mentoring and motivating our community
Alumni and friends,

After 20 years of editing UNCW Magazine, I still consider it an honor to share the stories of our university with faculty and staff, alumni, friends and the community. Putting together each issue reminds me of the qualities that define UNCW and the people who call themselves Seahawks. We’re determined, like recreation therapy associate professor Dan Johnson, who spearheaded the campaign to bring a Miracle Field to Wilmington. We’re dedicated, like Montae Willis ’15, who volunteers with the Wilmington Police Athletic League. We’re focused on solving the world’s greatest challenges, like Dana Nuesca ’95, executive director of U.S. Operations for Seeds of Hope.

You will find their stories, and more, in this issue. You will also find a number of statistics like those on the cover – empirical proof of UNCW’s impact on the community, the state and the world. As impressive as these numbers are, they simply reflect the depth of our commitment to making a difference through diverse programs to benefit others, such as helping former inmates learn to become productive citizens (page 10), supporting new teachers as they maneuver the ever-changing landscape of public education (page 6), digging in to preserve local watersheds (page 12), and laying the groundwork for increased economic activity (page 18).

So as you can see, at UNCW education is more than going to class, taking tests and getting a degree. It’s about emerging from college as a well-rounded individual with the skills to earn a living and also as a global citizen with the experience and compassion to make life better for those around them.

At a place like our university, there are always more great stories to tell, and I look forward to sharing those with you in future issues. As always, thank you for reading UNCW Magazine.

Sincerely yours,

Marybeth Bianchi
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First-grader Sincere Cuttino stands confidently in the batter’s box, shoulders squared above home plate, bat poised over his shoulder, arms ready to swing.

The pitcher, Joel Perrell, a UNCW student volunteer, takes a few steps toward Cuttino. He announces that he’s about to pitch, then carefully tosses the ball across the plate. Cuttino swings. Strike.

A chorus of encouraging words for Cuttino erupts from the dugouts and the bleachers. Coaches, parents and volunteers speak up in support of the determined batter from Bellamy Elementary School in Wilmington.
“That’s OK!”
“You can do it!”
“Try again!”
“You’ll hit it this time!”

Cuttino, who is visually impaired, faces the pitcher again. He may not be able to see the ball, but he can hear the cheers.

The pitcher patiently tries again and again, clearly aiming for the flight path of Cuttino’s bat, hoping to help the boy get a hit. Pitch, swing, strike – the pattern repeats many times – but pitcher and the pint-sized player refuse to give up.

No one at the Miracle Field believes in quitting – especially not UNCW’s Dan Johnson, associate professor of recreation therapy.

“We have a whole range of players here. We have kids with autism and ADHD, a variety of players in wheelchairs, and kids who don’t speak, but none of it matters on the Miracle Field,” Johnson says. “We help them be a part of the team in whatever way they want to be a part of the team.”

In May, the university and Accessible Coastal Carolina Events Sports and Services (ACCESS) of Wilmington, the local non-profit organization that spearheaded construction of the field and playground, signed an official agreement that formalizes UNCW’s commitment to the Miracle Field. Johnson, the founder and chair of ACCESS, couldn’t be happier.

“This is the only Miracle Field in the nation connected to a university,” he says. “We’re going to become a national model for extraordinary things.”

Cuttino refuses to let a few missed pitches get him down. He swings his bat back into place above his shoulder and whacks a hit toward short stop, where a teenager stops the ball with her wheelchair.

“Way to go, Sincere!” his mom yells. The crowd cheers as if he slammed a home run in the bottom of the ninth with the bases loaded.

A big smile flashes across Cuttino’s small face as his baseball “buddy,” UNCW sophomore McKenzie Messer ’16, quickly guides him to first base.

Nearly 100 children, teens and adults with physical, cognitive or developmental challenges play on six teams that meet at the Miracle Field, which opened last fall at Olsen Park in New Hanover County. At 33,000 square feet, it is the largest Miracle Field ever built. There are about 250 fields worldwide.

Miracle Fields have colorful, non-latex rubber surfaces that improve safety. The bases are inlaid, which helps individuals who use wheelchairs and walkers move around the infield more easily. The dugouts and restrooms are also accessible.

For UNCW students, the field is a hands-on lab where they get practical, applied experience in working with disabled individuals. Over the past year, Johnson recruited recreation therapy students to serve as the players’ “buddies.” They helped the players navigate the ins and outs of baseball, teaching them a diverse range of skills, from moving around the bases to figuring out how to be a part of a team.

“Our students are learning how to work with individual players, how to understand what motivates them,” Johnson says. “They are learning how to anticipate situations, become observant, eliminate risk and take care of things right away.”

According to Pete Hexter, BRAX Fundraising co-founder and a Miracle League supporter, the field creates a strong partnership between UNCW and the community.

“What better way to be involved than to give back on the local level? This facility is one of the best investments that this community has ever made,” Hexter says. “It is an asset that will enhance what UNCW brings to Wilmington.”
“This is the only Miracle Field in the nation connected to a university. We’re going to become a national model for extraordinary things.”

– DAN JOHNSON

Miracle Field and playground

- Built and supported by a consortium of community, government and business leaders, including:
  - Accessible Coastal Carolina Events Sports and Services (ACCESS)
  - New Hanover County
  - City of Wilmington
  - PPD
  - BRAX
  - UNCW

- Field, playground equipment and restrooms are wheelchair-accessible

- ACCESS online: miracleleaguewilm.org

- Global headquarters for the Miracle League: miracleleague.com

33,000 square feet
The largest Miracle Field ever built

UNCW is the first university in the U.S. to partner with Miracle Field
Paige Smith struggled the first few months as a new sixth-grade teacher. There were days when she felt uncomfortable in her classroom. She agonized over the best way to communicate with parents and felt overwhelmed by other school responsibilities. “It was very nerve-wracking,” said Smith, who teaches English language arts at Sampson Middle School in Clinton. “I wanted to make sure I made a good impression on my students. I also wanted to make sure I did everything I had to do – committee meetings, staff meetings. I think I still struggle a little with classroom management.”

The Watson College of Education and Clinton City Schools are partnering to help teachers like Smith. The new initiative, Beginning Teaching (BT) Matters Project, will provide teachers valuable resources and assist them in adjusting to their new communities. “This program will help beginning teachers have more confidence,” Smith said. “I know it would have made things much smoother for me.”

The Watson College of Education received $50,000 from the State Employee Credit Union and the Institute for Emerging Issues to implement the project. BT Matters was among the four projects selected for the SECU Emerging Issues Prize for Innovation in Education. Nearly 40 beginning teachers will be involved in the pilot, which begins this fall. After the first year, the team will revise the program and open it to school districts statewide. The team will create six online modules on topics identified as challenges for new teachers such as classroom management and feelings of isolation. “The goal is to share those resources with the teachers early so they feel connected with the community they may not know a lot about,” said Lewis. “What we are trying to do at UNCW is provide stability for teachers whether it is BT Matters or three days of professional development.”

BT Matters will help new teachers become better acclimated to the changing North Carolina education landscape, said Nancy Dillman, the district’s assistant superintendent for human resources. “We also expect first-year teachers to walk into the classroom and deal with all the nuances that a university doesn’t prepare them for,” Dillman said. “It can be very overwhelming.”

