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Good News in Cuba

By BRUCE D. MCLARTY, president

For all of my 60 years, Cuba has meant Communism, Fidel Castro, missiles, Olympic opponents and cigars. Though Cuba is only 103 miles from Florida, the island nation has always seemed to me to be the most foreign of foreign countries.

The political distance between Cuba and the U.S. is why I was completely surprised when two of my colleagues, Ken Graves and Chuck Hicks, came to my office last spring to invite me to visit Cuba with Harding’s Good News Singers, an a cappella worship ensemble consisting of 10 students. They had been invited to sing for a worldwide Christian youth meeting where more than 250 teenagers would be present. Furthermore, their Cuban host had indicated that it would add significance and esteem to this event if “el presidente de Harding” could accompany the students. So my wife, Ann, and I made plans to join them in Cuba with Jeff Montgomery, University photographer, accompanying us. We all were granted religious visas to enter.

We flew to Havana on Aug. 3 and soon were being driven to Matanzas where the youth gathering would begin that evening. As we arrived, I heard sounds I hope to never hear again. The clear, passionate, beautiful voices of young, Cuban Christians filled the air. I recognized almost all of the tunes, but the words, of course, were in Spanish. They were singing the same hymns and worship songs we sing in chapel each weekday. Because of sings, handshakes, hugs and simple expressions of gratitude translate with amazing accuracy across cultures.

Since returning, numerous groups have heard me reflect on the question that has haunted me most: What did I know about Cuba before I went to Cuba? I knew something of their history, revolution, leaders, and the complicated relationship between our two governments. Yet I was stunned to discover just how complete my ignorance was of the 11 million people who live on the small island that lies so close to the southern tip of our country. It was encouraging to spend several days touring and getting acquainted with these Cuban neighbors who possess an inspiring and joyous faith. We have to be a light to the world. What’s the best way for Christians to be a light to the world?

Jesus and Paul both call us to be different in different ways. Paul calls us to renew our minds, and Jesus calls us in many of his parables to give away the extravagant love and grace of God. We have to be different to be a light. We have to interact with people in a different way but still keep in mind that the centurios to be a people of God ever living in his presence.

I think it was in that moment that Cuba became far less foreign to me. Over the years as my family lived and worked in Asia, Africa and Europe, I learned that people of all cultures and races respect how Jesus lived his life and value his treatment of others. Prayerfully striving to consistently live as Christ in every situation can be used by God to be a bright light to those needing the savior.

We are living as light when people can clearly see the lordship of Jesus Christ in the ordinary details of our lives. Either he is lord of all or he is lord of none of it. We must not hide him in the church building.

What’s the best way for Christians to be a light to the world to the world?
One Moment

Singing for an overflow crowd, Good News Singers perform in Matanzas, Cuba, for a youth gathering as many in the crowd record on their cellphones. To learn more about this event, see Viewpoint on page 2.

Photo by Jeff Montgomery
Around Campus

The Linda Byrd Smith Museum of Biblical Archaeology showcases biblical artifacts.
Students looking to pursue careers in public health, public policy, law and medical missions can benefit from the diverse course offerings of Harding’s College of Arts and Humanities, and students can utilize the College to specialize their major coursework — especially for those in healthcare, public policy, law and medical missions.

“My career is spiritual in nature, then it seems like this major is tailor-made for Harding,” Dillion said. “I hope they’ll be better prepared to deal with humanity as doctors, physician assistants, physical therapists — whatever they go into.”

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Harding’s mission makes the major a perfect fit to expand students’ worldview, particularly related to health care, poverty and mission around the globe.

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A great time with @HardingU! Good News Singers in Cuba! So far, they sang and I spoke to 275 Cuban Christian teens! AUGUST 4

David Slater I’m saddened to hear of the passing of Harding University’s Rosemary Wilson. She has been a true friend for a long time, starting back in college. She was the heart and soul of the admissions office. It was my privilege to be with her very often during my time performing in the music group that represented that office. We always knew we could go to Rose’s office for some wise and spiritual guidance. I loved her and her sweet husband, George, very much. Blessings to her family. AUGUST 17

Kevin Brooks @KevinBrooksDPPP Just got back home from taking our oldest @sam209 to @HardingU. So proud of the choice she is making. And who she is. AUGUST 18

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Bewley on board

TIM BEWLEY ’03 of Nashville, Tennessee, was added to the board of trustees May 4. Bewley is senior vice president of Pinnacle Financial Partners. He previously served as first vice president at SunTrust Bank and chief deposit officer and vice president of Avenue Bank as well as in positions for Regions Bank in Middle Tennessee and Dallas. He was named to Nashville’s Top 30 under 30 in 2009, was one of Standard & Poor’s 500 rising stars of banking in 2010, and was named a Rising Star of Nashville in 2014 by Nashville Business Journal. Bewley and his wife, Holly McCreary ’03, were named Harding’s Outstanding Young Alumni in 2013.

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N ONLY ITS FOURTH year since reinstituting the women’s softball program, Harding turned in a season to remember. The Lady Bisons, under head coach Phil Berry, went 56-9 and won the Great American Conference regular season and tournament championships and the Central Region tournament championship, falling just one win short of an NCAA Division II Tournament appearance.

