

SPRING 2014 • VOLUME 9 • NUMBER 1 • A PUBLICATION OF CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY

# THE LAKER CONNECTION

**EMPOWERING  
EXPERIENCES  
MAKE DREAMS REAL**

DREAMS. MADE REAL.



**DREAMS . MADE REAL .**

Dr. Jacqueline Jordan, professor of biology congratulates a graduate following a Clayton State commencement ceremony.

Cover photo by Kevin Liles ('11)

**THE LAKER CONNECTION**

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**Above:** MBA graduates celebrate at commencement.

The most academically empowering experience at Clayton State University is graduation, when the student's dream of earning a college degree is made real. Clayton State empowers students in every undergraduate and graduate degree program through a variety of methods, from hands-on experience through programs like VITA in the College of Business to research opportunities and the use of technology in the classroom.

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Last fall, the Clayton State University Athletic Department announced the establishment of a Hall of Fame. And now is the time to recognize its first class of inductees.

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### As a term, empowerment has been used frequently, and in a wide range of contexts. I for one am attracted to the way in



Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes, Jr.

which the concept is described by the Connecticut-based People Empowering People Program. They define empowerment as "...a social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they define as important."

I am attracted to the concept, because I believe it captures many Clayton State University values and actions. Learning creates the conditions for exercising greater influence over one's own life. Students and graduates who apply that learning certainly bring direct benefits to themselves. But they do more. As a part of our institutional mission, the institution is committed to the cultivation of "...engaged, experienced-based learning, enriched by active community service..." And our students are empowered during their degree programs and other campus experiences to succeed in their careers. But they are also empowered through the same tools derived from their learning to contribute and, in fact, lead.

Our accounting students can gain in their understanding of Federal and State tax codes. That knowledge empowers them to advance in careers over time. But their learning also empowers those same students to contribute to citizens in our region through the VITA program described here and led by Professor Judith Ogden.

As you will read here, other business students use their learning to empower themselves to not only make a living, but also a life. In the end, leaving us with a quest to learn is the most important way we empower our students.

That quest manifests itself in academic programs across the campus. In some instances, it involves student involvement in research activities, reinforcing the need to continuously learn. In other instances, it will be the development of technical knowledge, which will provide access to a constantly changing learning environment of the 21st Century. Occasionally, the quests demonstrate how many of our new graduates help to empower others, through graduation contributions to the University Dream Makers Scholarship Initiative aimed to assist students for whom some scholarship support is the essential piece in the map to university completion.

Clayton State University has long been committed to empowering our students, even if we may not have said so explicitly. More than simply a cliché, we see this as a necessity of the 21st Century. Many of you may have watched a YouTube series first labeled Shift Happens and currently labeled Did Your Know 2014. That video reports the following: the top ten in-demand jobs in 2013 did not exist in 2004—[think search engine optimizer]. We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist using technologies that haven't been invented in order to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet. This issue of *The Laker Connection* can give you a glimpse of ways in which learning empowers our students to succeed in that future.

Dr. Thomas Hynes  
President



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THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# EMPOWERMENT

MADE REAL.

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*by John Shiffert*

“When they’re actively doing tax returns, they blossom.”

Now, maybe one doesn’t typically link the function of doing a federal income tax return with blossoming, or with making dreams real, but the speaker in this case is Clayton State University Associate Professor of Law Dr. Judith Ogden, and the case in point is the University’s longest-running community service initiative, the Vol-



Business students volunteer their tax preparation know-how to assist a community member.

unteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, hosted by the College of Business, and directed by Ogden.



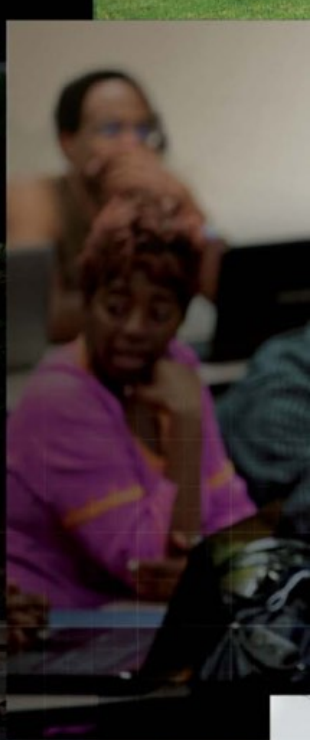
**Ogden**

VITA is a national program that provides tax support for certain eligible taxpayers. The program is also an empowering experience for Clayton State students.

Each year for the past 24 years, Clayton State accounting students have volunteered their time and efforts, providing the public with free tax preparation services and, in Ogden’s words, blossoming in the process.

And there are additional, long-term benefits to the students as well. Not only do they develop confidence in dealing with clients, notes Ogden, but the experience makes them much more comfortable in approaching an accounting firm after they graduate Clayton State.

“They’re now better at getting and keeping a job,” she says of her VITA volunteers.





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THE COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# VITA VITALS

TAX YEAR 2009

TO

TAX YEAR 2013

# 949

TAX RETURNS COMPLETED

# 79

STUDENT PREPARERS

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2014 SAW THE LARGEST NUMBER OF  
COMPLETED RETURNS IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS

# 224

PREPARED BY 16 STUDENTS

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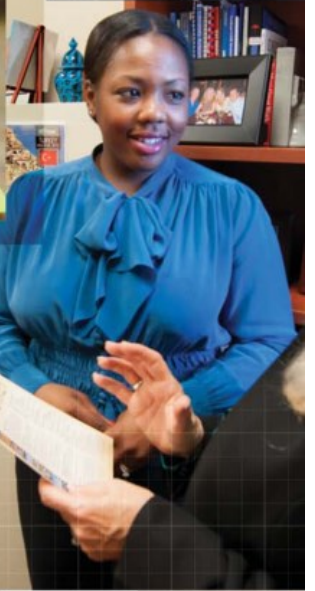
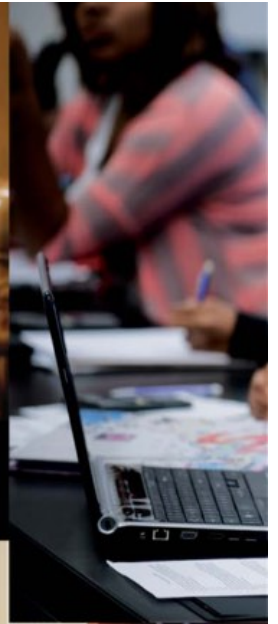
While VITA is a highly visible and public manifestation of the University's empowering its students, it is hardly the only such initiative in the College of Business.

Indeed, every business major at Clayton State knows about empowerment, thanks in part to the College of Business' capstone strategy course named capstone business experience. The lead instructor for the course is Professor of Management Dr. Gary May.

"The most empowering learning involves hands-on experience and challenge," says May. "By participating in an interactive team simulation, students actually learn how to run a business – creating and revising product lines, marketing their products, managing the production, performing HR functions, applying total quality management tools, and raising funds in a competitive



**May**







environment. Having teams go up against each other is a powerful motivator for students to test and hone their skills.”

That’s not just the professor talking. One of his current students, Christopher “CJ” Menard, has this take on the capstone business experience course.

“I think Dr. May’s course is a good practice for how real companies operate in the marketplace. You have multiple factors that are interlocked, all affecting your bottom-line. The simulation is very detailed, and is a great tool for preparing soon-to-be graduates, including myself, on how every decision and function within the organization is crucial for success. In the simulation, production cannot really schedule what it needs to produce unless it knows what marketing is planning. This is one of the challenges each student in the simulation has to take into account. The process makes you work as a team and hold each other accountable. The simulation has definitely empowered me to want to get into the workforce to begin making these tough, yet rewarding decisions.”

According to May, the simulation also provides a framework for understanding business processes, decision-making, and key financial reports as the students fight for market share and profits. The semester-long simulation is a complement to the cognitive course content, which teaches the principles of strategic management and leadership.

One of the College of Business’ specific academic programs that epitomizes empowerment is supply chain management, a wide-ranging success story from Morrow to Savannah that typically ends up with the ultimate prize for Clayton State graduates, a good job.

“Every year, we have a student trip to the Savannah Ocean Container Port,” explains Director, Supply Chain Management and Assistant Professor of Supply Chain John Mascaritolo. “The focus of this trip is to give the students an up-close view of the working operations of the fourth largest container port in the U.S. They get to see what global shipping is like. They see ocean containers being loaded and unloaded from the huge ocean vessels and I find this exposure gets them more excited in their future for a career in supply chain management.”



**Mascaritolo**

One student who felt that excitement was December 2013 graduate Angel Devone. An integrative studies major with a minor in supply chain management, Devone was also empowered by the University's Corporate Partners Program, and the Office of Career Services, in addition to the academic programs of the College of Business. As a result, she was hired for her supply chain expertise by Georgia-Pacific as a procurement specialist. In fact, after three months of employment at Georgia-Pacific's Houston plant, she was promoted to supporting the Georgia Pacific plant in Las Vegas.

As Director of Career Services Bridgette McDonald explains, Devone was hired by Georgia-Pacific after taking part in one of her office's periodic Employer Information Sessions – events that give Corporate Partners like Georgia-Pacific an up close and personal view of the University's best and brightest.