June Atkinson, state superintendent for the N.C. Department of Public Instruction, said a network of community members, veteran teachers and UNCW professors will help beginning teachers gain more confidence in their craft and aid in students reaching the highest level of academic achievement. “We know that being a beginning teacher can be a very lonely profession,” she said. “It is very important for our teachers moving to a new community to learn about the community and become vested in the community.”

Programs such as BT Matters and the college’s First Years of Teaching are beneficial to beginning teachers, said Taylor Thomas ’11, an English teacher at Eugene Ashley High School in Wilmington and a recipient of this year’s Promise of Leadership Award. The award is given to beginning teachers who have shown commitment to working with diverse populations of students, innovative use of technology and potential for leadership. “Statistics shows if you are going to leave your profession, it’s going to happen in the first five years,” Thomas said. “So, if we are really interested in keeping quality teachers, effective educators then it would make sense to do everything we can to build these young professionals up.”

Providing continuous support and advocating for teachers is part of the Watson College of Education’s mission, Lewis said. “In order to continue to impact the learning of students, we have to continue to support teachers whether it’s through professional development or continuing education,” she said. “I think we have made a real commitment to doing that.”
Taylor Thomas ’11, an English teacher at Eugene Ashley High School, says programs like Beginning Teaching Matters will help retain quality teachers. Thomas is in his final year of the Watson College of Education’s First Years of Teaching program.
REJUVENATING quality of life

awareness

Montae Willis, mentoring and motivating youth in our community.
Montae Willis ’15 knows his work with the Wilmington Police Athletic League is more than coaching and mentoring youth who are at risk of becoming gang members. His involvement could determine which road a teen takes in the future.

“I think that is what keeps me so motivated,” said Willis, an exercise science major. “Even when I am not getting the attitude that I want from a particular kid or a group at the time, it keeps me motivated because I know what could be on the other side of the road for some of these kids.”

Willis, a marine veteran, is among the 45 UNC Wilmington students and faculty who volunteer as coaches, referees or scorekeepers for P.A.L., which promotes gang resistance and awareness through competitive basketball. More than 240 youths, ages 8 to 16, participate in the program.

UNCW students have served as mentors for the program for the past four years, said Wilmington Police Officer Brandon Reece ’06, who oversees the league. It had an influx of faculty volunteers during the 2013-14 season.

Reece hopes the interaction between faculty and students will inspire the young people to pursue a college education.

“If we can plant that bug in their ear that they can do it that would be huge,” Reece said. “There are very few gang members with a college degree.”

Christopher Lantz, a professor and director of UNCW’s School of Health and Applied Human Sciences in the College of Health and Human Services, saw the need for increased involvement by the university after visiting the Brigade and Community Boys & Girls Clubs.

“I recognized that if we didn’t do something then we were being remiss in our commitment to the public’s health, and that is part of our mission – the health and well-being of all persons,” Lantz said. “There was a public health need that was staring me right in the face.”

The city has seen an increase in gang activity and gun violence involving youth. Four factors have been identified as significant contributors to the problem – absence of family structure, lack of education, few early child development/prevention and intervention activities and the limited availability of jobs.

University volunteers are not only donating their time, but also their resources. Laura Spivey, a lecturer in the School of Health and Applied Human Sciences, wrote an ETEAL grant for new basketball equipment. ETEAL, Experiencing Transformative Education through Applied Learning, provides students with engaging learning experiences. Students apply what they learn in an experiential way.

Spivey also recruited students and served as an assistant coach.

“This is a great opportunity for our students to have a positive impact on youth in our community and learn valuable skills associated with their majors,” Spivey said.

“They were able to be positive role models for these children and learned a great deal about some of the greater issues impacting Wilmington.”

The experience gave students the opportunity to translate classroom and conceptual content to the real world, Lantz said.

“All of a sudden, all those conversations about content and theories took on a whole different perspective,” he said. “In a very academic way, we benefited from that relationship more than [the P.A.L. athletes] benefited from it.”

During a recent practice, Montae Willis worked one-on-one with members of the league’s travel team. He offered words of encouragement and support to the young men as they ran offensive plays.

“It’s amazing to see the change from one attitude to another,” he said. “Officer Reece always says this is not a basketball program. This is a gang resistance and awareness program. I didn’t get it until I saw where the kids lived and I learned about their backgrounds. I was able to see how our involvement can make a difference. It’s not going to change where they are from, but it can change what they believe they can do.”

45 uncw students and faculty and 240 youths, ages 8 to 16 volunteer and participate in the P.A.L. program
It showed us the different places we could be if we continue on the path that we are choosing.

Miesha Patterson found the Justice and Education Program engaging. She’s now enrolled in a cosmetology program.
Donyell Roseboro and Kosta Kyriacopoulos share a strong desire to help populations who are marginalized in educational settings. The professors in the Watson College of Education have developed a project to assist one underserved group – former inmates.

The program, “Justice and Education,” aids the participants’ transition back into their communities and exposes them to higher education.

Roseboro and Kyriacopoulos taught a six-week course to residents of the Marvin E. Roberts Transitional Living Facility in Wilmington. The facility is a rehabilitation housing center for men and women recently released from the correctional system. Its goal is to give residents the tools needed to be successful.

“We want to make sure that they could see attendance at a university like this as a possibility in life,” said Roseboro, who also serves as the director of Professional Development System in the Department of Instructional Technology, Foundations and Secondary Education. “As much as we are connected to the elementary schools, I would like to see Watson College connected not just to this transitional housing facility but to other facilities as well.”

The course, which began in September, is a special initiative that stems from a project funded by the UNCW Center for Teaching Excellence. It is part of a larger project with CTE to develop a series of online modules on culturally responsive teaching, said Roseboro.

Nineteen residents took part in the program, which examines the relationship between the justice system and education. Participants analyzed legal decisions and public policies that affect individuals’ access to public education.

Typically, people who have been incarcerated have few opportunities to share their experiences, said Frankie Roberts, the founder and director of the transitional facility.

As a result of the partnership with UNCW, the transitional living facility residents can choose an academic track once they have completed certain benchmarks, Roberts said. In the past, residents’ choices were limited to employment or vocational training.

“The six-week program made us really take a serious look at education,” Roberts said. “UNCW can really help our participants take a four-year education a lot more seriously or explore the possibility. Typically, we think community college is the ceiling.”

The Justice and Education program was a factor in Miesha Patterson’s decision to enroll in the cosmetology program at Cape Fear Community College. Patterson is a former resident at the facility who found the class engaging.

“It showed us the different places we could be if we continue on the path that we are choosing,” she said.

There are plans to teach a doctoral-level elective Justice and Education course with a field experience component. Graduate students will work with residents at the transitional housing facility to write an educational autobiography and to create a mini-documentary, blog or short video about their experiences transitioning out of prison. The instructors will also hold classes at the residential campus to promote dialogue between residents and students.

Not only did the university provide an important service to the community, the participants also aided the professors, Kyriacopoulos said.

