

FALL 2021 SPECIAL ISSUE

transform

CELEBRATING

the
Best

OF THE BEST



Gatton College of
Business and Economics

Celebrating Success DURING CHALLENGING TIMES

Greetings

Gatton alumni and friends,

Growing up in Australia, my favorite celebration was the end-of-year holiday season – a “ripper chipper” of a time when we gathered for celebrations with friends and family. I have fond memories of enjoying my mother’s rich plum pudding during the holiday season, which falls during the scorching hot summer season in Australia. Just as this observance builds a sense of belonging and unity, celebrations play an important role in connecting and motivating business communities and teams, especially during challenging times.

On that note, I invite you to grab “a cuppa” (cup of coffee or tea) and enjoy this special issue of *Transform*, which is dedicated to celebrating wildly successful accomplishments of Gatton College alumni and students. Celebration honors the “yakka” (hard work) and shows gratitude to the people who do it. And there is much to celebrate in the 97th year of the college’s history even if it requires a little creativity to do so.

In this issue, we feature highlights of remarkable Gatton alumni who exemplify the college’s mission to prepare principled leaders for the global economy. We started the year with filming a virtual ceremony honoring our 2020-2021 Hall of Fame inductees. During the spring semester, we celebrated the UK’s first national volleyball championship team, led by Gatton MBA student Gabby Curry. In the summer, we cheered on the Gatton students and alumni who brought their A-game to the much anticipated 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Kudos to all of our award winners both on and off the court!

As we began the fall semester, we were delighted to welcome back more than 4,000 Gatton College students, which includes over 900 freshmen students in the Class of 2025, and the first students in our new professional programs. Thanks to our generous donors, we also awarded more Gatton Persistence Scholarships (GPS), one-time grants to keep students moving in the right direction. We included highlights and back-to-school photos for you to enjoy.

As 2021 comes to a close, we wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday. At Gatton College, we share a deep sense of gratitude for our alumni community who continue to be key partners in what our college has been, and what it will be.



Simon Sheather, Dean





Dean

Simon Sheather

Interim Senior Director of Philanthropy & Alumni Relations

Nicole Cartier

Director of Marketing & Communications

Michelle L. Lowe

Contributing Writers & Editors

Michelle L. Lowe

Dorian Martin

Diane C. McDonald

Lindsey Piercy

Lucy Tepper

Designer

Lynsay W. Christensen

Photography

Austin Lord Photography

Billy Howard Photography

Donna Cummings Photography

Sugar Maple Photo

Tim Webb

UK Athletics

University of Kentucky Public Relations

Subscribe to our monthly alumni newsletter
at gatton.uky.edu/alumni

Find Gatton on



UKGatton College



@UKGattonCollege



@UKGattonCollege



[linkedin.com/school/ukgattoncollege](https://www.linkedin.com/school/ukgattoncollege)

CONTENTS

04

Gatton Athletes:
Bringing Their
A-Game

06

UK Alumni
Association's Top
Award Recipients

08

Lyman T. Johnson
Award Winners

10

2020-2021
Gatton Hall of
Fame Inductees

19

Gatton on
the Gridiron

20

Donor
Spotlight

22

Back to
School
Welcome

Transform is published by the Gatton College of Business and Economics at the University of Kentucky and made possible through the generosity of private donations. For more information on giving to the college, please contact Gatton Philanthropy and Alumni Relations, 371 Gatton College of Business and Economics, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY 40506-0034. Phone: 859.257.4840



GABBY CURRY

HOMETOWN

Buford, GA

ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHT

Team Captain, UK's National Champion Volleyball Team (24 wins-1 loss).

OF NOTE

This was UK's first national championship in volleyball, as well as the first among SEC schools.

PERSONAL HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NCAA FINAL

14 kills and 13 assists, a personal all-time high, in the final against the University of Texas.

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

2020 NCAA All-Tournament Team, the SEC Libero of the Year.

FAST LEARNER

She completed her bachelor's degree in business in 2-1/2 years, thanks to taking high school dual enrollment classes that allowed her to earn college credit.

NEXT EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY

As a senior, currently enrolled in the MBA program.