From the students' perspective, the Employer Information Sessions are an empowering opportunity to listen to recruiters discuss how to gain inside knowledge to their hiring practices. That was the case in August 2013, when Devone attended the Georgia-Pacific Employer Information Session on the Clayton State campus and had a



Career Services offers several opportunities throughout the year for students to network with potential employers and graduate schools. Bringing career and educational opportunities to campus empowers students to make connections that can make their dreams real.

chance to interact with Georgia-Pacific Vice President for Procurement Scott Harper, eventually leading to her position(s) with Georgia-Pacific.

“There has been nothing but positive acceptance for our supply chain management program here at Clayton State University,” says Mascaritolo. “Companies like Georgia-Pacific, Philips Van Hausen, Kuehne + Nagle, Delta, and Coca-Cola, find our students of supply chain management well-trained and competent in meeting their requirements for filling competitive entry level positions.”

Clearly, the College of Business, like the rest of Clayton State, is a place of empowerment for students. Perhaps the student who expresses that the best is the president of the Clayton State Accounting Club and VITA volunteer, Garron Barrett, who notes that, while he's learned a lot of complex tax codes in class, “it was a great experience to talk to people, to engage with them.”

Ogden and Barrett both agree that “doing” tax returns live is a lot different than doing them in the classroom, and that students are indeed empowered by the experience.

“Every tax situation is different, you have to figure out every part of the tax return,” he says. “You can't flip to the back to the book to see the answer.”

While going “live” does provide the VITA volunteers with an empowering experience, Barrett also notes that their service also helps the taxpayers.

“By applying what we know in a real situation we can inform the taxpayers,” he explains. “We can also help the taxpayers learn about filling out their forms in the future.

“It's a learning environment for everyone.”

# More Than I Could Have Ever Dreamed...

Clayton State student Samantha Watson shares her academically empowering experience

Clayton State and its wonderfully encouraging faculty, staff, and departments have empowered me more than I could have ever dreamed.

Being an honors student has allowed me access to honors classes and exceptional faculty members. The enhanced classes, research opportunities, and invested faculty have empowered me to become a dedicated learner and have further pushed my interest of graduate programs.

Of all the professors I've had, Dr. Virginia Bonner has been the most inspiring. After four years of taking her classes and working with her, she has become a mentor for me. She has empowered me from day one by making me believe in my education and myself through her continual confidence in my abilities and reaching out to me with opportunities.

I also find empowerment through many other opportunities at Clayton State, most notably opportunities through the Department of Campus Life and the Department of Housing, Residence Life and Community Standards.

Being an AmeriCorps member in the spring of 2013 really empowered me to reach out on campus and in my community. The service program instilled humanitarian ideals and social consciousness in me. Also through Campus Life, I am in the Interfaith Leadership Ambassador Program, which empowers me through intensive education about different faiths and religions and allows me to understand and respect differences in religion and work with diverse groups of people to complete service projects for our collective community.

Outdoor Adventure is also really pushing me to do things I wouldn't normally do. It's nice to have a balance between academics/intellectual growth and everyday life growth. After the Outdoor Adventure trips I feel physically invincible and wholly alive, not just intellectually strong.

Being an RA (Resident Assistant) has changed a lot about my campus experience and growth. I know many residents on a personal level and people feel comfortable coming to me with problems. This position not only helped me afford on-campus housing, but it is helping me become more confident in delegating conflict management situations as well as building my peer leadership skills.



Watson

*by Samantha Watson*



Dr. Richard Singiser and a research student work in a science lab. Undergraduate research opportunities offer an empowering experience to students who plan to continue their education in medical school or graduate school, and also prepares them to think critically; a skill key to not only their future careers, but also in life.



Nip

## RESEARCH AT CLAYTON STATE

By Lauren Graves

Regardless of major or degree program, the ability to think for oneself is an empowering life skill Clayton State University students attain in route to making their dreams real. One way students hone their critical thinking skills is through research opportunities.



Singiser

Associate Professor of Chemistry Dr. Richard Singiser offers students the opportunity to conduct scientific research in his lab. And while he has several biology and chemistry majors who delve into understanding, hypothesizing, testing and observing proteins, genetics, and more, his non-science majors also learn the value of research.

“Research empowers by teaching students to be independent thinkers. Research gets them thinking about science in a real way, and not just from a textbook. It gets students back to the ‘why’ part of science and the independent learning gives them confidence,” Singiser says. “Science students who want to go on to medical school or graduate school - as well as my non-

sciences students who may not - learn a lot from research, because they find out the answers for themselves.”

Not only do they find out answers for themselves, students also learn about themselves. Chemistry major Abigail Jones is working on box turtle DNA research in Singiser’s lab.

“I think the opportunity to do research has empowered me personally because doing research helps diversify my thinking.

*Research at Clayton State will help me pursue my dreams...More than the techniques, the values I have learned during my research are the most beneficial. Learning to be patient - experiments are slow and time consuming; diverse thinking - there’s always another way or something you can improve; independence - no one is going to be there holding my hand every step of the way; and lastly never giving up - things may “fail” or not go the way that I wanted or planned, but that’s no reason to quit.*

-Abigail Jones, chemistry major

I've learned with doing research that nothing is linear," shares Jones. "There are multiple ways to get from point A to point B; you just have to be open to learning those new ways and be willing to think outside the box. It also has shown me that failure is not an end. I cannot begin to tell you how many experiments I have performed that have 'failed,' but I had to keep going, keep switching up my thinking and tweaking the experiment until I achieved success. I also have learned to be more independent and not rely on someone to help me. All these qualities I can take with me wherever I choose to go and be successful."

For Singiser's research students, empowerment goes beyond the classroom and the laboratory, allowing students the opportunity to collaborate with peers in their future fields.

"If they work in my lab with me for one year, I have committed to find a way to get them to a conference to present the work they have done," explains Singiser. "We have attended international conferences where they present their poster presentation to the world. Conferences are a place where students can see what other undergraduates are doing."



per

Conducting research, sharing findings with peers and adding to the knowledge base in his or her field of study is also a component within the Clayton State University Honors Program. Clayton State honors students participate in research opportunities through contract courses and research assistantships.

"Student researchers engage their studies at a level that offers unique rewards. Because research often results in scholarly productions such as articles and presentations, there is pressure beyond the drive to earn an 'A.' Articles are peer reviewed and talks or poster sessions put a student's work on display, sometimes before experts in the field," says Honors Program Director Dr. Alexander Hall.



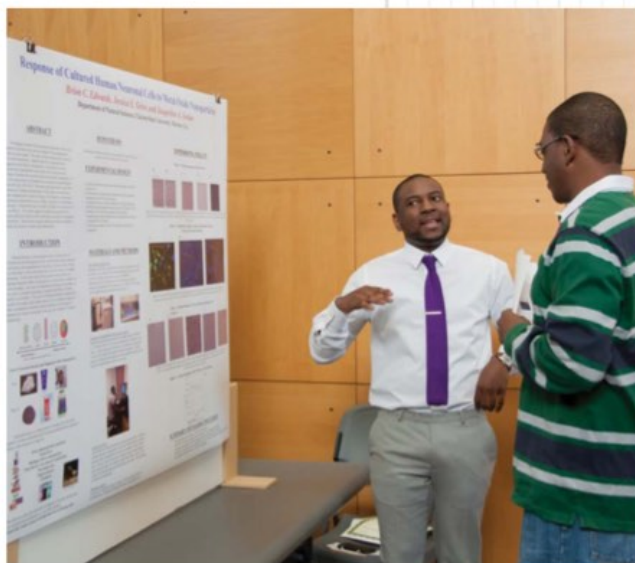
Hall

"Aside from affording students the opportunity to build their portfolios, sharpen critical thinking skills and make important connections, participating in research can help make students' dreams real by giving them a track record of academic success that bolsters confidence," Hall concludes.

Honors student and senior in the Clayton State nursing program, Elizabeth Medina, recognizes that empowerment.

"The honors program has helped make my academic dreams real... I am able to complete course contracts with my instructors in the nursing program. This enhances my understanding of the material because I do research, create PowerPoints, and then lecture to my classmates."

Whether it's research in a science lab to further our understanding of the natural world, or research to add to a specific field's discourse, Clayton State students are empowered by their academic experiences to think critically in their professional and personal lives.



Clayton State students conduct scientific and scholarly research and present their findings at events on and off campus. Above, students present their academic research to peers and faculty in the James M. Baker University Center.



Retta Chin Smith, class of 2013, graduated with a degree in middle grades education with a concentration in mathematics. Above, she uses an iPad app called Tower's of Hanoi to investigate a problem situation that motivated the topic of recursive sequences.

## EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

By Erin Fender

Clayton State students commonly encounter experiences that empower them to make the most of their potential and to achieve their goals. Quite often this is done through the use of technology in the classroom.



**Roberts**

“Technology enables today’s students to have ready access to information, computation, and communication tools in ways that have never been possible. Technology provides the potential for students to be globally connected and to interact with others all over the world.”

“It is important that computer technology provides tools -- this technology does not take the place of learning. Just as calculator technology has become important in the teaching and learning of mathematics, calculators are tools to enhance mathematical understanding. They don’t replace the mathematics that students need to learn,” explains Dean of the College of Information & Mathematical Sciences Dr. Lila Roberts.

Clayton State faculty use many tools like SMART Boards, Apple TV, tablets, WebEx and Ebooks. These tools give students a hands-on approach to learning that fosters a supportive relationship with not only the professor, but their classmates also. Many courses often use discussion boards to assist with post-class discussion or study help.