“Our goal was for this to be a beginning; a step towards something greater as far as involvement of the university,” said Kyriacopoulos. “We want to really reach out and let them know that this is also their university. We are a community organization and that they have a right to be here as much as anyone else does.”
Professors take classroom outdoors to help improve local environment.
Ideally, research developed within academia translates into practical, real-world application. The Tidal Creek Bioretention Plan, also known as the Rain Garden Project, transforms theory into action, in hopes of effecting change beyond the classroom. Through collaboration with community, UNCW is working to protect local watersheds from polluted stormwater runoff.

Lecturer Roger Shew and Associate Professor Anthony Snider, both in the Department of Environmental Studies, were enlisted to facilitate, implement and monitor the Rain Garden Projects surrounding Tidal Creek Food Co-op. The environmentally efficient endeavor has truly become a community effort, including the City of Wilmington Stormwater Services, local non-profits and businesses, alike.

“It’s a primo project for UNCW and our mission for outreach: to improve the environment, the economy and the social welfare of the people. These are the kinds of endeavors that educate both the students and the community,” says Shew.

Essentially, the parking lot and grassy area around Tidal Creek Co-op were identified as an effective test site for the bioretention plan. After a good, hard rain, stormwater wasn’t sufficiently re-absorbed; polluted runoff would bounce off pavement, run along nearby Oleander Drive, and trickle down grates, inevitably spilling out into local watersheds, like Hewletts and Bradley Creeks. The Rain Garden Project features an filtration system, namely, native plants working the soil, which more efficiently absorbs stormwater runoff.

“The roots drink up the water, create a resistance to the flow, prevent erosion and aerate the soil for draining water,” says Sean Ahlum, founder of the Surfrider Foundation and tech support specialist at UNCW, who views the project as an “ocean-friendly garden.”

By containing polluted runoff and keeping it out of local creeks, an effective rain garden keeps pollutants out of the Atlantic Ocean, as well.

In 2011, Ahlum teamed up with activist and Tidal Creek Co-op employee Kathryn Waple, who organized the Castle Street Community Garden, to develop plans for the Rain Garden Project. Enter Shew, Snider and their dedicated team of students.

Waple reached out to the university, and the two faculty members enthused about the opportunity to turn the co-op’s impenetrable pavement lot and surrounding grassy area into a thriving bioretention system. They secured a Center for Teaching Excellence grant to support the project, and they reached out to neighboring academies for necessary expertise.

NC State University’s Bill Hunt brought his engineering skills. Hunt recognized that the Tidal Creek site would be a great place to experiment.

“I realized how good a location this was for a stormwater management facility,” Hunt says, “meaning that the design would be simple enough that a student team with limited experience could do a good job.” The garden needed rerouted downspouts and native plants, which require less fertilizer and overall hydration to work their absorption and filtration magic.

The entire team joined forces with Erin Carey, stormwater coordinator of Bradley and Hewletts Creek watersheds, and the Rain Garden Project moved from theory to reality. Hunt’s own students designed the rain garden, while Shew, Snider and their students conducted rainwater tests on site.

Ultimately, the Tidal Creek Bioretention Plan hopes to effect change at a grassroots level—in every sense of the word.

“Springtime means people are thinking about their own backyards,” shares Carey, “and it’s a great time to reach out to people to tell them about native plants, tell them about rain gardens, explain about rerouting downspouts.”

“We’ll have educational signage around the perimeter,” Shew says of the outreach efforts. “The whole project will be a major achievement for us and the City of Wilmington as we try to get more businesses and residents to adopt methods for reducing stormwater runoff.”

This story includes excerpts from a Coastal Review Online (www.nccoast.org) article written by Tess Malijenovsky ’11.
RECONSTRUCTING

UNCW student-athletes volunteer their time with Habitat for Humanity helping to erect a house on King Street.
Even when they’re not in uniform, UNCW student-athletes demonstrate their teamwork, determination and passion for giving back.

The athletic department set a goal for the student-athletes this year: donate 5,000 hours to community service. The Seahawks soared way past that mark, with 373 student-athletes volunteering 8,570 hours involving more than 75 events and organizations.

“We take pride in our participation,” said Nathaniel Goodwin, member of the UNCW men’s soccer team. “The chance to give back and help those in need is important not only to men’s soccer, but to all of the athletic teams that represent UNCW.”

Goodwin and his teammates taught children with special needs to play soccer, worked as mentors and coaches for underprivileged children and helped operate soccer clinics.

Balancing classes and practice schedules is one of the biggest challenges for student-athletes. Arranging time to volunteer requires careful planning, but the students say that the opportunity to give back to the community that supports the Seahawks makes it easy.

They also enjoy incorporating the sports they love into their volunteer activities.

Emily Mauro, a member of the cross-country team, works weekly with students at a local elementary school. Not only does she provide valuable tutoring services for the kids, she also encourages them to run and shares her passion for cross-country with a younger generation.

Mauro and her fellow cross-country team members also volunteer at 5K runs and blood drives, and they participate in the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee food drive on campus.

One of the most valuable experiences they’ve had, Mauro said, was working with Habitat for Humanity.

“It ended up being a lot of fun working with my team,” she said. “It was a great experience, and I’m so glad we got that opportunity.”

Their project involved installing vinyl siding along the outside of the house, which Mauro said was pretty easy once they all got the hang of it. For six hours, she and other members of the cross-country team worked tirelessly alongside the woman who would be moving into the house.

“For me, having her there to help us and interact with us made the job that much more fulfilling,” Mauro said.

1,350 uncw/community volunteers prepared 285,000 meals during this year’s Stop Hunger Now campaign and collected 1,934 pounds of food to fight local hunger.
Marine biology student Madison Lytle prepares to catch more samples through kick netting, a method used in the field to collect nekton (swimming organisms) off the CREST Research Park dock.
UNCW’s MarineQuest programs do more than teach children about marine science. The camps and classes ignite their aspirations for the future and encourage a lifelong passion for the sea while introducing them to the journey of learning at North Carolina’s coastal university.

The memorable activities students experience through MarineQuest stay with them, whether they begin as a 5-year-old Sea Squirt or take the O.C.E.A.N.S. 17 program as a high school junior.

Benjamin Farris, a former camper, Sea Scholar and counselor-in-training, will attend UNCW in the fall. His early interest in marine science sparked growing up at Wrightsville Beach, and the camps at MarineQuest are where he got to express that passion.

“I fell in love with how everything was hands-on and how the professors wanted you to succeed,” Farris said. “I wanted to be on UNCW’s campus as much as possible by attending the MarineQuest programs.”

The faculty in the programs recognized Farris’ enthusiasm and created a volunteer counselor position specifically for him so that he could share his love for science with others.

“Attending MarineQuest provides a pre-college experience that helps familiarize teens with UNCW marine science faculty, campus facilities and resources, local habitats and skill development opportunities like research diving,” said Sue Kezios, director of youth programs. “MarineQuest also encourages the use of technological equipment in the field.”

Madison Lytle ’16 says MarineQuest gave her opportunities that, as a freshman at UNCW, she never would have gotten otherwise. She now works in the Benthic Ecology Lab at the Center for Marine Science with one of the professors she met through the program.

“The camp showed me what marine biology was—it wasn’t about playing with dolphins in SeaWorld. It was about science that focused on discovery and innovation,” Madison said.