TAKING CARE OF CLASSROOM BUSINESS

"In the day-to-day, I took care of everything outside of volleyball in a very excellent way to where when I got inside volleyball, everyone knew that I was going to be bringing my A-game. I think that by the end of the season, every single person on our team was doing that."

TAKING THE REINS

"We were a player-led team this year. There was not one person on this team who wasn't completely bought into what Coach Craig Skinner was saying. Yes, he could absolutely change it up in the middle of the game, but I think he also just trusted us to figure it out. He would make little suggestions, but other than that, he was 'You guys are great; go play your game.'"

APPLYING LEADERSHIP LESSONS TO VOLLEYBALL

"I learned a lot this season. The strategic communications class and Karl Gustafson's leadership class have come into play more this past season than I ever really thought."

GATTON ATHLETES

BRINGING THEIR A-GAME TO THE CLASSROOM & BEYOND

This year has exceeded the wildest possibilities for athletic records for both the University of Kentucky and the Gatton College of Business and Economics. Gabby Curry, who is working on her MBA at Gatton College, led the Wildcat women's volleyball team to its first ever national championship in 2020 as the team's captain.

Additionally, the Gatton College was well-represented on other national and international athletic stages, including the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and U.S. Women's Amateur Golf Championship. Four current Gatton students and alums displayed tremendous grit in preparing for and competing in these premier sporting events.



JENSEN CASTLE

HOME

West Columbia, SC

CLASSIFICATION

Junior

MAJOR

Management and
Marketing

PERFORMANCE

Despite having a rib injury and being the tournament's 63rd seed, Castle became the first Wildcat to win the 121st U.S. Women's Amateur Golf Championship



PETER WETZLAR

HOME

Harare, Zimbabwe

CLASSIFICATION

Class of 2020
(Magna Cum Laude)

MAJOR

Finance and Accounting

OLYMPIC EVENT

Swimming

PERFORMANCE

Set a Zimbabwean record in the men's 100-meter freestyle



ALI GALYER

HOME

Greenville, SC

CLASSIFICATION

Senior

MAJOR

Marketing

OLYMPIC EVENT

Swimming

PERFORMANCE

Competed for Team New Zealand in three Olympic events



WILL SHANER

HOME

Colorado Springs, CO

CLASSIFICATION

Junior

MAJOR

Economics

OLYMPIC EVENT

Air Rifle

PERFORMANCE

Won a gold medal in 10m air rifle, and set a new Olympic record





CELEBRATING UK ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S AWARD WINNERS

2020

Distinguished HALL OF FAME

In 2021, the University of Kentucky inducted 27 new members into its esteemed Hall of Distinguished Alumni for their meaningful contributions to the Commonwealth, nation and the world. The prestigious event, held every five years, was postponed last year due to pandemic restrictions. The inductees with ties to the Gatton College include:

William E. **SEALE B.A. '63**

Chemistry, College of Arts and Sciences; M.S. '69

Agricultural Economics, College of Agriculture, Food and Environment; Ph.D. '75

Financially supported the college's expansion and renovation; the namesake of the William E. Seale Finance Learning Center.

Charles L. **SHEARER B.S. '64**

Accounting, Gatton College of Business and Economics

Economics and International Diplomacy, Gatton College of Business and Economics; M.A. '67

Paul G. **VARGA B.B.A. '85**

Finance, Gatton College of Business and Economics

John A. **WILLIAMS B.S. '62**

Accounting, Gatton College of Business and Economics

Terry **WOODWARD B.S. '63**

Commerce, Gatton College of Business and Economics

Financially supported the colleges' renovation and expansion; the namesake of Woodward Hall, the college's banquet and events space.



Learn more about each honorees' extraordinary service to the University and the UK Alumni Association.

Distinguished SERVICE AWARDS

Beatty **LONDON**

Degree: Management in 2000

Current Role: CEO, STOLO Inc.