Dr. Kelli Nipper, an associate professor of mathematics, believes strongly that keeping students actively engaged in the learning process is enhanced with the use of technology. It enables students to see the mathematics that is all around them and the power to discover it.



**Nipper**

“I use technology as both a teaching and learning tool. I provide students with interactive websites, apps, dynamic software, and graphing calculators in order for them to experience new concepts and to verify accuracy. I believe that using technology tools such as these enables students to build new ideas, explore the

validity of these ideas, and then move to formalization,” says Nipper.

“Dr. Nipper has introduced numerous mathematical applications and interactive websites to her classes that have aided us in learning new materials as well as being able to utilize technology to teach the materials to our future classrooms,” says senior student Stephanie Cashion.

Stephanie is earning a degree in middle grades education with a concentration in math and science. Technology has played a large role during her undergraduate career at Clayton State; including making lessons, assignments, and helping to make learning more accessible for use in her own classroom after she graduates.

“The abundance of classroom-appropriate technology has been the most surprising aspect of technology I have learned. With a little research a teacher can find numerous resources for his or her classroom. As a soon-to-be middle grades education graduate and a future teacher, finding classroom- and standards-appropriate technology is a very important part of the lesson planning process,” says Cashion.

Graduate student Julie Bartlett is working on completing her degree in the Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics program. She has a unique perspective as both a student and through student teaching as she completes her degree.



**Bartlett**

“I have had experience with a MOBI board, which is a handheld board you write on with a stylus pen and it shows up on the screen. I enjoyed using this technology! This allows you to walk around the room and make sure students are on track while still writing notes on the board,” she says. “It can be boring writing on a traditional white board and students tend to misbehave if you are standing up there with your back turned to write. Using a MOBI board allows you to save your work so if you need to go back to reference a previous discussion then you can flip through your saved work, whereas on the whiteboard if you erase then you have to redo.”

Technology in the classroom is enhancing the way Clayton State faculty are able to teach and present material to students. From the use of SMART boards to how to incorporate on-line



Faculty and students at Clayton State use technology such as SMART Boards, Apple TV, tablets, WebEx and Ebooks as a hands-on, supportive approach to learning. Associate Professor of Mathematics Dr. Catherine Matos (top photo) uses SMART board technology in her classroom, and middle grades education students enhance their classroom teaching with technology (above).

discussion forums to continue the classroom discussion after class, Clayton State uses technology to empower students to expand their knowledge.

“We do have technology and we need to take advantage of it to be more efficient, but the knowledge of knowing how to do something is more important than knowing how to get technology to do it for you,” says Bartlett.



Health Care Management faculty members evaluate the student's capabilities, help focus on emphasizing strengths, and assist with improving interview responses. Everything counts: punctuality, appearance, attire, body language, communication, professionalism, and knowledge. Leading the exit interview session is (L to R) faculty member Deborah Gritzmacher with student Anna Byars, Dr. Marcia Butler, Dr. Kendolyn Smith and Dr. Ronald Fuqua.

## DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

*By Dolores Cox*

“Tell me about your interest in this position and why your qualifications make you a strong candidate for the job.”

How does a prospective graduate prepare and compete -- particularly in the rapidly expanding health care field? Students in the Health Care Management degree program have an overwhelming advantage: their capstone course is the culmination of exhibiting proficiency and expressing effectively the best responses to these critical questions.

Every senior participates in the exit interview - a mandatory component of the capstone course taught by Deborah Gritzmacher, associate professor of Health Care Management. She is fully invested in helping students achieve their potential and navigating through this pivotal stage. What makes the Exit Interview truly valuable is getting immediate feedback and constructive suggestions – such as doing research about the company at which the candidate is interviewing to thoughtfully engage with questions.

This individualized, in-depth approach is unique to Health Care Management because each and every faculty member in the department is involved. They are active health professionals in a variety of fields: human resources, long term care, Centers for Disease Control, pharmacy, nursing, dental hy-

giene, professional associations, public health, and policy administration.

How do students feel about this intensive experience? “This instills a sense of taking responsibility. This is real life. The exit interview exercise shows that the faculty members care about you, your career, and your success,” says Health Care Management student Anna Byars.

The interview is only one measure of professional skills. Another is the audition. For a music student, hours of practice peak in those few moments on stage. Students at Clayton State University have the privilege of performing at Spivey Hall.



Department of Health Care Management



“We are so fortunate to have this exceptionally fine recital hall right on our campus, where all of us can enjoy the world-class artists give the highest level performances. For our music students to perform on the very same stage is invaluable and awe-inspiring,” says Dr. Michiko Otaki, professor of music and director of keyboard studies.



**Otaki**

In addition to monthly student recitals, there are group performances, such as the Clayton State Music Drama Workshop, Clayton State Chorale, and Clayton State Orchestra. Each prospective graduate in the professional Bachelor of Music degree must complete a recital, which is held in Spivey Hall. Further insight is given by Dr. Kurt-Alexander Zeller, professor of music, coordinator of the Division of Music, and director of opera and vocal studies:



**Zeller**

“Singers who experience Spivey Hall as their principal performance venue are going to learn quite quickly and easily what their best sound really is... The result is a wonderful virtuous circle of a feedback loop, in which students can feel affirmed rather than intimidated, and that encourages them to improve.

“Students in the Bachelor of Music degree program are working on professional skills from day one. Music majors must be developing and honing practical professional skills all day long—how they breathe, how they move their bodies and their instruments, how they listen and tune and articulate. Music students don’t just *study* music; they must *do* music all day long. They are developing professional skills alongside academic knowledge.”

Beyond the interview and the audition, what else should a senior know? Career Services is a ready resource. One of the department’s most popular programs is the Business Etiquette Luncheon. This event provides students an opportunity to learn about effective networking and appropriate dining etiquette for a variety of professional situations. Participants eat a multi-course meal while the leader guides them through the etiquette of using tableware, managing different courses, and responding professionally during business dining.

Bridgette McDonald, director of Career Services, offers feedback from one student attendee: “This should be required for

every student at Clayton State! I learned so much about what is expected of me in a professional lunch or dinner, and I know it will help me land the job I want.”



**McDonald**

Clayton State’s supportive community is reflected in the dedication of faculty and staff who empower students through developing professional skills of all types.

Dr. Zeller describes the environment this way: “It’s a little like having a mirror which doesn’t hide your reality but always makes you look the very best you could—wouldn’t you face the world with just a bit more confidence and energy along with self-awareness?”



**Business Etiquette Luncheon**



Students participate in productions and have performance opportunities such as the musical production, Rodgers and Hart’s “The Boys from Syracuse,” held in Spivey Hall.

## Governor Deal Pledges \$2.9M to Equip New Clayton State Science Building

Georgia Governor Nathan Deal electrified a standing room-only crowd at the Nov. 14 groundbreaking for Clayton State University's new science building with a pledge to include \$2.9 million in next year's budget to equip the new facility.

Concluding his remarks before a large gathering of Clayton State faculty, staff, students and most of the local state legisla-



tive delegation, Deal noted the importance of the planned \$19.8 million building to the training of Georgia's future workforce, and added that an empty building wouldn't be of much help to the students.

"I am including \$2.9 million in next year's budget to equip this building," he then pledged.

According to Dr. Michelle Furlong, chair of the Clayton State Department of Natural Sciences, the funds Deal spoke of will be used mainly for scientific equipment for the new building's 16 labs. Included in the science building's 64,600 square feet will be eight instructional labs -- five for biology and three for chemistry -- and eight research labs, evenly split between biology and chemistry.

The ceremony was held on the site of

the new building, located in the parking lot across from the University's Laboratory Annex Building. Other speakers for the event, coincided with the beginning of construction, included University System of Georgia Chancellor Hank Huckaby; Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes; Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Clayton State, Dr. Nasser Momayezi; Kevin Kuntz, president of the Southeast Division of commercial contractor McCarthy Building Companies, Inc.; and Clayton State Student Government Association President Joshua Davis. Clayton State Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Dr. Micheal Crafton served as the master of ceremonies.

## Dr. Franklin and Nelson Mandela; Memories of Commencement Fall 2013

The Saturday, Dec. 7, 2013 Commencement will long be remembered as a special occasion.

Following the 9 a.m. ceremony highlighted by the keynote speech of State Senator Jack Hill, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the University honored former Atlanta mayor Shirley C. Franklin at the noon ceremony with the eighth honorary degree granted by the University in its 45-year history.

Now as the holder of an honorary Clayton State Doctorate of Public Service, Dr. Franklin (as so-introduced by Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes) proceeded to give a most memorable commencement address, basing her remarks to the graduates on the example set by a man she referred to as, "one of the great heroes of the 20th Century," former South African President Nelson Mandela, who passed away on Dec. 5, 2013, at the age of 95. In-



deed, the spirit of a great man imbued the entire Commencement, as Hynes asked the two full-house audiences to reflect on the memory on Mandela in his introductory remarks before both ceremonies.

Franklin stated that he would be remembered for centuries to come, because of his perseverance, intellect and vision. She urged some 240 graduates of the colleges of Arts & Sciences and Information and Mathematical Sciences to recall and follow the example and qualities Mandela exhibited throughout his long life.

## Clayton State Sets New Enrollment Record

Clayton State University is bucking a trend, not just across Georgia, but across the nation.

It has been widely reported that college and university enrollments were down throughout the U.S. for the fall 2013 semester. However, that was not the case at Clayton State. According to Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management & Academic Success Dr. Mark F. Daddona, Clayton State had a record enrollment for the fall 2013 semester, 7,263. The previous high mark for enrollment, set during the fall 2012 semester, was 7,146.