A three-year streak of 90 wins came to an end in the team’s next game, a 25-16 loss to Arkansas-Monticello clinched Harding’s first regular season softball championship. The Lady Bisons won the opener 7-5 with Kimmy Hendricks-Campbell driving in the game-winning run with a single in the bottom of the seventh inning of Saturday’s second game to give Harding a 1-0 victory and set off a jubilant celebration from the crowd.

First GAC Championship • April 23
A doubleheader sweep of traditional GAC power Arkansas-Monticello clinched Harding’s first regular season softball championship. The Lady Bisons won the opener 7-5 with Kimmy Hendricks-Campbell driving in the game-winning run with a single in the bottom of the seventh inning of Saturday’s second game to give Harding a 1-0 victory and set off a jubilant celebration from the crowd.

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LOOKING BACK, YOU MIGHT THINK OUR STORY STARTED AUG. 14, 2015 — the day of the accident. But to really explain how the Lord prepared me for the life I live now, I have to go backward some: back to my childhood and the loving, supportive atmosphere my parents created for me; back to arriving at Harding and the blessing of interacting with peers and professors who were molding me and making me better; and back to when I met Harrison.

Harrison and I both signed up to go to Harding University in Greece during spring 2013. I remember seeing him in the cafeteria, and I didn’t know who he was. I saw him and thought, “He’s the most handsome man I’ve ever seen! I’m going to marry him!” As I got to know him, I found this really interesting person with a lot of cool perspectives. He grew up in Georgia for a good part of his life and also in Mexico and Honduras as a missionary kid, so he’s fluent in Spanish. He didn’t live the most normal American life, and I thought he was the best thing ever — and I still do. It was one of those things where I was going to marry him unless something really bad happens. I was always really confident about that.

I went through a bumpy time, both in my faith and in my relationship with Harrison, after one of my really good friends from Harding died in a car accident. It was a time when I felt so confused about why God lets bad things happen to people and why he didn’t intervene. I was mad for a long time. It made me realize that I’m not immune to suffering. I struggled to hold on to God and say, “OK, this is terrible, but I still love you and praise you and glorify you.” It was difficult. Harrison was really amazing through that time. That was another thing that really solidified our relationship I think. He was there. He was loving me unconditionally when he didn’t have to.

When we got back from HUG, we were like, “Let’s get married!” So we did! May 31, 2014, was the best day. I remember so vividly saying my vows to him and thinking, “Finally, I get to make this man my husband, and we get to be a team in life forever.”

We finished our last year at Harding, and it was a wonderful environment to build a marriage in. We graduated in May 2015 and decided we would move back to Nashville, Tennessee, where I’m from. Harrison graduated with a degree in oral communications with speech and drama licensure, and he had been accepted into Lipscomb University’s Master of Fine Arts for film and creative media. He’s super talented. I graduated with a degree in psychology, and I also had been accepted in Lipscomb in a master’s program for counseling, so we felt all set to do life. We were going to be professionals and have three kids and a golden retriever. Because of his missions background, we were really excited about the idea of foreign missions and thought we had our lives paved out. We wanted to live for the Lord, and our purposes were good.
HARRISON’S FATHER, PHIL, AND I live and work in Honduras as missionaries. On the day of the accident, I had driven home from work to Guatemalan to see my son alive one more time if he could hear me. At first he said, “no” and when I got to the hospital, the doctor told me it was really bad. He wanted to perform a surgery where he would remove part of Harrison’s skull to let his brain swell. The doctor wasn’t hopeful. He really thought Harrison was going to die. I didn’t have much hope either. I prayed. I’m not sure what I prayed, just that the Lord would come be with me and help Harrison. Help us. I’m so grateful to have good friends who stayed by my side all night.