Being able to work with equipment often reserved for undergraduate and graduate marine biology students was a memorable experience for Charlton Simmons ’15 who attended MarineQuest and later worked as a camp instructor.

“My experience with MarineQuest inspired me to come to UNCW because I really got a chance to see the campus thoroughly, actually meet some professors, and get a glimpse of just how great the marine biology program is for undergraduates,” Charlton said.
In just two years, technology startup Next Glass™ has moved from idea to inception, thanks in part to the support and services available at UNCW’s Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) and MARBIONC, a state-of-the-art lab at UNCW’s CREST Research Park.

By Andrea Weaver

**STEP 1**

**Think of a Great Idea**

What is Next Glass?

“Give us one glass you love and we’ll make sure you never drink a bad one again.”

Chief executive officer Kurt Taylor and his father George, advisory board member, came up with Next Glass’s idea over dinner at a restaurant when they purchased a highly recommended wine that they didn’t enjoy.

Determined to take the guesswork out of ordering a glass of wine or beer, they began developing the idea to analyze the beverages’ chemical compounds, compare and catalogue them, and create a digital database of information for consumers.

**STEP 2**

**Partner with UNCW**

“Wilmington is home; we knew we wanted to be here,” Taylor says. “We knew we would have to overcome technology issues in Wilmington. The CIE and MARBIONC made it easier.”

Jim Roberts, executive director of the CIE, connected Next Glass to legal and financial advisors, helped the company meet potential investors and promoted its services among North Carolina technology experts.

When Next Glass needed a place to develop its Genome Cellar, the database that will form the scientific basis for its recommendations, Roberts introduced the company to scientists at MARBIONC in CREST Research Park, where UNCW provides business owners with opportunities to lease high-tech lab space.

“That place has been great for us because it truly is a plug-and-play system,” Taylor says. “We hired a team, purchased equipment, moved it in, and we were ready to go.”

**STEP 3**

**Build Some Buzz**

“Buzz about an organization or company makes the job a lot easier when we’re trying to attract investors,” Roberts says. To that end, the CIE promoted the company statewide through media outlets and technology organizations.

Next Glass has racked up technology and entrepreneurship awards and received the first local investment made by Inception Micro Angel Fund (IMAF) Cape Fear, a seed stage capital fund managed by Cornerstone Advisory Partners.

**Awards**

- 2013 N.C. Technology Association’s (NCTA) Best Emerging Company
- 2013 Elance Bold Ideas Startup Winner
- 2014 NCTA Startup Showcase Winner
- 2014 Coastal Entrepreneur of the Year
Launch Your Product

Next Glass, set to launch its service over the summer, is now working to build its consumer base and secure professional relationships with vineyards and grocery stores.

Roberts looks forward to toasting the company’s ongoing success. He says, “This is one of our tenants who has really benefited from what UNCW is bringing to the market.”

Next Glass already employs about 17 people and pays two or three times the average county wage, he adds. “This is part of the very definition of economic development: creating better jobs than the ones you have today and raising the average income of the citizens in the area.”

UNCW CREST RESEARCH PARK

CREST is one of the most advanced biotechnology research centers on the East Coast. The park offers new flexible research laboratories for rent to established firms, entrepreneurial start-ups, government agencies, universities focusing on biotechnology, analytical services, environmental sciences and early stage pharmaceutical research and development.

uncw.edu/crest

THE CENTER FOR INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

The CIE works to identify and nurture high-growth, high-impact companies and to accelerate the entrepreneurial ecosystem in southeastern North Carolina. The center offers training, co-working space for “napkin-stage” startups, low-cost offices, experienced mentors and a future venture capital fund.

Programs focus on helping entrepreneurs develop better investor presentations, prepare successful funding proposals and increase sales. By helping entrepreneurs as they make fundamental decisions, UNCW is setting them on the path to success within the local economy.

uncw.edu/cie
The relationship between a young girl diagnosed with brain cancer and the UNCW women’s soccer team provided inspiration for both.

Shortly after 7-year-old Baylee Adkins was diagnosed, the team adopted her. The team members visited her at home and in the hospital, used webcams to cheer her during difficult chemo sessions and created a special “Pray for Baylee” Facebook page. In turn, Baylee sat on the bench at all home games and traveled to the tournament conference.

The team members inspired Baylee to fight hard against the brain cancer and keep a positive attitude. She provided them with a valuable learning experience and an appreciation of what is really important in life.

The Colonial Athletic Association recognized this special relationship by awarding the women’s soccer team with the 2013 John H. Randolph Inspiration Award.

“Winning this award is a testament to our team chemistry and commitment,” said coach Paul Cairney. “I’m very proud of all of our team members. They have shown great leadership in helping Baylee and her family deal with a difficult time. While we inspired Baylee, she inspired us more.”
Dave Allen, the founding father and architect of UNCW’s swimming and diving program, is heading for dry land after 36 years with the Seahawks. The man responsible for leading UNCW’s swim program to national acclaim is retiring after an extremely successful career at the helm.

Along with numerous titles and championships throughout his time at UNCW, Allen was named CAA Coach of the Year 15 times, including five for the women’s team and 10 for the men’s team. After joining the Seahawk family in 1977, Allen went on to coach 15 All-Americans, 155 conference champions and 19 Eastern titlists.

His student-athletes enjoyed great success in the classroom as well as the water—eight of his swimmers earned the Chancellor’s Cup, the university’s highest academic honor for athletes. Allen was more than a coach to his students—he was an inspiration, a mentor and a friend.
UNCW Alumni Association
2014 Distinguished Citizen 
of the Year 
Corbett, a graduate of the 
Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest, 
established scholarships and 
a trust to assist the students 
and faculty of the UNCW 
School of Nursing and the 
Honors College.

“It’s all well and good to support your alma mater, wherever it is, but UNCW needs your help, too. This is where we live. This is ours.”
– DR. J. RICHARD CORBETT

UNCW Alumni Association
2014 Distinguished Citizen of the Year

Corbett, a graduate of the Bowman Gray School of Medicine at Wake Forest, established scholarships and a trust to assist the students and faculty of the UNCW School of Nursing and the Honors College.
1963
Friends of Wilmington College (now UNCW) forms

11,000 to 50,000
Increase in Wilmington College library’s holdings after the Friends of Wilmington College sponsored a massive book drive

1964
Wilmington Kiwanis Club awarded its first scholarships to students at what was then Wilmington College

$194,000+
Scholarship gifts from the Wilmington Kiwanis to 80+ UNCW students from New Hanover County

$262,000+
over 25 years
Total value of annual grants awarded by the Friends of UNCW to campus programs

2003
Friends of UNCW establish fully-endowed merit scholarship, helping more than 20 honors students to date
A group of young girls gathered around Dana Nuesca '95 as she sat on the front porch of a home in an impoverished village in Costa Rica, her heart aching as they told their stories, one by one.

Each shared the horror of being trapped in the world of sex trafficking. Some were as young as 8 when they were sold. In most cases, they were part of a cycle of intergenerational prostitution.

“When we first went down to Costa Rica, we thought we would be working with girls who had pimps. When we found out the mothers were trafficking their daughters, we realized it was much more sinister than imagined,” said Nuesca. “It was as if someone punched us all in the gut.”