The fall 2013 figure marks a 1.6 percent increase from last fall's record, and includes significant growth in the University's Dual Enrollment program (from 222 to 347 new students), growth in freshmen enrollment, and total graduate enrollment (332 to 367). Total enrollment for the University has increased by 19.4 percent since 2006.

## A New Scholarship Initiative; “Dream Makers”

As a means of addressing the ongoing challenge of students being stretched by increasing educational costs and the need to “make ends meet,” Clayton State University, where dreams are made real, has announced a new scholarship initiative, “Dream Makers.”

Dream Makers got its start when a working group of University officials representing Clayton State’s Complete College Georgia Initiative, the Office of Financial Aid, the Clayton State Honors program, and the Office of Development came together in the spring of 2013 to identify specific areas of student financial need and to explore possible funding solutions for those needs.

Dream Makers is a multi-faceted approach to helping those students who are either high achievers, are close to completing their degree, or both. Three separate initiatives will be a part of the Dream Makers program; Dream Makers Scholarships, the Loch Leaders Investment Fund, and Laker Completion Grants.

If you are interested in becoming a Dream Maker, contact Vice President for External Relations Kate Troelstra at (678) 466-4470 or visit the Dream Makers giving page online at <https://giving.clayton.edu/dreammakersinitiative>.

## Taylor Foundation Establishes Annual Scholarships at Clayton State



Taylor

Since 1974, Marcia Taylor has been building her family-owned transportation and logistics company into a global corporation with annual revenue in excess of \$260 million. Luckily for Clayton State University students, while creating her vastly successful business she also instilled a philosophy that, “Giving back should be a part of any successful organization.”

According to a recent announcement, The Taylor Family Foundation has awarded a grant of \$10,000 to the Clayton State University Foundation to support four upperclassmen majoring in Supply Chain Management at Clayton State.

“The Taylor Family Foundation and Bennett International Group are proud to partner with Clayton State University and the College of Business by making these funds available to students so that they may continue their educational dreams,” states Lynette Alt, vice president of Bennett and the administrator for the Taylor Family Foundation in McDonough, Ga. “The annual scholarships continue a tradition established by Mrs. Taylor and Bennett International Group to be actively involved in the communities in which we operate.”



Scholarship Luncheon scholarship recipients with Bennett’s Lynette Alt. (L to R) Kimone Mcleod, Lynette Alt, Justin Agonafir, Regina Auletta, & Irvine Georges



## Mediation Team Wins The Highest Award

Add “mediation” to the list of fields where Clayton State students excel.

After returning from the November International Intercollegiate Mediation Tournament at Drake University Law School in Des Moines, IA, there were no more mountains to conquer for the Clayton State Mediation Team.

“There are no more tournaments this season. We have won the highest award,” says Dr. Judith Stilz Ogden, associate professor of law in the College of Business at Clayton State.

Indeed, the Drake tournament concluded a spectacular campaign for Clayton State’s mediation team of Tamara Johnson (Supply Chain Management major), Bertha Amosu (Accounting), Latangila Hodges-Bellamy (Supply Chain Management), Patrick Moore (Legal Studies), Shannon Moultrie (Legal Studies) and Matthew Blake (Legal Studies). In an international tournament with 42 teams from 25 colleges and universities from various countries, Clayton State won the First Place Mediation Team Award.

In addition, the team also came in sixth for the Advocate/Client Team Award, and individually Moultrie and Amosu took second place for Individual Advocate/Client. Also receiving individual awards were Hodges-Bellamy and Blake (Eighth place Individual Advocate/Client Award) and Johnson (15th place Individual Mediator).

## AmeriCorps Members Make a Difference During Alternative Break Trip

Sixteen AmeriCorps students, along with Jennifer Welch, AmeriCorps program coordinator and Dr. Samuel Maddox, associate professor of psychology, volunteered at Give Kids the World, a 70-acre nonprofit storybook resort where children with life-threatening illnesses and their families are treated to a week-long, cost-free fantasy vacation.

While the reward of service is often in the performance of the service, AmeriCorps received a special reward via a post on Clayton State's Facebook page from Bruce Nagy, of Kamloops, B.C., Canada, whose family was staying at Give Kids the World. In part, Nagy's Facebook post said...

"I cannot say enough about how wonderful everyone treated us all during our entire stay!....Right now I am holding back some tears, trying to express how much your campus group from Clayton State, on both occasions that they visited the Village, (helped). How heartwarming they all were, courteous, the smiles... they were all so amazing!!!"

In addition to Welch and Maddox, the AmeriCorps "Team Orlando" consisted of Jessica Dent, Sara Diggins, Josee Dolce, Keyauna Hopkins, Catherine Hutchins, Exell Jackson, Samantha Lapier, Joel Lymon, Christopher Manning, Jevon Miller, Nicholas Reed, Hillary Rimes, Venus Royster, Breanna Simpson, Racquel Valadez and Whitney Smith.



## Exceptional Results From SACS Reaffirmation Visit Says President Hynes

The SACS Commission on Colleges Visiting Committee completed its decennial reaffirmation visit to Clayton State University last week with an exit presentation that typified what Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes characterizes as an "exceptional" result.

Hynes notes that while the final reaffirmation decision on Clayton State's accreditation will officially be made at the December 2014 meeting of the SACSCOC Board, the visiting committee's recommendations are invariably accepted.

"In our case, the committee left with no recommendations for additional work to demonstrate compliance with the accreditation principles," he says. Hynes, who himself has been part of 16 such visits as an evaluator or as a university under review, adds that this is the first "no recommendation" report he has experienced.

In addition, the Committee also praised the University's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) -- Partnering Academics and Community Engagement, or PACE — and found it was an acceptable plan for Clayton State to move forward.

Dean of Assessment and Instructional Development Dr. Jill Lane and Professor of Psychology Dr. Antoinette Miller have led the University's SACS-related efforts for nearly two years in what Hynes refers to as a "massive undertaking."



**Partnering Academics  
And Community Engagement**

## Clayton State Fourth on AffordableCollegesOnline.org Listing of ROI for Georgia Colleges Universities

Two years ago, *James* magazine called Clayton State University a "Best Buy" among Georgia colleges and universities. Now, Clayton State has gathered a similar encomium from another source, AffordableCollegesOnline.org.

At a time when officials from President Obama on down are calling for higher education to become more affordable, AffordableCollegesOnline.org has a list of 188 Georgia institutions ranked by their ROI (Return On Investment) to students.

The list ranks Clayton State fourth in the state, (and third among public colleges and universities in the state) behind Georgia Tech, Southern Poly, and Emory University and ahead of, among others, the University of Georgia. It is also worth noting that Clayton State's tuition is the third-lowest among the top 25 colleges and universities on the list.



Norman

## Norman Named Hatfield Award Teacher of the Year

Clayton State University Associate Professor of Psychology Dr. Mario Norman has won the University’s Student Choice Award for Teacher of the Year for three consecutive years.

So it’s not surprising that the College of Arts & Sciences awarded Norman the Gene Hatfield Teacher of the Year Award for the 2012/2013 academic year.

The Gene Hatfield Teacher of the Year Award recognizes the accomplishments of outstanding faculty members within the College of Arts and Sciences. Now in its fifth year, the annual award is presented to a teacher who displays enthusiasm, creativity, compassion, authority, authenticity, patience, persistence, or humor in their teaching and interactions with students. The Arts & Sciences Teacher of the Year award is made possible by, and is named after, Dr. Eugene Hatfield, long-time (1976–2008) history professor at Clayton State.



Young

## Young Named Hatfield Award Scholar of the Year

Clayton State University Director of Music Management Studies and Assistant Professor of Music Dr. Shawn Young was awarded the Gene Hatfield Scholar of the Year Award for the 2012/2013 academic year.

The Arts & Sciences Scholar of the Year award is made possible by, and is named after, Dr. Eugene Hatfield, long-time (1976–2008) history professor at Clayton State. Preceding Young as recipients of the Hatfield award are Dr. Brigitte Byrd (2009), Dr. E. Joe Johnson

(2010), Dr. Jonathan Lyon (2011) and Dr. Alexander Hall (2012).

Young is a scholar of American Studies who says he is fascinated by how social movements and music evolve in response to pluralism, and whose current research explores this intersection. He particularly focuses on popular religious music.

## Former Clayton State Graduate Students are Now Clayton State Faculty

Within the past few semesters, several graduates of Clayton State University’s School of Graduate Studies have found themselves in a transition from student to faculty at Clayton State. The University now has seven faculty members that were once participants in Clayton State’s Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) English and Mathematics graduate programs, as well as

a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies graduate.

Three of the recent graduates graduated from the Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics program; James Kirksey, Aaron Rafter and Jennifer Harris now teach within the Clayton State Mathematics Department. Kelley Gladden, Daniel Smoak and Ryan Strader graduated from

## Clayton State University for Parents and Students -- Creating a College-Bound Culture

“We’re creating a college-bound culture in Clayton County,” says Dr. Lila Roberts, dean of the College of Information and Mathematical Sciences (CIMS) at Clayton State University, commenting on the “big picture” goal of the partnership between the University and Rex Mill Middle School.