Michael W. **ANDERSON**

Degree: Accounting in 1992

Current Role: Vice president of operations, Churchill Downs Incorporated

Ruth **DAY**

Degree: Accounting in 1985

Current Role: Chief information officer, Commonwealth of Kentucky where she leads the Commonwealth Office of Technology and serves on the Governor's executive cabinet

Fritz **SKEEN**

Degrees: Business Administration in 1972, MBA in 1973

Current Role: Retired from IBM where he served in sales, marketing and executive positions

Joseph T Burch YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS



Erin Carr **LOGAN**

Degree: Accounting in 2006

Residence: Seattle, Washington

Current Role: Category and program management leader, Amazon, Inc.



Blake **WILLOUGHBY**

Degrees: Accounting in 2011, Economics in 2012, MBA in 2012

Residence: Louisville, Kentucky

Current Role: Chairman and president of First Breckinridge Bancshares Inc.





The Gatton College of Business and Economics celebrates its 2021 Lyman T. Johnson honorees. The Lyman T. Johnson Awards, named for the civil rights pioneer, are among the University of Kentucky's highest honors. The honorees will be recognized by the UK Alumni Association Lyman T. Johnson African American Alumni Group, in partnership with the UK Office for Institutional Diversity, at the 31st annual Lyman T. Johnson Torch Bearer and Torch of Excellence awards in Spring 2022.



It is my goal that everyone would have the same opportunities and access to resources to achieve their dreams.

KENDALL DULANEY '22 of Louisville, Kentucky is the recipient of the 2021 Lyman T. Johnson Torch Bearer Award, which honors students with exceptional academic achievement and ability to impact the lives of others. DuLaney is a senior at UK majoring in management and marketing with a minor in dance. She is engaged in a specialized cohort as a Social Entrepreneurship Honors Pathway Scholar through Gatton College, which allows honors students to pursue a curriculum option with a focus on sustainability, corporate social responsibility and entrepreneurship. DuLaney has been involved with the UK Dance Team, the UK NAACP Chapter and the Iota Sigma chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. She is the lead mentor for the Gatton College Mentoring Initiative, which offers support to first generation and marginalized students. Since the age of three, she has been dancing and aspires to open a dance studio to give back to Black dancers. After graduation, she will start a HR Rotational Program at Dell Technologies, where she will help with diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives.





Representation matters, because it is important for those coming behind us to see what is possible. Along my journey, so many amazing people have poured into me to help me get where I am today, and so it is imperative that I do the same for others.

KEISHA RASPBERRY '02 of Atlanta, Georgia is the recipient of the 2021 Lyman T. Johnson Torch of Excellence Award, which honors alumni who embody the characteristics of determination, hard work and have positively affected the lives of people on campus, the community, the state or our nation. Raspberry is the vice president of finance and strategy for the U.S. and Canada at Brown-Forman, where she oversees the financial strategy and revenue growth management for the company's largest region. She graduated with a B.S. in Accounting in 2002 and has an MBA from Bellarmine University. Raspberry currently serves on the Finance Advisory Board at Gatton College. She is a passionate champion of diversity, equity and inclusion and serves as a mentor to many young women and men in her community.

CELEBRATING “THE BEST OF THE BEST”

The Gatton College Hall of Fame is a prestigious lifetime award recognizing remarkable alumni who have enhanced the reputation of Gatton College through their outstanding professional achievement, personal accomplishments and loyal service to their alma mater.

2020-2021
HALL OF FAME
Inductees

Class of
1988
BS FIN

JANET *Dietrich*

One term paper in Dr. Charles Hayward’s class changed Janet Dietrich’s life. “I had to write some sort of an essay, and I needed an A in order to get an A in the class. I turned my paper in, and when I got my paper back, he gave me a B,” she recounted. “I tried all kinds of ways to make him change his mind and to convince him that I deserved an A. He did not change his mind; he left the B. And I’ve never forgotten that.”

That experience taught Dietrich the importance of going the extra mile, which has served her well professionally. Her 25-year career includes working in energy trading, marketing and management. The Houston resident has held senior management positions in global energy sales, marketing, financing and trading businesses.

Dietrich brings that depth and breadth of experience to her role as senior managing director and head of America’s Corporate Sales for Macquarie Group, a global financial services group that operates in 32 markets. “Janet has a lot of experience and has been successful throughout her career in both the industry and the financial world,” said Nicholas O’Kane, head of Macquarie’s commodities and global markets. “She brought to us a fierce intellect and understanding of the industry. Her ability to think through problems clearly, articulate solutions and think a couple of steps ahead has been something that’s really helped us navigate challenges over the last few years.”