Nuesca never intended to become an advocate for victims of sex trafficking. Her background is in communication and finance. She earned a bachelor's degree in communication from UNC Wilmington and a master's degree in management from Troy University. Nuesca was manager for the largest provider of federal background investigations before taking on the fight against sex trafficking of children.

For the past two years, Nuesca has served as the executive director of U.S. Operations for Seeds of Hope Home Inc., a non-profit organization that provides a safe haven for victims of sex trafficking in Costa Rica. The non-profit provides counseling, education and vocational training for victims and for those who are at risk of being sexually exploited.

Penny Williams, co-founder of Seeds of Hope, contacted Nuesca in late 2011 about establishing the non-profit. Williams was researching a mission project in Costa Rica when she decided to open a shelter for abused girls after meeting two men who spoke openly to her about their involvement in sex tourism in the country with underage girls.

Williams felt something had to be done. She met with health and law enforcement officials about opening a shelter for girls who have been sexually exploited. Williams later asked Nuesca to help her start the program.

“We knew we couldn’t save everyone, but our goal was to pull as many from the lifestyle as possible,” Nuesca said.

In April 2012, Seeds of Hope opened its first clubhouse in the Pacific Coastal region of the country. The program has grown from five to more than 60 at-risk and exploited girls, whose ages range from 8 to 17.

Organizations like Seeds of Hope provide the girls some stability and protection. When the trafficker is a member of the girl’s family, the girl loses the person who is supposed to be the protector of the family, said Darrell Irwin, a professor of sociology and criminology at UNCW who has taught classes on human trafficking.

“We have their families failing them and society failing them,” he said. “And that's a pretty desperate situation.”

“She is planting seeds of hope for a hopeless population of young victims,” Irwin said about Nuesca’s work.

Nuesca has seen a positive change in the girls. Desperation has been replaced with hope. There is a sense of personal empowerment among them and an aspiration to do something important with their lives.

“Not only has an entire community of girls been changed, but the overall community has been affected. There is a buzz in the village,” she said.

Two Seeds of Hope clubhouses will open within the next year in Costa Rica. There are plans to expand the program to other Central American countries. The non-profit is also developing programs to target young boys and men in hopes of changing the culture of child sex trade in the country.

“We knew we could work with girls, but we also knew the problem was so much bigger. We needed to work with the young boys also, so that we could change the cultural stereotypes held against women,” she said. “Change is coming.”
Jason Mott’s journey to publication was filled with many rejections, but one happy ending.

He was turned down by 10 agents before he met Michelle Brower of the Folio Literary Agency. After some rewriting and a title change, The Returned was picked up by Harlequin’s imprint, MIRA.

Mott said when Brower first called him with the news, his reaction was one of confusion.

“Did they read it?” he asked, “and do they know it’s not a romance novel, because it’s Harlequin and Harlequin does bare-chested guys on the cover with their hair blowing in the breeze.”

Within a year, Mott’s novel was published, received rave reviews, made it to the New York Times Bestseller list and was on its way to becoming a television series. Brad Pitt’s production company, Plan B, bought the film rights, and “Resurrection,” based on Mott’s novel, began airing in March on ABC. It has scored impressive ratings and has been renewed for a second season to begin this fall.

The Returned is about a global event in which peoples’ deceased loved ones start returning. The story centers on an older couple, Harold and Lucille, who are forced to face the return of their eight-year-old son who drowned almost 50 years ago.

The UNCW alumnus, who earned his B.F.A. in fiction in 2006 and his M.F.A. in poetry in 2008, said he was inspired to write the story from a dream he had about his late mother returning to him. The dream was so real it stayed with him for weeks. Eventually, he discussed it with a friend who was good at coming up with ideas, and who asked, “What if that really actually happened, and what if it wasn’t just her?”

Mott said that was the beginning of The Returned. It has since been published internationally in 13 languages. His new project, The Wonder of All Things, is set for publication in September.

Mott, who lives in a small house on a dirt road, beside a cow pasture with a forest behind it outside Bolton, said his love for small towns has had an enormous impact on his writing.

“My stories will probably always take place in small towns and revolve around small town life to a certain degree because that’s what I know best.”
Peggy Lyons ’76 had a natural appeal about her. It began with her smile, and the love it communicated drew Mike Good ’77 to her during his freshman year at UNCW. Mike and Peggy met at UNCW in 1974. The two students shared a common label as “out-of-towners” living in Galloway Hall. This bond led to a fast friendship, and the two later became resident assistants together. Mike studied business, joined the TKE fraternity and was a catcher on the team under Coach Bill Brooks from 1974 to 1977, appearing in 60 games for the Seahawks. Peggy studied health and physical education and was elected homecoming queen in 1975.

Peggy began her teaching career in the Brunswick County school system. Within a couple years, she and Mike began moving frequently for Mike’s engineering job. They eventually landed in Huntsville, Ala., where Peggy continued her teaching and volunteer efforts.

The couple’s international involvement began when they met an exchange student from Ghana, who was attending the University of Alabama Huntsville, and learned about his mother, Eugenia Motogbe, who started the Eugemot Orphanage in Ghana.

“Ms. Eugenia Motogbe visited Huntsville in late 2004, and Peggy and I were part of a church community who wanted to help,” said Mike.

In 2005, Peggy began her mission trips to the orphanage, located in the Volta Region of Ghana on the west coast of Africa, just north of the equator. The region has a population of 1.6 million, with 40 percent of its inhabitants under 14 years of age, many living on just $2 each day. Organizations like the Eugemot Foundation help care for the children and work to develop a better way of life.

Peggy’s work included organizing fundraising efforts at local churches, delivering school materials, developing curriculum and assisting on construction projects. The children at the orphanage flocked to her ever-present smile and vibrant enthusiasm.

Mike remembers how much joy this international work brought her. “Annual visits and helping the Eugemot Orphanage became one of her passions. She always thought her mission work was very rewarding.”

Tragically, Peggy became ill after returning from her mission trip in 2010. Doctors determined that she had contracted malaria, but the virus was discovered too late, cutting short a life of giving and service.

Peggy’s death was an incredible loss for the Huntsville community and Eugemot Orphanage. At her memorial service, the foundation named its new school in her honor. The Peggy Good School of Hope was dedicated in May 2011. Her portrait hangs in the school office and a bust of her likeness is located in the courtyard, enshrining her magical smile.

Mike hopes to continue Peggy’s legacy by carrying on the care and compassion she showed the children with annual trips to Ghana to preserve and grow what he calls Peggy’s Plan.

“Peggy’s Plan, as we refer to it, stands for Promote Eugemot Growth and Graduate Youth Services and is focused in three areas: relocating the orphanage to the foundation’s property, farming a portion of the property for vegetables, a staple of the children’s diet, and enlisting donors who can help defray expenses for continuing education for graduates.”

On Mike’s most recent trip to the orphanage in November 2013, he and other volunteers cleared 10 acres of school property for farming and made general building repairs. The next step for the Peggy Good School of Hope and Eugemot Foundation is to develop more classrooms for the 150 students.