Students and their parents from Clayton County’s Rex Mill Middle School visited Clayton State Saturday, Oct. 5 for the Second Annual Clayton State University for Parents and Students, an outreach plan of the University designed to foster a “college bound” culture among the middle schoolers and their parents. Hosting and welcoming the middle school students and parents were Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes, Dean Roberts, and CIMS Associate Dean Jarrett Terry. The students were also accompanied by their principal, Camille Murner, and several Rex Mill teachers, including Clayton State alumnus and seventh grade social studies teacher Cindi LeMon.

the Master of Arts in Teaching English program, while Toyce Wheeler graduated from the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program. All four of them now teach within the English Department at Clayton State.

## Clayton State Library Awarded National Endowment for the Humanities Grant to Take Part in Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle

The Clayton State University Library has received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to participate in a special initiative entitled Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle.

Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle is part of the National Endowment for the Humanities' Bridging Cultures initiative, in partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Erin Nagel, assessment & marketing librarian and coordinator for Clayton State's participation in Created Equal: America's Civil Rights Struggle, notes that the program will focus on four remarkable film depictions of various historic phases of the civil rights struggle. The four movies, which will become part of the Clayton State Library's permanent collection, are; *The Abolitionists*, *Slavery by Another Name*, *The Loving Story*, and *Freedom Riders*. The films will be screened on campus and community discussion events will be held.

"We hope that this programming will encourage participants to reflect on the lengthy, ongoing struggle for Civil Rights in America as well as explore the ever-evolving meanings of freedom and equality in this country," says Dr. Gordon Baker, Clayton State dean of Libraries.

## Demmitt Named Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Kevin Demmitt, a 20-year veteran faculty member and administrator at Clayton State, has been named Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

"Clayton State is blessed to have a number of individuals able to exercise leadership in times of transition. As Dr. Micheal Crafton leaves us after nearly five years of exceptional service, we are delighted to announce that Dr. Kevin Demmitt has agreed to serve as Interim Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs," says Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes in making the announcement of Demmitt's appointment.

Hynes points out that Demmitt has served the University in wide variety of capacities, most recently in the Office of Academic Affairs as Associate Vice President for Extended Programs. Included in those leadership responsibilities have been oversight of Clayton State's off-campus sites – notably the Peachtree City and Henry County locations – as well as on-line offerings, the growing dual enrollment program, and the Office of International Programs.

"I am excited about serving in this capacity," says Demmitt, a long-time and well-known resident of Peachtree City, Ga. "We have a number of academic initiatives underway, including developing new programs to support the film industry, increasing our engagement with the community through student internships, and continuing our efforts to help more students graduate and enter the workforce. My goal is to work with others to keep them moving forward."



Demmitt

## Alumnus Kevin Liles Covers the Sochi Olympics

Clayton State University may not have had any athletes in Sochi, Russia for the 2014 Winter Olympics (of course, winter sports aren't too common in the South in any case), but alumnus Kevin Liles was nonetheless on site at the winter games to unofficially represent the University.

Liles, a 2011 Clayton State graduate with a degree in Communication and Media Studies, is a commercial and editorial freelance photographer based in Atlanta. His clients have included the Atlanta Falcons, Atlanta Braves, Reynolds Plantation, USA Today Sports Images, Georgia Public Broadcasting, and Clayton State. In addition, his work has appeared in *Sports Illustrated*, *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *USA Today*, *Newsweek*, as well as other national and international publications. In Sochi, he was shooting for USA Today Sports Images.

In addition to his photographic work, Liles also blogged from Sochi, providing followers with some stunning photos of the Olympic venues, only what one would expect from the former editor of *The Bent Tree* who has photographed, among other subjects, the NCAA Final Four, no less than four NBA finals, and the cover of Clayton State's *The Laker Connection* magazine. (<http://kevindliles.com/>)



Liles

## Bruce Gant Gives Back to Veterans Through Scholarships

Clayton State University Foundation Trustee Bruce B. Gant, Jr., and his wife Vicky Gant, have established a scholarship for veterans at Clayton State University.

The Clayton State Veterans Endowed Scholarship is being established by the Gants in order to support veterans through scholarships in perpetuity. Until the endowment is fully-funded, the Gants will make an annual contribution so that the scholarship can be awarded as early as next fall. As a medic in the Vietnam War, Bruce Gant is a veteran and a member of the Military Order of the Purple Heart. Recognizing the supreme sacrifice that veterans make for the nation, this scholarship is a way to give back to those who wish to complete their degree.

A long-time agent – now retired -- for the State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company, Gant earned State Farm's prestigious President's Club ranking three times in his career and also won Clayton County's "Small Business of the Year" award in 1999.

After returning from Vietnam where he had served as a Senior Corpsman (medic) with a Marine rifle company, Gant made the transition from saving lives on the battlefield to helping others protect their investments on the home front.

"When I became an insurance agent in 1974, a very wise senior agent gave me the best advice; he told me, 'If you take care of your clients, they will take care of you – if you don't take care of them, someone else will,'" says Gant. With a goal of superb customer service strongly embedded in his business ethics, Gant began building a successful client base that would eventually make him one of Clayton County's most honored and recognized businessmen.

As part of his commitment to the community whom Gant says "has given me so much," Gant has served as Chairman of the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce, chaired the Pacesetters Committee, was a member of the Military Affairs Committee, and has served on the Board of Trustees for the Clayton State University Foundation since 1997.

## Building Naming Committee Recommends New Names for Athletics & Fitness and Student Center

Following the recommendation of the Clayton State University Building Naming Committee, the Athletics & Fitness Center and the Student Center have new names.

The Student Center is now called Edgewater Hall, and the Athletics & Fitness Center is now the Athletics Center. The committee



Bruce Gant with members of the Clayton State University Student Veterans Association: L-R: Tiffany McGregor, Melissa Thomas, Corey James, Kevin Nguyen, Bruce Gant, Patrick Anderson, Kevin McMullen, Sieu Tran, Dennis Brown and Paul Watson.

"Being asked to be a trustee on the Clayton State University Foundation was and is one of the greatest honors I have received," says Gant. "I feel that as a trustee, I can give back to the community and make a positive impact on our future."

Clearly, serving others has always been a high priority with Gant. When serving in Vietnam in 1968, Gant fought in the Hue City battle for which the USS battleship Hue City – the first and only ship in the United States Navy named for a battle in the Vietnam War – was named. When the ship was dedicated in 1991, Gant and his fellow Marines who fought at Hue City were named honorary crew members.

Gant thanks his wife, Vicky, for her support over the years and her contribution to both the success of his career and his business. Similarly, future generations of Clayton State student veterans will be thanking the Gants for their contributions to making their dreams real.

also recommended that the Student Activities Center keep its current name. The Building Naming Committee consists of Chair Cindy Lauer, Kelly Adams, Dolores Cox, Mike Mead, Nicole Harris, Dr. Jim Braun and Dr. R.B. Rosenburg.



Clayton State University President Tim Hynes gathers with students in the James M. Baker University Center. Your gift, in the amount of your choice, can make it possible for Clayton State students to continue their academic coursework and make their dreams of earning a degree real.

## YOU CAN MAKE A DREAM REAL DREAM MAKERS SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE

For many Clayton State University students, finding the economic resources to remain enrolled can mean the difference in celebrating dreams made real or watching dreams fade away.

According to a 2012 statistic, 78 percent of Clayton State students demonstrate financial need, and 69 percent still had an unmet need even after receiving scholarships, grants or loans. In addition to student loan debt, Clayton State students often work more than one job to continue to pursue their dream of a college degree.

To help students maintain their course towards graduation, Clayton State introduced the Dream Makers Scholarship Initiative in 2013. Through this initiative, donors – including fellow students – can permanently change a student’s life.

“The greatest advantage the Dream Makers initiative offers is a spectrum of choices,” explains Vice President of External Relations Kate Troelstra. “Clayton State University ensures that the final decision on how you impact a student’s life through scholarship funding is completely up to you. You may choose to help a Clayton State student that meets criteria important to you: those who are first-generation college students, from a specific college or department, or have urgent financial needs. Or you may prefer to assist students who show exceptional academic promise or those who are so close to receiving their degree, but need support financially to make it to the finish line. With Dream Makers, the choice is yours today... and the impact you make is forever.”



Dream Makers is a multi-faceted approach to helping those students who are either high achievers, close to completing a degree, or both. Dollars raised during FY14 will be awarded during FY15. There are several ways that you can become a Dream Maker at Clayton State University:

## Dream Maker Scholarships

With a commitment of \$1,000 per year for two years, Dream Maker Scholarships will carry the name of the donor and may have certain broad selection criteria established by the donor. Each scholarship will be given to one student, and the donor and student will have the opportunity to meet at the annual scholarship luncheon held each spring.

## Loch Leaders Investment Fund

This fund will recognize high achievers – those full-time students with a GPA of 3.5 or greater who demonstrate unmet need as defined for this program. Continuing students were given the highest priority having shown a commitment to Clayton State University.

Donors can become a part of this group by making a commitment of \$500 a year for two years. A select group of students will be designated as Loch Leaders each year. These students will have the opportunity to meet with the donors to this fund at the annual scholarship luncheon held each spring.

## Laker Completion Grants

For so many of our students, they are the first in their family to attend college. Actually completing their coursework and receiving their degree is an incredible accomplishment and many times is postponed due to family situations, work demands, and, very often, financial challenges. The Laker Completion Grants will impact those students who are near degree completion and demonstrate unmet need as defined for this program. Priority will be given to those closest to completion with unmet need and a GPA of at least 2.5.

