnson, associate vice chancellor for alumni relations and chief engagement officer; Jeanna Curtis-Swofford, vice chancellor for university advancement; Erica Bell, executive director of the Office of Regional Centers and Online Programs and Jake Bynum, chief of staff in the Office of the Chancellor.

Heath receives spring Beth Maloan Award

Christopher Heath, a sophomore marketing major from Wildersville studying at the UT Martin Parsons Center, was the recipient of the spring 2026 Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award.

Heath is a student worker in the UT Martin Parsons Center front office, supervised by Dr. Kelli Deere, director of the UT Martin Parsons Center. The award was presented to him April 15 by Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. at the UT Martin Parsons Center.

"(Christopher) is the very first person you meet when you walk

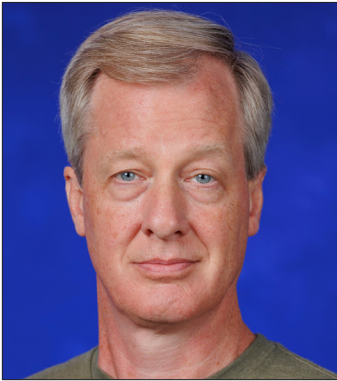


Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. (left) presents the spring 2026 Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Worker Award to Christopher Heath, a sophomore marketing major studying at the UT Martin Parsons Center.

Continued on PAGE 3

YoUTMs

highlighting the excellence of our faculty and staff



Nappo

Dr. Daniel Nappo, professor of Spanish, participated in the 56th annual Popular Culture Association Conference, held April 8-11 in Atlanta.

He chaired a panel called "Latin Americans & Latinos: Literature, Film, and Cultural Identities." It featured papers about filmmakers Willie Varela and Eli Roth, and the musician Bad Bunny.

During Nappo's panel, he also

presented the paper "A Fairy Tale of Post-Revolutionary Mexico: Emilio 'El Indio' Fernández's 'Hidden River' (1947)."

The Popular Culture Association is a group of scholars and enthusiasts who study popular culture through writing, sharing and publishing in the field.

Information about the conference can be found [at this site](#).

Ronne Cox, electronic resources and discovery librarian, presented at the WeTALC spring meeting April 10.

WeTALC - the West Tennessee Academic Library Consortium - is an information network serving the scholarly and research communities of the member libraries. Cox is the vice chair and chair-elect of the organization.

Cox presented "Rolling for

Initiative: Reinventing the Academic Library through Dungeon & Dragons."

She used qualitative and quantitative data that had been collected through surveys over the past two years to highlight the benefits of using D&D to help students feel connected to the campus, comfortable in the library and allowing students the opportunity to grow through experiential learning.



Cox

Dr. Louis Kolitsch, professor of mathematics, gave an invited presentation at the Gainesville International Number Theory Conference (Alladi 70), held March 18-22 at the University of Florida in Gainesville. The conference funded Kolitsch's travel to the site.

This international conference, organized in honor of the 70th birthday of mathematician Krishna Alladi, brought together researchers from

around the world to present recent advances in number theory. The conference was organized by George Andrews, Frank Garvan and Andrew Sills.

Kolitsch's talk, "Partition Results Related to a Special Case of Jacobi's Triple Product Identity," focused on results in partition theory using algebraic and combinatorial methods.

Information about the conference can be found [at this site](#).



Kolitsch

Grubaugh retirement reception announced

A retirement reception for Dr. Jack Grubaugh, professor of biology, will be held from 1 to 3 p.m., Friday, April 24, in the Tennessee Room of the Holland McCombs Center. The reception is a come-and-go event.

Grubaugh has been a faculty member at UT Martin since 2010.

Several "skulls" will be on display from his beetle work, and a jar will be made available for students to place their favorite "Grubaughism" in.



Grubaugh

The news at news.utm.edu

[Ferrell, Sargolzaei named UTA Outstanding Teachers](#)

[UT Martin receives Special Olympics Unified Champions School designation](#)

UT MARTIN | NEWS

Upcoming Skyhawk Home Events

Tuesday, April 21

- Baseball vs. Belmont, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

April 23-25

- Beach volleyball, OVC Championship Tournament, Skyhawk Beach Volleyball Complex, [Championship Central](#).

Friday, April 24

- *Baseball vs Eastern Illinois, 5 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Saturday, April 25

- *Baseball vs. Eastern Illinois, 3 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Sunday, April 26

- *Baseball vs. Eastern Illinois, 1 p.m., Skyhawk Baseball Field.