“Peggy represented hope in those kids’ eyes,” Mike said, “and she made them believe there was a better way of life just around the corner.”

by John Riemer and edited by Savannah Jamieson ’14
A Golden Honor

Edward Q. Hicks '75 is a recipient of the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest non-military award. Hicks, was one of the first African Americans allowed to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, joining a very segregated military in 1948. When he arrived at Montford Point (adjacent to Camp Lejeune) for basic training, he was placed in a separate facility with the other black recruits and given a different uniform than those worn by white Marines. Despite the daily struggle of segregation, Hicks went on to earn a Bronze Star and a Navy Commendation with combat valor in Korea and Vietnam, eventually retiring as a captain.

Blair Callahan
Roger W. Knight '82 was appointed to the N.C. Biotechnology Center Board of Directors. He is an attorney in Raleigh practicing election law, government and political organizations and campaign finance.

Elizabeth McClellan '82 passed away Sept. 18, 2013.

Elizabeth Rogers '82 passed away Sept. 27, 2013.

William Chiverton '83 passed away March 9, 2014.

Arnold Houston '83 passed away May 6, 2013.

Nancy Thorsen '83 passed away June 22, 2013.

Anne Best '84 is the executive director of Wilmington Interfaith Hospitality Network.

Bessie Moore '84 passed away Nov. 18, 2011.

Andy Nowel '84 is the director of curriculum, scheduling and assessment for the Poole College of Management at NC State University.

Kay Bowman '85 passed away March 5, 2014.

Stan Hill '85 was elected president of the N.C. CPA Foundation for 2013-14.

James Donald (Don) Matthias II '85 graduated from the University of Alabama School of Law where he was awarded the Balch & Bingham LLP Corporate Law Award and the Robert C. Walthall Scholarship. Don received Best Paper Honors for his classwork in mergers and acquisitions, corporate law: offshore financial transactions and business organizations.

Harry E. McClaren '85 was promoted to vice president of government, defense and security programs with Erickson Air Crane Inc.

Regina Randolph '85 passed away Dec. 18, 2013.

Angela Batts '86 passed away May 13, 2013.


John Pasch '86 retired at the rank of captain from the U.S. Navy after 25½ years of service.

Karen Williams '86, '96 is the director of curriculum and advancement at Harrells Christian Academy in Harrells. She serves on the Burgaw Area Chamber of Commerce Board and has been honored as the Volunteer of the Year for two consecutive years.

William Barefoot '87 was promoted to senior manager at WebsterRogers in Florence, S.C. He is a member of the S.C. Association of Certified Public Accountants and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. He is a 2012 graduate of Leadership Greater Florence and serves on the Greater Florence Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Angela Owens '87 published a children’s book titled Turtle Gliding.

Jeffrey Ridgers '87 passed away Nov. 19, 2013.

Christopher Rouse '87 passed away June 25, 2013.

Lora Eason '88 passed away May 31, 2013.

Patricia Hawkins '88 passed away June 3, 2013.

Pam Ehrhart Hurley '89, '91M is president of Hurley Write, a Washington, D.C.-based company that teaches technical, scientific and business writing to large companies. She was featured in an Oct. 13, 2013, story in the Washington Post.

Paige Cribb '90 is first woman elected as an officer on the Carolina PGA Board of Directors. She will serve a two-year term as secretary. Paige is director of student support for the Coastal Carolina University Professional Golf Management Program.

Caroline C. Lewis '90 is the director of Poplar Grove Plantation, an 1850 manor house in Scotts Hill.

Leslie Welter '90 teaches English in Moscow, Russia, at English Unlimited, which specializes in English programs for corporate clients.

Paige Young '90 and Scott Sayers were married Dec. 21, 2012.

Jack Eichelberger '91 passed away April 18, 2013.

Tori Jones '91 is the senior strategist and account director at Bon’s Eye Marketing. She also is a marketing instructor at UNCW’s Cameron School of Business.


Joseph Wellspeka '91 passed away March 4, 2014.

Shanda Williams Bordeaux '92 was promoted to director of development and alumni relations at Wilmington Christian Academy.

Herbert Coombs '92 passed away Aug. 7, 2013.

Rhonda Ezzell Jessup '92, director of public relations at Mount Olive College, was named the Career Woman of the Year by the Wayne-Duplin Business and Professional Women.

Amy Sloop '92 is the assistant principal of Scotland High School in Scotland County.

1990s

Deborah Brasic '94 and '01M is a nurse practitioner with Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCare Center in Pender and New Hanover counties.

Billy Cone '94 published a new book of photography, titled Femme, which includes portraits of unknown Parisian faces.

Margueritte Crothers '94 passed away July 20, 2013.

David Crawley '94, '97M is public works director for the city of Springfield, Ga.

John Girault '94 is executive director of Edisto Island Open Land Trust.

Andrew Malinowycz '94 passed away Nov. 17, 2013.

The redesigned circulation area in UNCW’s Randall Library was dedicated Nov. 25, 2013, in memory of benefactor Martha Clayton '95, who passed away Feb. 16, 2012.

Matthew Tierney '95 passed away April 25, 2013.

Shelly R. Blake '96 is the general counsel for the N.C. Department of Transportation.

Heather Swain Coghill '96 is a learning specialist at Caldwell Academy in Greensboro. In addition, Heather has her own specialized tutoring and educational consulting business.

McGavock Edwards '96 was promoted to vice president and manager of IMRE in Raleigh. She oversees public relations, social marketing and integrated accounts, and manages IMRE’s presence in the Southeastern U.S.

DeLayne Godwin '96, '01M is a nurse practitioner at the Lower Cape Fear Hospice & LifeCare Center at the Wilmington Care Center.
Joel S. Spencer '96 and Melanie Spencer '96 are the owners of Bike Cycles in Wilmington.

Todd Beane '97 is the principal of Uwharrie Middle School.


Anthony Santos '97 passed away March 1, 2014.

Shawn Smith '97, '08M, owner of Sugar on Front Street in Wilmington, expanded to wholesale operations, relocated to Surf City and changed the name of the special order bakery to Sugar Island.

Kara Fuchs Gansmann '97 is an associate in the litigation section of the Wilmington office of Cranfill, Sumner & Hartzog, LLP.

Michael S. George '98 earned a Master of Science degree in education, specializing in training and performance improvement, from Capella University in December 2013. He is pursuing a Doctorate in Education and anticipates graduating in 2015.


David Jenkins '98 is health director for Scotland County.

Janna Lennon '98, '07M is the assistant principal of Bellamy Elementary School with New Hanover County Schools.

Jackson L. Norvell '98, '08M is principal of Eugene Ashley High School in Wilmington.

William Owens '98 was listed as a "Rising Star" in the 2013 edition of SuperLawyers Magazine. Owens graduated from Campbell University's Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law.

Megan Parpart Williams '98 announces the birth of her son, Chase Durward Williams, on Dec. 7, 2012. Williams is president of the North Carolina Nurses Association.

James Blanton '99 was appointed by Gov. Pat McCrory to serve on the N.C. Crime Commission. He is an attorney with White & Hearne.

Anthony W. Dixon '99 was appointed interim director of the School of Hospitality, Sport and Tourism Management at Troy University.

Corey Heitz '99 is the director for undergraduate medical education with the Department of Emergency Medicine in Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine.