Donors to the Laker Completion Grants can make a gift of any size. All donors who support the Laker Completion Grants will be recognized as having participated in this initiative.

“On every campus I visit a student will share the challenges of staying in school with higher tuition and fees, which may be exacerbated by a job loss at home,” said University System Chancellor Hank Huckaby in a Jan. 15 press release. “Sadly, in many cases, a few hundred dollars will make the difference as to whether that student stays in school.”

Your gift can make a difference. Clayton State University invites you to become a Dream Maker and impact the lives of students at Clayton State University. Through your generosity students will have the opportunity to realize their dream of a college degree and will go on to meet the challenges of living and working in a dynamic, global society.

Visit our Dream Makers Scholarship Initiative website at [www.clayton.edu/giving/dreammakers](http://www.clayton.edu/giving/dreammakers) to make a gift online or contact Vice President of External Relations Kate Troelstra at (678) 466-4473 or [kate@clayton.edu](mailto:kate@clayton.edu) for more information.



Clayton State seniors can make dreams real for future graduates by participating in the Senior Class Gift Program. The Senior Class Gift Program promotes the importance of philanthropy and is a collective effort by seniors to leave their mark on the university and academically empower underclassmen. Seniors who donate are awarded an orange tassel to wear at commencement.



H. Mason Barfield



Alex Dowling



Carlos Head



Nkiru Okosieme

## CLAYTON STATE ANNOUNCES FIRST INDUCTEES TO ATHLETIC HALL OF FAME

by Gid Rowell

Last fall, the Clayton State University Athletic Department established a Hall of Fame. And now is the time to recognize its first class of inductees.

From public nominations, the Clayton State Athletics Hall of Fame Committee selected four members for the initial class; retired Athletic Director H. Mason Barfield, former men's soccer player Alex Dowling, former men's basketball player Carlos Head and former women's soccer player Nkiru Okosieme. The Hall of Fame Class of 2014 were recognized at a Hall of Fame induction ceremony on May 30, 2014.

This initial class of the Clayton State University Hall of Fame includes the architect of the department's success, Mason Barfield, and three student-athletes who exemplify what a student-athlete is supposed to be; Dowling, Head and Okosieme competed not only at a national level in their sport but also excelled in the classroom. All four of these inductees made huge impacts while at Clayton State and certainly can be great role models for our current and future student-athletes.

### MASON BARFIELD

A native of Hahira, Ga., Barfield served as Clayton State's first athletic director and first men's basketball coach (from 1990 to 1995.) He laid the groundwork for the program, beginning in 1990, and oversaw and led the program for more than 20 years until his retirement in 2011. The University also recognized Barfield by naming the basketball floor at the Athletics Center in his honor in 2012.

Barfield was instrumental in establishing the Laker sports programs in the early 1990s and also in Clayton State's transition to NCAA Division II in 1995. After the first few years of transition into the Peach Belt Conference, Laker athletics began to take shape at the Division II level in 2000. Under Barfield's leadership from 2000 to 2011, Clayton State won 15 Peach Belt Conference regular season championships and finished conference runner-up on 12 occasions. In addition, Laker teams won eight Peach Belt tournament titles and finished as tournament runner-up four times, establishing Clayton State as an elite power in the league.

At the national level, Clayton State teams advanced to the NCAA Division II National Tournament 48 times during that span, including three "Final Four," six "Elite Eight" and fourteen "Sweet 16" appearances. The culmination of that success was in 2011 when the Laker women's basketball team captured the school's first NCAA Division II national championship.

### ALEX DOWLING

A native of Benoni, South Africa, Dowling was a four-year letterwinner (2001, 2003-05) and one of the most decorated men's soccer players in Laker history. He was a two-time NCAA Division II All-American in 2004 and 2005, a two-time NCAA Division II All-Southeast Region selection and a two-time All-Peach Belt member.

Dowling served as the team captain and sweeper on the second and third best Clayton State defensive teams in Laker soccer history. The squad posted a .72 goals against average in 2004 and a .73 goals against average in 2005, and both defenses ranked among the nation's best.

He also helped lead the Lakers to a trio Peach Belt Conference Championships, the 2001 and 2005 Peach Belt Conference Regular Season Championship teams and 2005 PBC Tournament Championship. During his tenure, the Lakers advanced to the NCAA Division II "Sweet Sixteen" on three occasions; in 2001, 2004 and 2005.

Dowling was a recipient of Clayton State's Laker Award in 2006, given to Clayton State's top student-athlete each year. He graduated in 2006 with a bachelor's degree in management.

## CARLOS HEAD

A native of Morrow, Ga., Head was a four-year letterwinner (1990-94) and played on Barfield's first basketball teams. After more than 20 years of men's basketball, he still holds many of Clayton State's all-time records.

Head is the school's all-time leading scorer with 1,682 points. He ranks second all-time in games played with 114 and third all-time in games started with 78. He ranks first all-time in field goals made with 608 and first in all-time in field goals attempted with 1,287. Head ranks second in 3-point field goals made with 132, third in all-time in rebounds with 523 and third all-time in steals with 125.

He led the Lakers to school's first championship, the 1993-94 Georgia Athletic Conference Championship. He averaged more than 18 points for the team that finished the season with a 25-7 record, Clayton State's best record in men's basketball. He was selected to the NAIA All-District All-Freshman team in 1990-01 and to the All-Georgia Athletic Conference Team in 1993-94.

Head graduated with a bachelor's degree in management in 1995.

## NKIRU OKOSIEME

A native of Onitsha, Nigeria, Okosieme was a three-year letter-winner (2001-02 & 2004) for Clayton State's women's soccer program. Okosieme was a NCAA Division II All-American in 2004 and a three-time All-Southeast Region



selection in 2001, 2002 and 2004. She was the Peach Belt Conference Player of the Year in 2004 and named All-Conference all three years. She finished the 2001 season ranked second in the country in scoring with 33 goals on the year.

At Clayton State, Okosieme ranks second in single season scoring with 33 goals in 2001 and second in single season assists in 2004 with 10. She also ranks second all-time in goals scored at Clayton State with 64 and second all-time in assists with 24. She led the Lakers to their first NCAA Division II national tournament appearance in 2004.

Along with her standout career at Clayton State, Okosieme also played in four World Cups for her native Nigeria (1991, 1995, 1999, 2003). She scored three goals in her World Cup career, including a goal against the 1999 World Cup champion U.S. squad.

She was a two-time winner of Clayton State's Laker Award in 2003 and 2005 and the only female Clayton State student-athlete to win the Laker Award twice. Okosieme was also the recipient of the Bumbalough Academic Award in 2005, holding the Clayton State's highest GPA among all female student-athletes.

Okosieme graduated Clayton State with a bachelor's degree in information technology and a master's degree in health administration.

# faculty profile

## DR. ALI DADPAY HE ALWAYS WANTED TO TEACH

“I always knew I wanted to teach, but being a college professor is something I arrived at rather than something I always wanted to do,” states Assistant Dean and Master’s of Business Administration Director and Assistant Professor of Economics, Dr. Ali Dadpay.

An Iranian native, Dadpay received his Bachelor of Science in Engineering from Sharif University of Technology in Iran in 1997. He then continued his studies in the United States at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, where he obtained his master’s degree in 2001. Dadpay then attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee where he earned his Ph.D. in Economics in 2007 - the subject he now teaches at Clayton State University.

Dadpay is an expert on the economic affairs of the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the economic evolution of societies and the global marketplace. He often writes in Persian-speaking media in Tehran on economic affairs, the effects of sanctions and other things related to the global development process. He also is an expert in strategic interactions between governments and private sectors in global and multinational markets.

Dadpay followed his father’s footsteps by moving to the United States in 2000. He wanted to see the world and pursue his dream of being an economist. After graduating with his doctorate he went immediately into industry as a consultant where he stayed for four years.

He began seeking work as a professor because he liked teaching and excelled at it in graduate school. Clayton State was his first teaching job post graduation and after several years of teaching, he was promoted to Assistant Dean of the MBA program in August 2012.

Clayton State’s MBA program is for experienced professionals who are seeking to move their careers to the next level and beyond over the course of

a 20-month, fast-track program. Students whose time is already at a premium in their roles as executives benefit from a course structure that allows for continuous full-time work outside class. International students – a sector Dadpay knows well -- also benefit from a structure that meets the full-time program of study requirement, while allowing maximum time during the traditional academic week for study and preparation. MBA courses meet primarily every other Saturday for nine hours, and utilize online components to increase students’ ability to use technology and to help students use their time most effectively.



The MBA is offered in a lock-step, cohort format to build stronger relationships among students so as to increase communication and the sharing of experiences. Reflecting Dadpay’s interest and expertise, the curriculum is rigorous and is designed to prepare graduates to operate successfully in a rapidly changing global world of business.

Dadpay claims he didn’t plan to work solely in the United States after college, but that it became the natural choice.

“This industry works better than any other. In most countries faculty have to work multiple jobs and don’t have the access we have here to the international scene,” argues Dadpay.

Despite being happy about living and working the U.S., Dadpay states that he misses home often and goes back at least twice a year to visit.