Friday, May 1

- *Softball vs. Southern Indiana, noon (dh), Bettye Giles Softball 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.

UT Martin hosts middle school math contest



The UT Martin Department of Mathematics and Statistics hosted its annual Dr. Desirée McCullough Middle School Math Contest, welcoming 430 students from 31 schools across Carroll, Decatur, Dyer, Gibson, Henry, Lake, Madison, Obion and Weakley counties. Students in grades 6–8 participated in a day of problem solving and mathematical competition, showcasing strong analytical thinking and teamwork. The contest was coordinated by Dr. Jason DeVito, assistant professor of mathematics, and Dr. Robert DeYeso, assistant professor of mathematics. Preparing materials for the UT Martin Middle School Math Contest are (l-r) DeVito; TLee Howard, lab instructor of mathematics and statistics; Carlin Bush, lab instructor of mathematics; and DeYeso.

HEATH from PAGE 1

through the door,” Deere stated in her letter of nomination. “That first impression matters, and Christopher represents our center with professionalism, warmth and maturity well beyond his years. He dresses professionally, greets every visitor with respect, and creates a welcoming environment for students, faculty and community members alike.

“In addition to his front-office responsibilities, Christopher was one of our very first PEP (Peer-Enabling Program) leaders for the Parsons Center. As a PEP leader, he helped set the tone and standard for student leadership within our program. He has been instrumental in building a positive student culture and modeling involvement, responsibility and school pride for others to

follow.”

Deere spoke of a time when the center’s maintenance person was out for a medical procedure and Heath stepped up.

“Without being asked, he came to me and said, ‘What do you need done? I will help,’” she stated. “Since that time, he has replaced more than 100 damaged ceiling tiles due to the ice storm, changed numerous light bulbs throughout the building, assisted with recruitment during Preview Days, and willingly taken on tasks well outside his job description. He never complains and never seeks recognition; he simply sees a need and fills it.

“Christopher is highly self-motivated and genuinely invested in making our center the best it can be for students and staff. He does not wait to be

told what to do; he anticipates needs, takes ownership and follows through. His work ethic, dependability, leadership, and servant-hearted attitude make him an invaluable member of our team.”

The Beth Maloan Outstanding Student Employee Award is named for the late Beth Maloan (1951-2001), longtime UT Martin director of budgeting and payroll, who was a strong advocate of student employment. It recognizes exemplary work ethic and commitment to the university.

The award was established by the university in May 2001 soon after Maloan died following a long bout with cancer. Malone worked at UT Martin from 1976 to 2001 and served as the director of finance and budgeting from 1988 to 2001.

She also taught classes in the College of Business and Public Affairs.

The award is given each semester to a student nominated by his or her supervising office or department. The award includes a \$1,000 cash award and an engraved plaque.

To be eligible for this award, the student must have been employed on campus for a minimum of one year, be a full-time undergraduate and carry a minimum cumulative grade-point average of 2.5.

The recipient is selected based on problem-solving and decision-making skills, dependability, interpersonal skills and communication, teamwork, customer service, productivity, self-motivation and on- and off-campus working relationships.

Graham defends dissertation in sociology



Dr. Cameron Graham, lecturer of sociology, defended his dissertation to the committee at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The dissertation was titled “Neo-Medievalism or a New Cold War? A Comparative Study of World Powers, Paramilitaries,

and the Civilianization of Warfare in the Global Risk Society.”

The dissertation examined the rise of covert, unconventional, irregular and hybrid warfare among leading world powers.

It advances the development of a critical sociology of war

that is capable of addressing the complexities of global politics and the discreet practices of war-making and coercive statecraft that have shaped international relations since 1945.

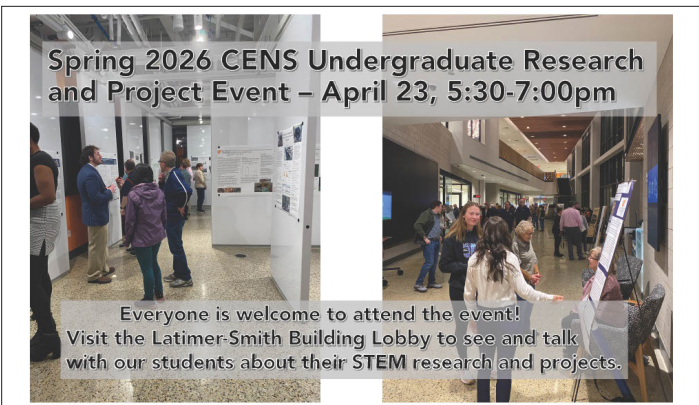
Shown in the above photograph are Graham (second from left) and the dissertation

committee, which included (l-r) Dr. Harry F. Dahms, Dr. Tim Gill (participating via Zoom) and Dr. Tyler Wall, all of the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and Dr. Solange Muñoz of the UTK Department of Geography.