James McAbee '99 passed away Nov. 13, 2013.


Amanda Sigmon '99 passed away May 24, 2013.

**2000s**

Claudette Cohen '00M is the winner of the 2013 Doris Betts Fiction Prize competition for her story, "The Mayor of Biscoe." Her story was published in the 2014 issue of the North Carolina Literary Review.

Shane Fernando '00, '08M is the director of Cape Fear Community College's Humanities and Fine Arts Center. He also serves as president of the Thalian Hall Center for Performing Arts Board of Trustees.

Wendy Worsley Fullerton '00 and her husband Dennis announce the birth of their third child, Dylan Paul, on Sept. 25, 2013.

Patrick Gunn '00, '05M is a member of the UNCW Board of Visitors. Patrick does strategic consulting in the civil health division of Booz Allen Hamilton. He earned Project Management Professional certification.

Janice '00 and Jeffrey Hernandez '00 announce the birth of their daughter, Altairea Maya, on May 4, 2013. Jeff is a nuclear operator at Cooper Nuclear Station in Brownville, Neb., and Janice is a volunteer at La Leche League leader and homeschool mother.

Stacey Moore '00 passed away July 1, 2013.

Koyah Alston Rivera '00 is pursuing a Ph.D. in leadership studies at N.C. A&T University. She is the graduate registrar/graduated student support services manager at the UNC School of Dentistry.

Edward S. Schenk III '00 was honored by U.S. News and World Report's Best Lawyers as a 2014 Best Lawyer in Raleigh for worker's compensation law—employers.

Richard J. Schrum '00 and his wife, Jamie, announce the birth of their son, Wulf Richard, on Jan. 13, 2013.

John R. Bell IV '01 was elected to the N.C. House of Representatives and is serving his first term for the people of Craven, Greene, Lenoir and Wayne Counties in House District 10.

Rhett Butler '01 is vice president of sales for Intelligent Decisions.

Matthew A. Gray '01 passed away May 26, 2013.

Karen Hackney '01 passed away Feb. 25, 2014.

Jessica Maher '01 is a special assistant to President Barack Obama for legislative affairs. Her duties involve promoting the president’s agenda in the U.S. Senate. She focuses on coordinating with the Senate Energy and Natural Resources, the Environment and Public Works, the Agriculture and the Indian Affairs Committees.


Dawn Ramsauer '01 passed away Dec. 21, 2013.

Paula Steele '01 passed away Jan. 20, 2014.

April Keen '02 announces the birth of her son, Keen Rufus Fox, in 2012. She is a site identification specialist II with Quintiles Inc.

Mandy O'Callaghan '02 was appointed policy chief of the Florida House of Representatives Health Quality Subcommittee.

Melissa Allen '03 and David Sacknoff were married Sept. 29, 2012. She was granted a U.S. patent award on Feb. 5, 2013, for a brachytherapy and radiography target holding device. She is the director of marketing with Cardinal Title Group in Chantilly, Va.

Andrew K. '03 and Nicole B. Benbow '04 announce the birth of their daughter, Catherine Bailey, on Aug. 30, 2013.

Jane Howard Crutchfield '03 and her partner started a raw food truck and catering business, Triangle Raw Foods, in Durham in 2011. They are in the process of opening Café Love, a raw, organic and vegan foods café in Durham.

John C. Gibson '03 and Kathleen A. Phillips were married Sept. 18, 2013. John works for BB&T in Wilson.

Christopher Horvath '03 and his wife, Jamie, announce the birth of their son, Grayson Noah, on Sept. 3, 2013.

Dorothy Nesbitt '03 passed away Feb. 4, 2014.

Lauren Norman '03 is one of 46 law enforcement analysts certified through the International Association of Crime Analysts. She is employed by the Garner Police Department.

DJ '03 and Michelle Ottey Urban '01 announce the birth of their daughter, Kaia Blue, on Sept. 21, 2013. Michelle is a pharmacist for Realo Discount Drug in Jacksonville, and DJ is a pharmacist for CVS in Wilmington.
Bonnie Thayer Dubier '04 is the owner of Thayer Consulting LLC, a full-service advertising agency in Wilmington. She married Jacques Dubier on Dec. 31, 2012, and has two sons, Austin and Noah.

Laura E. Chilton '04 and John D. Midgett '98 were married March 30, 2013. The couple resides in Wilmington.

Charlotte F.A. Floyd '04 released her debut novel, Deception, in May 2013.

Jordan E. Pike '04 and Kelly B. Burns were married June 29, 2013. Jordan is employed at Wireless Data Systems in Wilmington.

Summer Safrit '04 owns a photography studio in Hendersonville, Tenn., that specializes in pictures of high school girls. She was named best photographer in Sumner County for 2013.

Chandan Y. Shankar '04, a lawyer with the Richardson Firm in Fayetteville, was named to the Top 100 Lawyers – Criminal Defense list with the Richardson Firm in Wilmington, was named to the Top 100 Lawyers – Criminal Defense list and the Top 40 Under 40 list by the National Trial Lawyers.

Sara Shoemaker '04 and her husband, Clint, announce the birth of their daughter, Samantha Bell, on April 28, 2012.

Christi Neuberg Weide '04M passed away Jan. 18, 2014.

Eddie T. Farmer '05 announces the birth of his son, Paxton Jack, on Dec. 20, 2013. Eddie teaches ninth grade math in Vale, N.C.

Jonathan R. '05 and Nanda Langdon Jones '04 announce the birth of their second child, Levi Randolph, on June 5, 2013. They live in Clayton.

Sarah Van Maenen '05 spent the summer of 2013 in Panama as an educational volunteer with Give & Surf.

Nakita Thomas '05M was one of 10 finalists for the Fishman Prize, which recognizes exceptionally effective teachers working in high-poverty public schools. She teaches exceptional teachers at Cape Fear Middle School in Pender County and is a mentor teacher for the New Teacher Center in Santa Cruz, Calif.

Cristi Thompson '05 is an assistant sales manager with Coldwell Banker Howard Perry and Walston Builder Services in Raleigh. In 2013, she was recognized by the Triangle Sales and Marketing Council as a member of the Elite Million Dollar Circle and by the National Sales and Marketing Council as Silver Rookie Salesperson of the Year and member of the Gold Sales Team of the Year.

Jason '06 and Amber Grogan Hacker '06 announce the birth of their son, Erik Daniel, on April 23, 2013. Jason earned a Ph.D. in psychology from Loyola University Chicago and received the Dissertation Award for Professional Schools from the Council of Graduate Programs.

Donnarie Mills Hales '06 is the first chair of, the youngest appointee to and the only female on the Pitt County Agricultural Advisory Board.

Jessica L. Phillips '06 earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in visual arts from the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University. She has a one-year appointment as artist-in-residence at the Saratoga Clay Arts Center in Saratoga Springs, N.Y.

Jenna Schmidt '06 and Jessica Herman '04 participated in a volunteer day with the Clinton Foundation, cleaning up the destruction of Hurricane Sandy.

David Anderson '07, '09M was approved to be an owner and operator of a McDonald’s restaurant and purchased the McDonald’s location at Monkey Junction.


Jared Callahan '07 has started a business, City of Light Fitness, in Buffalo, N.Y.