The UK alumnus has a prime seat at the table in the ever-important energy industry as Macquarie’s co-head of

Upstream Oil and Gas for the Commodities and Global Markets division. “If you think about it, energy impacts everything that we do. It’s interesting to see where the industry’s been, where we are right now, and — with the importance of climate change — how this industry will evolve and develop for people all around the world.”

Dietrich also is committed to giving back to her community. She’s a founding board member for both the Houston Alumni and Youth (HAY) Center, the Houston chapter of the International Women’s Forum and the Houston BARC Foundation. “Janet is very good at understanding an issue, and once she understands it, she connects with it,” said Mary Green, director of the HAY Center. “The HAY Center appreciates Janet’s faith in our work and believing in us. It’s because of her being such a strong ambassador and advocate for the work that we do, that we’re in the position that we’re in.”

Ultimately, Dietrich points to her two daughters as her proudest achievement — and her reason for giving back to both the Greater Houston community and to Gatton College. “As they’ve gone through school and college, the professors they’ve had, and the guidance they’ve received along the way, is one of the reasons that I’ve tried to stay involved and to give back,” said the member of the college’s Finance Advisory Board. “I worked with the staff there and got to know Wendy Liu. I’ve virtually joined her classes and talked about what I do and the industry, and how the students can get involved in this industry going forward.”

Dietrich’s career success doesn’t surprise Dr. Hayward, and he delights in thinking that he may have played a part. “I was very happy to learn that she interpreted that B that way — that she needed to move that switch on commitment and achievement a little higher,” he said. “I congratulate her on doing that. She is A+ in her career.”



*Senior
Managing
Director*

Macquarie
Group

Houston,
Texas



*President
and CEO*

Provident
Entertainment

Nashville,
Tennessee

2020-2021
HALL OF FAME
Inductees

Terry Hemmings has always kept the faith. And in turn, has helped millions of fans do the same. Over the years, the Gatton College of Business and Economics alumnus has been a leader in the rapidly changing faith-based entertainment industry. His guidance has been critical to the careers of Grammy winning artists such as Third Day, Casting Crowns, Zach Williams, and Kirk Franklin, as well as award-winning film producers, the Kendrick Brothers.

Yet Hemmings' initial career path had nothing to do with music. He planned to follow in the footsteps of his parents—both medical professionals, and become a physician. He changed course as a student at the University of Kentucky and majored in business administration.

After earning his BBA, Hemmings started his career as an investment broker at J.C. Bradford and Company in Nashville. But four years later at the age of 27, he took the road less traveled to become a music industry CEO.

Hemmings' early foray into the entertainment industry was boosted by an introduction to Amy Grant, a Christian music legend, who led him to her manager's record label, Reunion Records. At the time, established corporations were just becoming involved with the Christian music industry. With his business background, the Lexington native was well-positioned to influence the faith-based music industry's journey in becoming a respected entertainment business.

Grant eventually became one of the first Christian artists to successfully cross over to pop music. At the same time, Hemmings started a nine year run as president and CEO of Reunion Entertainment Group, Reunion Records and Music Publishing. During his tenure, Hemmings was responsible for a 15-fold increase in revenues, thanks in part to managing labels for musicians such as Third Day and Michael W. Smith. In 1996, he oversaw the sale of Reunion Records to Bertelsmann Music Group, a German company, which would later sell most of its music assets to Sony Corporation of America.

Hemmings also emerged as a driving force behind the digital distribution of Christian music through serving as president and CEO of MusicTrust Technologies Company LLC, an entity involved in digital rights and property management solutions for the music industry. He continued in the digital space as president and CEO of e-healthcare

Class of
1981
BS BA

TERRY
Hemmings

company Digital Medical Systems (now Phyve, Inc.). This role enabled Hemmings to hone his skills in developing company strategy, managing operations and coordinating mergers and strategic partnerships. These skills proved invaluable in leading his next roster of record labels through decades of disruption.