STEM majors to show senior projects

UT Martin College of Engineering and Natural Sciences students completing research or senior design projects with a faculty mentor or as a part of a course will showcase their work in experiential learning.

All campus and community members are welcome to attend from 5:30 to 7 p.m., Thursday, April 23, in the Latimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building lobby and discuss projects with the students.



JOIN THE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE WITH THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE FOR

GIVE A LITTLE. GET A LATTE!

Donate to St. John's Food Pantry and be one of the first 50 students or first 50 employees to receive a free Sly Coffee!

NEEDED ITEMS INCLUDE:
Canned soups, canned chili meals, Ravioli or pasta bowls, Instant mac and cheese cups, Chef Boyardee products, peanut butter and jelly, and more!

APRIL 21ST BRING A DONATION BETWEEN 9AM-11AM
University Center North Patio

Sly Coffee will be on-site from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM, so you can enjoy your drink at your convenience after grabbing your voucher or stop by anytime for your favorite coffee on the go!



The UT Martin Grounds crew received the annual Campus Sustainability Award, which recognizes an individual, student organization, department or other group that has enhanced sustainability at UT Martin. Sustainability can be defined as anything that contributes to the ecological, fiscal or social well-being and longevity of one’s community. The UT Martin Center for Sustainability identifies and recognizes those on campus doing work and leading honorable efforts to contribute to these goals. Shown with this year’s Sustainability Award are (front row, l-r) Nathan Hartley, Mark Gasman, Zach Nabors, Mike Davis, coordinator of the UT Martin Center for Sustainability Dr. Eric Pelren, head groundskeeper Chris Virgin, Sustainability Center intern Bella Redlark, Trish Chambers, Matthew Lugo, (back row, l-r) Marshall Burns, certified arborist Shannon Baughman, Dave Chambliss, Justin Lattus, Sustainability Center intern Brady Coleman, Tyler Earls, Haden Schlicht and Maggie Gateley.

Grounds crew receives Campus Sustainability Award

The UT Martin Grounds Department crew received this year’s Sustainability Award through the UT Martin Center for Sustainability.

“The grounds department has an outstanding record of work that continues to add significantly to the sustainability of our campus,” said Dr. Eric Pelren, coordinator of the UT Martin Center for Sustainability, which conducts the award process.

Pelren said that head groundskeeper Chris Virgin has dramatically increased the

number of native trees on campus through successful state and federal grants, qualifying the UT Martin campus for Certification by the Tennessee Urban Forestry Council as a Level II Arboretum.

“Their staff includes a professional arborist (Shannon Baughman) who has tremendously enhanced the health of our campus trees through culling of diseased trees, pruning, mulching and watering new trees, which has resulted in our status as an Arbor Foundation Higher Education Tree

Campus,” he said.

“The Grounds Department...is installing a native pollinator garden in front of Gooch Hall. They have implemented a delayed mowing program in strategic areas as a measure to improve the pollinator habitat while realizing significant cost savings.”

The department has also added educational signage and held numerous campus-wide service days for students, faculty and staff to assist with campus beautification efforts.

Campus Calendar

Tuesday, April 21

- DASH Research, town hall series, 9-10 a.m., “Lifecycle Actions and Integrations”; join session [here](#).
- “DISC in Action: Practical Tools for Supervisors and Leaders” training session, 10-11:30 a.m., 230 Boling University Center.

Wednesday, April 22

- DASH Research, central

office users webinar series, 9-11 a.m., “Awards and Award Modifications in HGA”; join session [here](#).

Thursday, April 23

- DASH Research, principal investigators and departmental users webinar series, 9-10 a.m., “Lifecycle Actions and Integrations”; join session [here](#).
- DASH, hiring, 3-4 p.m.,

register [at this site](#).

Wednesday, April 29

- DASH, compensation, 3-4 p.m., register [at this site](#).

Saturday, May 2

Commencement, Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

[Facebook link](#).

[YouTube link](#).

- 10 a.m., colleges of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, Business and

Global Affairs, Engineering and Natural Sciences, Humanities and Fine Art.

- 2 p.m., College of Education, Health and Behavioral Services.

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.