Casie Hammons '07 is the Winston-Salem Symphony’s development manager.


Justine Sgalio '07 and Brent Jameson were married Aug. 5, 2012. Seahawks who attended the wedding included John Edwards '07, Ty Moore '08 and Kelly Smith Moore '07.

Justine is a freelance public relations consultant and an aspiring writer. The couple reside in Seymour, Ind.

Michael '07 and Laura Falco Staples '07 announce the birth of their daughter, Sophia Lynn, on Sept. 26, 2013.

Christopher A. Watford '07 and Michael Herbert '05 of Leland Fire/Rescue won their second state paramedic competition title in a row at the N.C. Office of Emergency Medical Services Emergency Medicine Today Conference in October 2013.

Justin B. Williams '07 graduated from Chatham University with a Doctor of Occupational Therapy degree, summa cum laude. His dissertation on powered mobility training for older adults was accepted for publication in the June 2014 issue of OT Practice. He is employed by Genesis Rehab Services and is director of rehabilitation and an occupational therapist at Cascades Verdae in Greenville, S.C.

George Baines '08 is an on-premise sales representative for Coca-Cola and led the N.C. East Region of Coca-Cola in new business sales in 2012 and the first quarter of 2013. He was featured in the June 1, 2013, edition of the StarNews.

Joanna J. Hasapis '08 is a member of the real estate and commercial development practice group in Parker Poe’s Raleigh office. She earned her J.D., summa cum laude, from N.C. Central University in 2011.

Laura Kranz ‘08 was a finalist for the Golden Link Awards Affiliate Manager of the Year.

Nelson Oliver '08 was one of 25 students worldwide admitted to the Peter Stark Producing Program in the University of Southern California’s School of Cinematic Arts, earning a Master of Fine Arts degree in motion picture producing in May 2013. His internship at the Kennedy/Marshall Company led to a full-time position at Amblin/DreamWorks.

Chris Pagels '08 is doing his anesthesia residency at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. His wife Elizabeth Crisp Pagels '08 is a nurse in the cardiac catheterization lab at the University of Virginia.

Susan Reuschle '08 and Kyle Eaker '09 were married June 3, 2013. Susan is the coach of the women’s lacrosse team, and Kyle works in the counseling center at Lenoir-Rhyne University. Kyle will graduate with a Master of Arts degree in counseling in 2014.

Meredith Causey '09 is a nurse in the medical intensive care unit at Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital where she received the Exceptional Person Award. She is pursuing a Master of Science in nursing with a concentration in nurse-midwifery at East Carolina University.

Katherine McConnell '09 and Robert Weinbach Jr. '09 were married May 31, 2013.

2010s

Jamel L. Campbell '10 and Angela Yvette Ray were married Nov. 17, 2011. Jamel is a financial services officer at State Employees Credit Union. He lives in Raleigh with his wife and two children, Kingston and Victory.

Brittany Cox '10 has been busy acting in Seattle, Wash., including a Microsoft commercial, as Celes Chere in Final Fantasy: Terra and in A Bad Summer for Tomatoes. She is the daughter of Deb Newton '83 and Lee Cox '82.
Kelly Jarrell ’10 is the relationship manager for BLDG25, a division of Vaco Raleigh that specializes in design, development and project delivery for clients in a variety of industries.

Cory Morris ’10 graduated with a doctorate in chiropractic from Palmer College of Chiropractic in Port Orange, Fla.


Megan Sage ’10 and Kevin Townsend Jr. ’11 were married in June 2012 and reside in Charlotte. Megan teaches high school French, and Kevin works as a senior account specialist for the truck division of Enterprise.

Natalie Smith ’10 and Justin Myers ’10 were married Sept. 20, 2013.

Marissa Walch ’10 and Cole Wilken ’11 live in Baltimore, Md., and adopted a dog named Minnie.

Sarah Edwards ’11 and Aaron Leger were married Sept. 27, 2013. Her bridesmaids were fellow Honors College graduates Amanda Krise ’11, Katie Robbins ’12 and Sarah Arsennon ’11. Sarah is pursing a Ph.D. in lifespan and developmental psychology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Alex Fadel ’11 and Eric Nelson were married Sept. 21, 2013.

Chad Locklear ’11M is the director of marketing at Givens Performing Arts Center at UNC Pembroke.

Erin Mode ’11 and David Dardick ’11 were married Dec. 22, 2012.

Leslie Ann Newman ’11 Ph.D. received the 2013 NASSP Dr. Sizer High School Dissertation Award for her research, “Pieces of the Puzzle: Improving Turnaround High Schools.” She is an assistant principal at Topsail Middle School.

Natalie Price ’11 is an assistant show manager with Southern Shows inc. and has helped produce the Southern Women’s Shows in Orlando and Memphis.

Donald Rush ’11 and ’13M was selected as one of the Fayetteville Observer’s Class of 2014’s 40 Under Forty Recipients, which honors 40 of the area’s rising leaders for business success and community impact. Donald is a first grade teacher at Dublin Primary School.

Maura A. Sanders ’11M is a licensed real estate agent working in the Traverse City, Mich., area.

James Tatum ’11 finished 14th in the 77 kg weight class of the International Weightlifting Federation World Championships held in November in Poland. He is a member of the U.S. Olympic weightlifting team.

Woodcuts by Christopher Alexander ’12 and Ashton Durham ’12 were showcased in the UNCW Cultural Arts Building Art Gallery during the summer of 2013.

Courtney L. Cavanaugh ’12 handles marketing and Internet sales for D.R. Horton Building Corp. in Wilmington.


Brian Satz ’12 is the owner of Computer Warriors in Wilmington, which specializes in computer repair and the sale of refurbished devices.

Rebecca Sidden ’12 is pursuing an M.B.A. with a concentration in marketing at Regis University. She serves as the public relations/marketing person for Cane Bay High School Choral Booster Club Board.

Sarah Cox ’13 and Keith Fraser ’13 married July 20, 2013.

Three UNCW alumni were chosen by Gov. Pat McCrory to serve on a 24-member Teaching Advisory Committee dedicated to improving the education climate in North Carolina. Elizabeth Jones ’13M, an eighth grade science teacher and department chair at Roland Grise Middle School, was named chair. Jennifer Currin ’09M is the 2013 N.C. Virtual Public School Online Teacher of the Year. Anna Outlaw ’08 is the district lead teacher of mathematics in Duplin County.

Lauren Norman ’13 was one of four people in 2012 recognized for outstanding contributions to the field of crime analysis by the International Association of Crime Analysts. She was the first analyst in the country hired to implement Data Drive Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety on a regional level through the Garner Police Department.

Jordan Rouse ’13 and Bill Hawks ’10, ’11M were married June 15, 2013. Bill is the director of business development at SeedSpark in Charlotte, and Jordan is a math teacher at Weddington High School in Union County.
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After learning the mailbox at the northern end of Wrightsville Beach had been vandalized, **UNCW Ambassadors** wanted to continue the 11-year tradition as part of their legacy to the community. Organizer Madison Page said, “There’s still something special about receiving a hand-written letter, and when you go down to the mailbox, you have the opportunity to read letters from people that you may never have the opportunity to connect with in person.”