In 2003, Hemmings was named president and CEO of Provident Music Group, a division of Sony Music Entertainment company. For nearly two decades, the executive has guided the division's growth into a trusted faith and family content company that includes Provident Label Group, RCA Inspiration, Essential Music Publishing, Provident Films and Essential Sound. This expansion coincided with an unprecedented shift in consumer consumption and media habits, thanks to omnichannel distribution, live streams and social media engagement.

Hemmings credits his overall career success to his ability to apply a business structure in an industry that historically has focused on independent, creative endeavors. The Gatton College Hall of Fame inductee also benefited from his ability to tolerate risk, which is inevitable in an industry where some artists soar while others inexplicably fall off the charts. "Terry has that rare blend of that right-brain, left-brain approach," says Randy Goodman, chairman and CEO of Sony Music Nashville, the umbrella for Provident Entertainment. "He can read a P&L statement and then move into the studio and have that dialogue with a creative or an artist."

Class of
1969
BS ECON

RODNEY H. *Mabry*

During a time when many higher education institutions were struggling, Dr. Rodney H. Mabry helped The University of Texas at Tyler thrive and become well-positioned for long-term success. To do so, the university president drew on his experiences at the Gatton College of Business and Economics.

Born in Paducah, Mabry has deep roots in the bluegrass state. Not surprisingly, he opted to attend the state's flagship university, where he majored in commerce with a concentration in economics. "UK was a perfect fit for me, and I had a ball," he said. "The people around us in the debate program and the business college were so friendly and so encouraging, and at the same time so determined that we learn a lot. I carried that quest for top quality as a mindset for me to be successful throughout my career."

Mabry also credits his time at UK with meeting his wife, Merle Hardesty Mabry, on a blind date to homecoming their senior year. "We have just really enjoyed being best friends all our lives," he said. "I guess that's what really matters."

After earning a Ph.D. in economics from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and, much later, a University Management Certificate from Carnegie Mellon, Mabry focused on building a career in higher education. He held leadership positions at the University of Tulsa, Clemson University and the University of Louisiana-Monroe before getting the top job at UT Tyler in 1998.

As UT Tyler's president, Mabry successfully led an initial 10-year strategic plan called the New Millennium Vision that ultimately made the East Texas institution into a major

university. "I took the job in order to build a small institution into something worthy of The University of Texas System." During his 18-year tenure, UT Tyler grew significantly in every measure. The university tripled enrollment, added two satellite campuses, a significant engineering program in Houston, a new Fisch College of Pharmacy, its first three doctoral programs, and an NCAA Division III athletics program that garnered 5 national championships and 959 academic all-conference athletes — more than any American Southwest Conference university. During his tenure, the university's endowment doubled and the main campus footprint doubled from 200 to approximately 400 acres, while some 22 new buildings were added.

"With all this growth, our main objective remained to create a university that had the 'look and feel' of a private university, making our high touch, high quality vision a reality," Mabry said. "For me, it's always been about quality, being the best at what you're trying to do." These initiatives brought the University to almost 10,000 students, with an annual growth rate that was in the 7 to 11 percent range and accelerating. "Tyler is a wonderful place and our beautiful campus, with buildings surrounding two lakes, is an easy sell to students," the educator said.

After stepping down at the end of 2016, Mabry was named president emeritus by The University of Texas System Board of Regents in 2020.

The Mabrys also have been instrumental in the growth of the City of Tyler. "They were involved in the Chamber and the Economic Development Council," said Kevin P. Eltife, chairman of the UT Tyler System Board of Regents and former mayor of Tyler. "Whenever we needed anything at the city, we called on them. They played an integral part of this entire community, and this is why they are so loved."



*President
Emeritus*

University
of Texas
at Tyler

Tyler,
Texas



Partner

Alston &
Bird, LLP

Atlanta,
Georgia

*Owner and
Principal*

NetMOVE

Atlanta/
Charlotte/
Winston-Salem

2020-2021
HALL OF FAME
Inductees

Rosemarie and David Thurston are partners in the truest sense of the word. Their strong bond has resulted in a thriving marriage of 33 years and served as a foundation as they've raised their family. Additionally, each has served as the other's biggest cheerleader on the way to significant professional success. The Thurstons' easy compatibility makes it even more fitting that they are the first couple to be honored together as inductees into the Gatton College Hall of Fame.