— Samantha Watson

**Economics is an interesting topic. Everybody feels like it’s boring or very serious but every student deals with it on a daily and hourly basis. I focus on their life experiences rather than on theories, which helps connect the dots for them. Relating it to daily lives is a very fun experience.**

# student profile

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## EMILY TRAN ENJOYING EVERY MINUTE AT CLAYTON STATE

**L**ike many students at Clayton State University, Emily Tran was attracted to Clayton State because of its convenient location to Atlanta, the serene campus, and the diversity of students and faculty represented at the University. A 2010 graduate of Cross Keys High School in Atlanta, she decided to attend Clayton State for the fall 2010 semester and enter the business program.

Emily graduated this May, having majored in marketing. She earned her bachelor's degree in business administration. Emily is the first American-born woman in her family, and the first female to attend college. She deeply admires her parents and the many opportunities they have presented to her over the years.

"My parents have impacted my upbringing because they have given up their lives in Vietnam and sacrificed everything to come to America in order for me and my three siblings to have a better future," she says. "They have always pushed me to work harder and grasp all the opportunities that are open [to me] and never to give up."

Emily has enjoyed every minute at Clayton State. "Being active on campus is my number one enjoyment and satisfaction. I am a busy body that loves to give back."

Over the semesters Emily has participated in many extracurricular activities and on-campus organizations; including SLIC (Student Leadership Involvement Council), DEEP (Diversity Educational Experiences for Peers), AmeriCorps as a service learning team leader, the Resident Assistant (RA) program for on campus housing, as vice president of Habitat for Humanity, and as a student assistant for the Department of Campus Life. This year she completed more than 1,000 hours of community service and received the President's Volunteer Service Award. "This was my number one achievement be-

cause I was determined and persistent at giving back to the community," she says.

She was also proud of being recognized as a Volunteer Coordinator for the Georgia Wounded Heroes non-profit this past summer. She successfully coordinated the Mud Crusade and the Color Run, which had more than 2,500 attendees.

Emily has also received several scholarships that have helped her attend Clayton State including the Hope Scholarship, the Booker T. Izell Scholarship, and the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award.

Emily hopes that other students will benefit from their college experience here at Clayton State. She emphasizes that Clayton State provides many opportunities that allow students to feel empowered and that will aid in making their college experience memorable and successful.

"Get involved! When you are involved, you allow yourself to grow and meet great people that will help you throughout your college career. Be vulnerable and put yourself out there, try new organizations and attend different events to find your niche."

Now that she has graduated, Emily hopes to be part of the National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) for two years and volunteer around the United States. She then plans to apply for graduate school at either the University of Vermont or Bowling Green State University for her M.Ed. in Student Affairs. Her dream is to be a director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs or work for a non-profit focusing on human trafficking.

— Amanda Parham



**Clayton State has taught me how to facilitate, coordinate, present, create essential skills, and find myself. The Associate Director of Campus Life Lakiesha Cantey-Rawlinson, my mentor, has made me a better version of myself. She trained and developed me to understand what social justice means and how to create a change. Without her I would never be the leader I am.**

# staff profile

## TAMEEKA HUNTER EMPOWERING THROUGH THE DRC

Clayton State University is known for empowering its students. One individual who defines empowerment is Tameeka Hunter, assistant director of the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Hunter empowers students with disabilities.

"I am proud to work at a university that provides such a quality education," says Hunter. "Another thing I really love about Clayton State is the familial campus climate; there is a true feeling of community here."

An Athens, Ga., native, Hunter has lived and worked in the Atlanta area for more than 10 years. In addition to her being a nationally-certified rehabilitation counselor, Hunter holds a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling, which provides her with medical knowledge of various disabilities as well as additional knowledge on counseling interventions. Prior to Clayton State, she worked as a disability services specialist at Georgia Tech and has also worked by appointment as a disability affairs coordinator for the City of Atlanta Mayor's Office.

"Working with people who have disabilities is not merely a profession for me, but rather a passion," says Hunter. "Early on, I realized I wanted to work with students who have disabilities."

Hunter has demonstrated this passion and proven strong leadership skills throughout her work experience by being twice appointed to the Georgia Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities (GCDD). She was also named the 2008 C. Anthony Cunningham Council Member of the Year and was elected 2008 vice chair of the Council.

At Clayton State, Hunter enjoys empowering students by helping them to discover what is possible despite their disabilities. She enjoys working for a department that provides high-level assistance to students with disabilities.

The DRC offers a myriad of services, accommodations, and training opportunities for people with

disabilities, as well as the campus community.

As an individual with her own disability, cerebral palsy, Hunter believes that empowerment comes as a result of being an example.

"As a child growing up, I did not see many career professionals who had obvious disabilities like mine. I decided that if I did not see an example, I wanted to be an example for other people with disabilities, and my desire to work with the disability community was born," she states.

Being an example is exactly what she did.

Earlier in her employment at Clayton State, she met an undergraduate student who was concerned that he would have limited employment opportunities. Despite being extremely intelligent and capable, he was nervous about how potential employers would react to his disability and worried that he would miss out on great career opportunities.

Over time, Hunter and the student developed an amazing relationship that empowered him to go out and reach his goals. Hunter shared with him her road to obtaining a career as a person with a disability, and he confided in her because not only did she have the formal education in the field of disability, but she shares the same disability.

The student has since earned both his undergraduate and graduate degrees in psychology from Clayton State, and is now contributing to the University in a professional capacity. His dreams have truly been made real. And Hunter is making her own dreams real by providing guidance and knowledge to others, with a disability or without, and empowering them to succeed.



**We equip students with the tools, technology, and training necessary to help them reach their full potential and achieve their goals. What I enjoy most about working in my department is helping students discover the power of possibility. I enjoy being a catalyst for student discovery, empowerment, and self-advocacy.**

— Sarah Boyd

# trustee/advisor profile

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## TIM CRAWFORD AND DANA LEMON LEADERS IN DREAMS MADE REAL

“**T**he Board of Trustees at Clayton State is heading in an exciting direction with changes and growth in areas that will allow us to play an even bigger role in the success of the university. I am very excited about things currently underway and goals we have for the future! I have seen more growth at Clayton State these past six years than at any other time in the university’s history,” says Tim Crawford, Clayton State University Foundation Board Chair.

Crawford graduated in 1984 from Clayton State and also has two daughters who are Clayton State alumni. He is president and co-owner of Heritage Cadillac Mitsubishi Saab. As a business owner in the community, he has great appreciation for the economic impact the University has had and will continue to have in the future.

“The Dream Makers Scholarship Initiative, as we have already seen, is off to a great start increasing scholarships through the work of the Board and the University staff. We see a great opportunity for further increases in coming years,” says Crawford.

The vision of the board, noted Crawford, is to continue to bring together a diverse representation of the community and perhaps involve more alumni. There is a strong desire to continue growing the number of scholarships available for students. At Clayton State there are many students who might not be able to afford quality education without these scholarships. In 2013, 78 percent of our students demonstrated need and received some sort of aid (scholarships, grants, loans, etc.).

“By giving back to the community not only financially but also with time, we can help make it better,” says Crawford.

“**I** am a huge fan of Clayton State and have been since I was in high school. I believe in the work this institution is doing. I believe this school gives students affordable yet quality education. Part of my excitement as a new member of the advisory board is to be able to tell the story of Clayton State,” says Dana Lemon.

The Board of Advisors is a key leadership group that reviews current topics pertaining to the University’s long-term strategic plans and provides feedback to the trustees, the president, and other key members of University administration.

Lemon grew up in McDonough, Ga., and is firmly rooted in Henry County. She is president of the family business, W.D. Lemon & Sons Funeral Home, where she works alongside her six brothers and sisters and two nephews.

She is very active within and committed to serving her community. She serves on the Georgia Department of Transportation Board representing the 13th Congressional District, having been elected as the first woman to serve on that board. She also serves on the Board of Directors for New Life Community Ministries and the Executive Committee for the Georgia Funeral Service Practitioners Association.

After graduating from Henry County High School, she graduated from Davidson College with a B.A. in Psychology. She later graduated with honors from the Grupton-Jones College of Funeral Service. She is a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and continues to do many outreach services to the community through the sorority.

“Everyone deserves an opportunity to get a secondary degree. It gives them choices and grows potential. Clayton State gives this opportunity to our community,” says Lemon.

Her commitment to community service and outreach was recognized in 2012 by the Georgia House of Representatives where she received a resolution and commendation for her contributions to the State of Georgia.



**Tim Crawford**



**Dana Lemon**

– Erin Fender

# alumni profile

## PAM DAVIS SUCCESSFUL IN SO MANY WAYS

**T**he first thing one notices entering Pam Davis' office is her MBA diploma. Pam is understandably proud of the Clayton State University parchment. After all, she travelled around the globe and then secured her daughter's future, before beginning her pursuit of the document that proudly hangs on her wall today.

Pam has seen much of the world – the glamorous and several of the not-so-glamorous spots – while supporting her husband's ascent to the rank of Lt. Colonel in the United States Army. During that journey, she also championed her daughter's escalating swimming talents. When Katelyn Davis earned a scholarship to her mother's undergraduate alma mater, the University of Alabama, Pam once again cheered, "Roll Tide!"

Only then, after many of her family responsibilities were, "moving down the path we had hoped for," did Pam decide, "it was my turn. So in my 40's, I went back to Clayton State to earn my MBA."

In 2009, Pam received her degree from Clayton State's newly-created MBA program. With determination, and hours of study, she had successfully balanced the work-school-family dynamic that is the trademark of so many successful Clayton State graduates.

"I had a tremendous support system; the Clayton State professors were always eager to help, and I became very close to many of my classmates who were experiencing the same challenges," Pam recently explained.