Dyersburg STEM students consult with UTM on project



Five students from Dyersburg High School visited UT Martin on April 10 with their Engineering Design IV teacher, Seth Coleman. Dr. Ashley Owens, UTM assistant professor of engineering, helped the students troubleshoot a dodgeball launcher that they designed and built for a student at Dyersburg Middle School who uses a wheelchair. The students said he has always wanted to throw a dodgeball, and they are helping to make that dream come true. The idea began with sixth-grade STEM students at Dyersburg Middle School who reached out to Coleman for help. During the high school students' visit to UT Martin, they came up with a list of changes they could make to improve the launcher. After that, they were given a tour of the Lattimer-Smith Engineering and Science Building and met with Owens' ENGR 486 (Quality Engineering) students to discuss life as college students and how to prepare for it. Three of the DHS students – Erick Arevalo, Noah Autry and James Carson – plan to attend UT Martin. Shown in the photo with the dodgeball launcher are (l-r) Dyersburg High School students Carson, Rocco Ciccone, Autry and Edilberto Ramirez, Coleman, Arevalo and Owens.

Waka Flocka Flame performs on campus



Waka Flocka Flame (Juaquin James Malphurs), a rap artist known for his hits "No Hands" and "Grove St. Party" and appearances on "Growing Up Hip Hop: Atlanta," performed April 16 in the Student Recreation Center. More than 640 students attended. The concert was the annual spring concert for UT Martin students only, sponsored by Flight Crew.

Students direct phishing awareness campaign

If you recently received a notice about a campus traffic citation, an urgent message from “ITS” asking you to switch from DUO to a new MFA system, or a homework assistance request from an unknown student, you may have just participated in a phishing awareness campaign designed by students in **Dr. Lily Pharris’s** CYBR 352 Secure Software Development course.

In partnership with the UT Martin Office of Information Technology Services, students designed realistic phishing scenarios based on common social engineering tactics.

Each student developed a campaign, with three selected for live deployment this semester and two more earning honorable mention for potential future use.

The selected campaigns – created by Molly Corgan, a senior cybersecurity major from Cary, North Carolina; Joey Meeks, a junior cybersecurity major from Sharon; and Carson Summers, a junior computer science major from Paris – focused on high-probability situations: a parking citation (approved by the Department of Public Safety), an authentication update and a student request targeting the Department of Computer Science.

All used familiar campus messaging and time-sensitive prompts to demonstrate how easily users can be persuaded to act.

This project highlights hands-on cybersecurity education in action. Students



Showing their certificates of participation for their part in a phishing awareness campaign are (l-r) Joey Meeks, Carson Summers and Molly Corgan. The campaign helped to find weak spots in campus cybersecurity.

applied technical knowledge while thinking like attackers, and faculty and staff across campus became active participants, reinforcing that cybersecurity awareness is a shared responsibility.

The success of this initiative was made possible through collaboration with the UT Martin ITS office, with leadership and support from ITS Director of Client Services and Support **Olivia Fernandez** and the ITS team: director of infrastructure **Coy Hazlewood**, project manager **Matthew Adams** and security administrator **Christopher Johnson**.

Tips that the cybersecurity students offer after the campaign include:

- Pause before you click. Urgent messages are designed to rush you or play on emotions.
- Verify the source. Don’t trust links in emails. Go directly to official sites.
- Trust your instincts. If something feels off, it probably is.
- Report suspicious messages. Use the built in Outlook Reporting feature to train AI models to identify potential phish. Forward suspected phishing emails to abuse@utm.edu so they can be investigated.

You Tell Me

• **Question** – What happened to the books and other materials that have been removed from the Paul Meek Library shelves? Where are they stored, and will they be brought back?

• **Answer** – The Paul Meek Library continuously reviews its print and digital collections to provide high-quality scholarly resources for its patrons. Removing duplicate, outdated or irreparably damaged materials through weeding, de-selection or de-accession is essential for maintaining an academically useful collection and making best use of limited space. Librarians work with faculty liaisons in each academic department to ensure print holdings support educational programs with current scholarship. The library updated its Collection Development Policy in 2024 to include de-accessioning guidelines developed by a committee that included non-library teaching faculty. These guidelines informed the recent review of low-use print reference materials and older bound journals, which was communicated to campus through monthly deans, directors and department chairs meetings and the Faculty Senate Library Committee. Retained items are integrated into the library’s collections; removed items are offered free to students, faculty and staff, with excess materials recycled through the campus surplus process. Please refer any questions or concerns to Dr. Erik Nordberg, dean of the Paul Meek Library, at enordber@utm.edu or 731-881-7070.

Submit your questions to Addenda at 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