The college also played a role in the relationship of the two accounting majors, which began when Rosemarie was a UK freshman. "We share very similar passions — faith, family, friends," she said. "We really enjoy being together, and I'm looking forward to the next 33 years."

Even though they have that common ground, the pair's paths to professional success have differed. David spent 20 years at Emory University, where he managed complex financial service operations. Eventually he opted for a career change and stepped into the moving and storage industry. He now serves as president and principal of NetMOVE, which has locations in Georgia and North Carolina.

He also is a member of the Emory Alliance Credit Union (EACU) Board of Directors and currently serves as chairman. "David's contributions to the credit union make it a better place," said Chris Culbertson, EACU's president. "He has a lot of great ideas. He uses his experience in the small business that he owns and his former professional career at Emory to help the credit union make better decisions and to contribute in the ways that he has that have been very meaningful to the credit union."

Rosemarie pursued a different path, becoming a lawyer at the 800+ lawyer firm of Alston & Bird LLP, where she leads the firm's REIT practice nationally. As a partner in the Financial Services & Products Group, she has become an expert on real estate investment trusts (REITs) and alternative investment funds. Over the course of her career, she has helped clients raise \$50 billion in equity securities for real estate. "What Rosemarie brings to Alston & Bird is the combination of skills and talents that makes someone enormously successful and respected, not only by her immediate team, but those around her," said Richard Hayes, Alston & Bird's chairman and managing partner. "You only have to be in the room with her for about three minutes to realize that she is experienced and knowledgeable in her

Class of
1986
BS ACC

Class of
1981
BS ACC

ROSEMARIE A.
AND DAVID L.
Thurston

area, and that you can rely on her judgment. And if you follow it, it's a pathway to good things."

Her deep knowledge and skills have been recognized throughout the industry. Rosemarie is among Georgia's Top-Rated Lawyers based on peer reviews by Martindale-Hubbell®'s ranking of AV Preeminent®. She also was recognized among GlobeSt.com's 2019 Women of Influence in Commercial Real Estate and has been honored by Chambers USA and Chambers Global.

The couple credit a significant portion of their success to the University of Kentucky and Gatton College. "Both my wife and I were first-generation college students. We've been unbelievably blessed," David said. "When you do a little soul searching, you think about what really made a difference to me — and it was the education."

They both remain involved in their alma mater in 2018, including establishing the Thurston Scholar scholarship, which supports first-generation college students. "If we can take that financial pressure off a first-generation Kentucky college student and enable them to go back to their communities and their families and transform their lives, that's really meaningful to us," said Rosemarie, who is a member of the college's Dean's Advisory Council. "We're just honored and pleased to be a part of it."

Their friends and colleagues appreciate the Thurstons' commitment to their family, coworkers, alma mater and community. "The University of Kentucky must be a tree of great nurture," said Donna Bergeson, a senior counsel at Alston & Bird. "Both Rosemarie and David Thurston are intellectuals of the highest caliber, morally, intellectually and philanthropically. They have made their families proud, the University of Kentucky proud, and they're proud to have gone to the University of Kentucky."

Class of
2001
BS FIN

NATHAN *Winters*

Nathan Winters is known for his strong values, integrity and ability to work collaboratively. He's already making a significant professional mark 20 years after graduating from the Gatton College of Business and Economics.

Winters credits the college for preparing him for a rapidly changing environment. "One of the primary things that I took away from college was to be a continuous learner — how to learn fast, how to adapt to new and different things," he said. "Those are all skill sets that you need throughout your career to be successful."

Those skills were beneficial when he joined General Electric's financial development program, which assigned him to work in various GE divisions. Winters remained with GE for 17 years and held CFO positions across the company.

In 2018, the UK alumnus joined Zebra Technologies as vice president of Corporate Financial Planning and Analysis and Business Operations. The Chicago-based company provides technologies for a variety of industries, including retail, health care, manufacturing, transportation and logistics.

Winters' time at GE prepared him to navigate Zebra's complex business model. "Nathan really came in and understood the financial situation, how and why our customers buy our products and our competition," said Jeff Schmitz, CHRO/CMO of Zebra. "He dug into the business to understand it. That really has given him a great foundation."