Now a 12-year veteran of Delta Community Credit Union, Pam serves as the vice president of retail lending and deputy chief lending officer. The announcement touting Pam's latest promotion within the organization states, "She has helped grow the Credit Union's real estate loan portfolio from \$668 million in 2002 to \$1.3 billion today."

Pam proudly reports that she, "would have never been able to apply for my present post without the MBA I earned at Clayton State."

Pam remembers how many of the students in that first Clayton State MBA group would gather to study together before class.

"We became very close. The result was worth all the hard work... but there were some days where the challenges seemed daunting. Bonding with others who were experiencing the same concerns was very helpful to me," Pam commented.

Drawing special note from Pam was Dr. Gary May's Business Communication course. In a local publication highlighting four graduates of Clayton State's first MBA class, Pam called May's guidance, "priceless," and noted his, "instruction that made me much more strategic in my communication throughout my professional life."

May, a veteran faculty member of the College of Business at Clayton State, beams when he talks of Pam and her first MBA cohorts and reports he enjoys tracking their careers.

"When Pam Davis enrolled in the MBA program, she was already successful in so many ways; yet she knew our program would be instrumental in reaching the future goals that she outlined for herself," May recalls. "That first group of MBA students was very close, and Pam deserves credit for serving as an inspirational mentor – as well as a classmate – to many of the other students."

Around the globe with her husband, to Tuscaloosa with her daughter and finally to the doorstep of Clayton State University ... Pam Davis' pathway to her MBA degree will never be described as direct. However, based on her professional position and the office where her degree is displayed ... by any definition, Pam's route has to be labeled successful.

– Tom Giffin

**I had a tremendous support system; the Clayton State professors were always eager to help, and I became very close to many of my classmates who were experiencing the same challenges.**





# ClassNotes

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## 1981

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**Fred Taylor (A.S. Agriculture)** has worked on movies, commercials, industrials, and television before becoming one of the founding members of the local IATSE - 479 Studio Mechanics. Taylor has had an office at CNN Center for more than 10 years, where he maintained, repaired, and installed production equipment and scenery.

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## 2007

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**Samantha Brazie (B.S. Psychology and Human Services)** of Newnan received the 2013 Outstanding Recent Graduate Award. Brazie has shown significant leadership in her career, in both the community and public services. Through her involvement with the Newnan-Coweta Chamber of

Commerce, she has single-handedly promoted Progressive Heating and Air to a level where they are a local "household" name. She is also president of Newnan Networkers BNI, chair for the Navarre Christmas Parade, an ambassador for the Newnan-Coweta Chamber, vice-chair for the Community Welcome House – a local battered women's shelter, and chairs several fundraisers for the American Cancer Society and other charity events in Coweta County.

**Nikki Sawyer (B.S. Biology)** was named the 2007 Chancellor's Academic Recognition Award Recipient, and graduated summa cum laude in May 2007 – she was accepted to both Columbia University and Emory University's graduate schools. It was while Sawyer was studying at Emory, in August 2012, that Clayton State Natural Sciences Department Chair Dr. Michelle Furlong

contacted her about joining the faculty at Clayton State. Given her background, it's not surprising that Sawyer is thrilled about the most recent development in the natural sciences at Clayton State. "I am extremely thrilled about the new science building," she says. "I have always been thankful for the science program here at Clayton State, and especially for the faculty that have helped me succeed beyond my imagination in my career as a scientist."



Sawyer ('07)

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## 2009

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**Nyisha Nelson (B.A. English)** moved to Alabama to work at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center as a counselor teaching Aerospace history to children from around the world at space camp. After that experience, Nelson began working on her master's in special education and graduated from Liberty University in May 2012. Being a life-long learner and never wanting to grow complacent, Nelson re-enrolled in school immediately after graduation to pursue her Education Specialist degree in Curriculum and Instruction at Liberty University and graduated July 2013. She is currently teaching in a self-contained special education classroom at Mainstay Academy. Her passion for teaching and helping others extends past the classroom as she also works part-time with develop-

**ClassNotes** is the perfect place to share personal and professional news with friends and classmates. Please send us information about special milestones in your life including births, marriages, careers, family events, etc. Submit your news and a print quality photo to:

**Standard Mail:**  
Clayton State Alumni Relations  
2000 Clayton State Boulevard  
Morrow, GA 30260

**Email:**  
Leila Tatum  
Director of Alumni Relations  
Alumni@clayton.edu

# ClassNotes



mentally disabled individuals in a group-home setting to enhance social skills and behaviors.

**Ivan Segovia (B.A. Music)** was the featured soloist in Mozart's Requiem alongside students from Archer, Dacula, and Grayson High School. This was the first time that Gwinnett County Schools have collaborated for this kind of musical project.

## 2010

**Gail Buckner (B.S. Integrative Studies)** has been selected to serve as chair the Dean's Advisory Board for the College of Arts and Sciences. Buckner, a resident of Jonesboro, originally graduated from Clayton State in 1977 with an A.A. in Education. She later earned a B.S. in Integrative Studies from Clayton State. Buckner previously served for 16 years (1990 to 2006) as a State Representative (District 76) and was the Democratic nominee for Georgia Secretary of State in 2006. She served as a member of the Georgia State Senate, representing its 44th District, from 2008 to 2012. Buckner was also named Clayton State's first Alumnus of the Year in 2002 and served as the University's Commencement speaker in December 2003... the first time an alumnus of Clayton State had served as the Commencement speaker.

**Tony Underwood (B.A. Liberal Studies)** passed away unexpectedly on July 20, 2013. Underwood drowned while swimming at Panama City Beach.

## 2011

**Karessa Carter (B.A. Middle Grades Education)** found success and recognition at her job by being chosen by Babb Middle School's principal to travel to Las Vegas, Nev., for the national convention on Differentiated Instruction last month. Carter graduated from Clayton State in May 2011 with a degree in Middle Grades Education. Her primary area of study was language arts and her second area of study was social studies. Three months after graduation, Carter signed her contract with Clayton County Public Schools in August of 2011. It was after completing her internship and practicum at Babb that she was hired there as a seventh grade language arts teacher. "My career allows me time to reflect on and improve my craft each and everyday. I simply love making a difference and helping those around me succeed," Carter proclaims.



Carter ('11)

**Bina Patel (B.S. Health Care Management)** volunteered in Georgia's second Mission of Mercy in Norcross. The Georgia Mission of Mercy (GMOM) is a charitable dental clinic sponsored by the Georgia Dental Association. The goal of GMOM was to provide dental

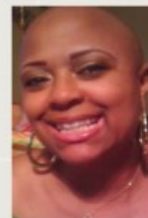


Patel ('11)

care at no cost for low and no income adults while placing priority on patients suffering from dental infection or pain. The event was staffed by hundreds of dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, laboratory technicians, and community volunteers.

## 2013

**DeAnna Holmes (B.S. Healthcare Management)** recently lost her battle with breast cancer. She battled cancer much of her time at Clayton State while balancing time with her children, chemo, and keeping up with her studies. She was determined to not let cancer get in the way of accomplishing her dreams. "My strong upbringing from my parents and my determination to be a good example for my children is what keeps me motivated to excel in school," said Holmes in a December 2012 interview.



Holmes ('13)

**Dytina Lukesa Thomas (B.S. Criminal Justice)** passed away on August 5, 2013. She graduated in spring 2013.

**Jennifer Rosenbaum (B.S. Political Science)** is the most recent alumnus on the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's Advisory Board. Rosenbaum is a 2013 Clayton State graduate with a B.S. in Political Science who is now attending law school at Emory University and who was, appropriately



enough, the winner of the College of Arts & Sciences Trachtenberg Political Science Award for 2013.

**Marcus Bartlett (B.S. Mathematics)** received the 2013 Distinguished Alumnus Award at the Annual Alumni Dinner for his outstanding contribution to the community. Bartlett had a topographical index for molecules representable by graph theoretic trees named after him while he was still an undergraduate at Clayton State. He also co-authored the paper, "Variation of Distance-Based Invariants of Trees" which was accepted to the Journal of Combinatorial Mathematics and Combinatorial Computing.



**Bartlett ('13)**

**FUTURE ALUMNUS AWARD**

**John Bennett** received the Exceptional Future Alumnus Award for his excellence in leadership, academic success, and university service. Bennett is a member of the Jazz Combo, and was previously a member of the Clayton State Chorale and performed in the Clayton State Opera. As the recipient of the Future Alumnus Award, he has contributed time and energy to multiple University events that extend above and beyond the standard student requirements. In addition, he has been involved in blending his performance talents with numerous University activities and has performed for the University's Commencement ceremonies for several years.



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# **ALUMNI,** *Reconnect with Clayton State, and* **YOU CAN WIN A KINDLE FIRE**

*Register with Clayton State University's new online community to stay current with exciting news and events and be automatically entered to win a Kindle Fire.*

*This contest is open to Clayton State University alumni who register with valid and up-to-date contact information. You must be registered by June 30, 2014 to enter.*



## **TO REGISTER**

- 1. Go to [giving.clayton.edu/kindlefire](http://giving.clayton.edu/kindlefire)**
- 2. Follow the link to register and log in to our online community**
- 3. Complete and submit your contact info by July 31, 2014**

*Only graduates of Clayton State University are eligible to win. The winner will be selected from those who have registered with valid email addresses. The winner will be selected at random from a pool of eligible participants and will be notified using the email address provided.*