Three years later, Winters was promoted to chief financial officer, becoming responsible for investor relations, financial planning and reporting. "Nate has a rare combination of a strong business acumen but, above all, he's a great person," said Anders Gustafsson, Zebra's CEO.

Receiving the Gatton College's Distinguished Young Alumni Award — the college's highest honor for alumnus under the age of 45 — underscores Winters' foundational influences, including his wife, Megan.

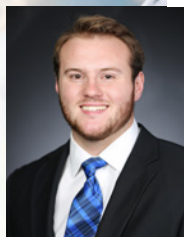
"Whenever you see somebody who is really good at what they do, you have to look at where they came from, whether that's their family or their university," Schmitz said. "It's been exciting to see him move through his career, both at GE and now at Zebra."



**Chief
Financial
Officer**

**Zebra
Technologies**
**Lincolnshire,
Illinois**

A sixth-year senior, Luke Fortner is building success one degree at a time. After graduating in December 2019 with a degree in mechanical engineering, Fortner plans to graduate in December 2021 with his master's degree in mechanical engineering. Fortner is also working on a One Year MBA at UK's Gatton College and is on track to graduate in May 2022. The four-year letter winner is one of 176 semifinalists on the watch list for the William V. Campbell Trophy®, which recognizes an individual college football player as the best football scholar-athlete in the nation for combined academic success, football performance and exemplary leadership. Fortner is a four-time member of the SEC Fall Academic Honor Roll and a three-time member of the Dean's List. Early this year, he was named to the 2021 CoSIDA Academic All-District Team. "I am motivated to win inside and outside of the classroom, because I've always prided myself on having an unfaltering work ethic," says Fortner. "I have a hunger for challenge and a steady belief that I can impact the world in a positive way."



LUKE FORTNER

Center & One Year
MBA Student

CHEERING FOR GATTON ON THE GRIDIRON

As UK Football skyrocketed in the AP Top 25 polls after a historic win over Florida and a 6-0 start to the 2021 season, Big Blue Nation cheered on these Gatton College athletes who are mastering the gridiron and academics.



WILL LEVIS

Starting Quarterback &
M.S. Finance (MSF) Student

Elected as one of eight team captains before he played his first UK Football game, Will Levis transferred to UK after graduating from Penn State's Smeal College of Business with a degree in finance in just three years. "One of the things that made the University of Kentucky stand out was the opportunity to add a top shelf master's degree in finance education to my football experience," said Levis, who became a starting quarterback at a Southeastern Conference school where Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) laws have come into effect in the last few months. With nearly 100,000 followers and one million likes on TikTok, the social media star is famous for how he eats bananas and drinks coffee. With NFL aspirations, the quarterback's impressive arm and background in finance have given him a grasp on what it means to be successful in the professional world. Levis is on track to graduate in May 2022.



MATTHEW RUFFOLO

Kicker & One Year MBA Student

Nicknamed “Big Foot,” Matthew Ruffolo graduated in May 2021 from UK with a finance degree. He is currently working on his MBA at UK’s Gatton College and has been named to the SEC Fall Academic Honor Roll. Ruffolo is on the Lou Groza Award Watch List, which recognizes the nation’s top placekicker. Other than playing for the NFL, his dream job is to be a CFO of a company — which pursuing an MBA will help him do. “I want to be successful in my performance on and off the field,” says Ruffolo. “Choosing to pursue the UK MBA while playing football has been a great experience. The knowledge and leadership skills that I have learned in the UK MBA program will enable me to be successful later in life.



Luke, Matt, and Quintin have been excellent candidates in our MBA program to date. Balancing a challenging schedule with athletics and graduate studies, they’ve been very engaged in the MBA program. They are outstanding young men that epitomize the character and drive to succeed associated with our student athletes. - Karl Gustafson, MBA academic director



Known as Q, Quintin Wilson is enrolled in Gatton’s full-time One Year MBA, a program designed for young professionals, recent graduates and emerging leaders across all academic majors. As the center for UK Football, he has been named to the SEC Fall Academic Honor Roll. Wilson graduated in December 2020 from UK with a degree in management, completing his bachelor’s degree in just two and a half years with the help of advanced placement credits earned in high school. “In order to accomplish my goals in life, I believe it is imperative to me to succeed inside and outside of the classroom,” says Wilson. “I want to leave a lasting impact on everyone I meet, and I have the ability to make a lasting difference in this world.”



QUINTIN WILSON

Center & One Year MBA Student



HELPING STUDENTS WHEN IT COUNTS

Gatton College student Carlos Varela describes his father as one of his biggest influences. The elder Varela, a charismatic man, was born in Columbia but immigrated to the United States to create a better life for his family. Inspired by his father's dedication and hard work, Carlos committed to earning a college degree — something his parents never achieved.

But in 2020, COVID-19 created a roadblock that could have hindered Carlos' educational pathway in pursuing a double major in marketing and management, as well as a Bachelor of Science in Communications. The third-year student originally planned to work during Summer 2020 to help his family pay for his college tuition. However, the Florence, Kentucky native prudently decided to forgo a job as the pandemic worsened.

"Personally, I was comfortable working and physically able to," said Carlos. "However, I would be coming home every day to my father who is in an at-risk category, so working wasn't an option, and I was short on income."

Carlos wasn't alone. The pandemic put significant economic strain on numerous Gatton College students, which could have led them to delay completing their coursework or caused them to drop out. Sensing this growing financial need, Dean Simon Sheather created the Gatton Persistence Scholarship (GPS), a one-time grant to help students maintain their momentum toward their degree. This scholarship was funded through a matching program in which 19 Gatton alumni raised \$309,198 in just one month. Those gifts were matched, dollar-for-dollar, with internal funds.



CARLOS VARELA

MARKETING AND MANAGEMENT

HELPING STUDENTS

WHEN IT COUNTS

The college awarded \$529,000 to 160 undergraduate and graduate students during the 2020-21 academic year. One of the recipients was Nathan Davis, who received the grant as a freshman in Fall 2020. "This grant greatly alleviated some of the financial stress, because it covered my books and other material costs, which helped to prevent me from taking out loans," said the Nicholasville, Kentucky resident, who is pursuing a double major in finance and accounting with minors in business analytics and economics. "It also helped with some of the main necessities, such as groceries, as well as being able to put some of that money towards paying for contacts lenses."

A portrait of Nathan Davis, a young man with short dark hair and a goatee, smiling. He is wearing a blue blazer over a white collared shirt. The background is a light-colored stone wall with architectural details.

NATHAN DAVIS

FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING

A portrait of Tenneil Edelen, a young woman with long black braids, smiling. She is wearing a blue and orange geometric patterned shirt. The background is a stone wall with large carved letters, including 'JTC' and 'BUSIN CON'.

TENNEIL EDELEN

FINANCE

Davis also credits the GPS for providing important motivation with his academics.

"I truly think this grant was one of the reasons why I was fortunate enough to have a 4.00 GPA for the fall and spring semesters of my freshman year," he said. "Because I know how it feels to be in the position of needing help, it motivated me to help others in need and try to be the best that I could be."

The GPS also provided critical support for students such as Tenneil Edelen, a senior finance major with a minor in international business, who are closing in on finishing their college degree.

"I am most thankful to be a part of a college where the faculty and staff show up and show out for their students," the Louisville, Kentucky native said. "I feel at home here in the Gatton College, and as a senior about to graduate I am so proud to be graduating from UK!"



RETURNING STRONG

The Gatton College of Business and Economics launched the 2021-2022 academic year with new in-person beginnings and opportunities, new professional students and the largest incoming freshmen class in Gatton College history!



University of Kentucky
Gatton College of Business and Economics

FALL 2021 SPECIAL ISSUE

Office of the Dean

371 Gatton College of Business and Economics
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506-0034

Non-Profit Org
US Postage Paid
Permit 51
Lexington, KY



CELEBRATING *Our Alumni*

The Gatton College of Business and Economics welcomed its alumni to join Dean Simon Sheather, along with faculty and staff, at its UK Football season tailgates at Kroger Field. With over 36,000 alumni worldwide, the Gatton College helped celebrate a record season of wins!