HE MADE IT THROUGH SURGERY, and for the first time I had hope. He was alive. Of the 10 percent who live, only 23 percent were 23 at this time — and we hadn’t been agreeing. For all of their sacrifices and love, but I’m not helpless. We are so grateful for the support and friendship that will forever be special to us. We met all kinds of daily needs while we found our new normal. When we sought new therapies and support from both families, we’re so blessed to have people in an accident like this die on the spot. Of the 10 percent who live, only 23 percent were 23 at this time — and we hadn’t been agreeing. For all of their sacrifices and love, but I’m not helpless. We are so grateful for the support and friendship that will forever be special to us. We met all kinds of daily needs while we found our new normal. When we sought new therapies centers, the Shepard prison came home from the hospital. As we transitioned home, our church family and friends strengthened through their suffering. It is a beautiful thing to see how much they love each other and to witness their commitment to serving God while finding joy even in their current circumstances. After the accident, we received so many visits both in Erie, Pennsylvania, and in Atlanta from strangers and friends alike. Messages flooded in from around the world to let us know that Harrison was being prayed for constantly. Christians from all over the country sent cards and items they thought might be helpful. When Hayley and the rest of the family needed a place to stay in Atlanta, close friends of the Waldron family took all of us into their home. Churches from around the Atlanta area provided food multiple times per week for several months. Friends from our home congregation, Tuscaloosa Church of Christ, and other close friends pitched in with their individual skills to help renovate our house before Har. rison came home from the hospital. As we transitioned home, our church family and friends agreed on how much easier it was to not get out of bed and crawl in a hole, but I got up. I was not letting this beat me. I was not going to lose the battle that was now my fight. I was no longer living. I was never going to wake up. I was letting the girl with her phone, I couldn't make the flight to Erie, Pennsylvania, on my own, so I traveled back to Honduras to kneel with Phil. We were in constant communication with Hayley and her parents, and by the time we left for the airport we knew that Harrison had undergone brain surgery and that the next 48 hours were critical. I remember begging God to allow me to see my son alive one more time if he was going to take him. I called my mom and sister-in-law. Those were hard conversations. I saw a life flight helicopter coming over the trees, and I remember thinking, “I really hope this isn’t for Harrison.” I landed in the field across the street. I didn’t know what was happening. I couldn’t breathe. I couldn’t function. I thought I was going to die. They got him into the helicopter and took him off to a trauma hospital in Erie, Pennsylvania. I followed along in the car. When we got to the hospital, the doctor told me it was really bad. He wanted to perform a surgery where he would remove part of Harrison’s skull to let his brain swell. The doctor wasn’t hopeful. He really thought Harrison was going to die. I didn’t have much hope either. I prayed. I’m not sure what I prayed, just that the Lord would come be with me and help Harrison. Help us. I’m so grateful to have good friends who stayed by my side all night.

PHOTO BY ASHLEY PARSONS

MARRING | FALL 2017

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A tear." I was like, no way. And we thought about getting out of the hospital. I didn’t have much hope either. I didn’t have much reason to live anymore. I thought I was going to die. I didn’t have anything to live for. I thought I was going to die. I didn’t have anything to live for. I thought I was going to die. I didn’t have anything to live for.

Her mother’s perspective

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Harry and me. We choose joy, and we choose to do the hard stuff. During and after the accident, we were incredibly blessed by the church around us. I have never experienced the church in this way until this happened. [Vice President for Alumni and Parent Relations] Liz Howell sent out this message to somebody up near Erie, Pennsylvania, where Harrison was in the hospital first, and all of these Harding alumni came out to help us. Down in Atlanta, it was the same story. We did some treatments in Jackson, Tennessee, and people would come and bring us meals and pray over us. The church there rented us a hospital bed and built this ramp on the house where we lived. They took care of us. In all of this, I realized that God will see you through, and he will often use your people to pick you up and help you. I love the church in a much different way now because of that.

The treatments in Jackson were to improve the communication between Harrison’s brain and his body. The doctors take out fat from his belly, get stem cells out of it, and inject those into his cerebrospinal fluid, and the stem cells go into his brain and help form little connections. This is a difficult process, and that’s why it has been such a long, hard recovery.

But Harrison is the most determined person I have ever met. When he would build something for me, like a coffee table or bench, he would not rest until he was finished. He would not come in to eat or drink. He wouldn’t move from that spot until he was finished and happy with it. That has served him so well in this process because he has to keep working and pushing through. He is able to see past our suffering and past what’s happening on the earth and able to see it for its eternal quality. I can’t help but think that God made Harrison and me for this. We choose joy, and we choose to do the hard stuff. We have never experienced the church in this way until this happened.

There’s a lot of uncertainty as we are two years out now. Sometimes I look 10 years into the future and wonder where we will be, but there’s no guarantee. There’s no knowing, which can be a really scary place, but I’ve gotten used to it. The bottom line is we’re going to surrender to this new life and this new plan God has laid before us. This is not what we wanted at all, but sometimes God lets us have these opportunities to glorify him. People always told us that God was going to have a special purpose for us. I was not thinking that this would be what it was. But we know God’s got us, and he has great plans for us.

I have a quote from Harrison that I love. This is what Harrison wants people to know. “God is good and has done great things for us during this long, difficult journey.” God’s faithfulness to us during this has helped us be more faithful to him. We know he’s got this taken care of. He’s cared for our every need before we even knew we had them. He’s given us grace and love and incredible support.

Someone asked me once how my purpose has changed. I said my purpose hasn’t changed; it’s become more clear to me. I cause Harrison got hurt and because we hurt so much, my purpose is coming to greater fruition. When God presents you with a different opportunity or a different path than you wanted, if you take the path, you will be blessed beyond measure, more blessed than you could ever imagine.

I’m so happy to be living it for the Lord—and even when it hurts. God has done great things in my life, and I know if he loves me and he loves Harrison, which I believe he does tremendously, we’re going to be OK. He’s going to give us meaning in our brokenness. And one day when we’re all completely whole in heaven, it’s going to be amazing. I believe we’re going to see some fruit from this trial, which is what our lives are all about. It’s about getting people to heaven and living this wonderful life for eternity. It’s what I signed up for when I gave my life to Christ.

A friend’s perspective

Hayley and Harrison were new into their relationship when we spent the semester in Greece. So, we had been able to see their relationship change and evolve during that time, which is a very different situation than on campus in Scary. This experience adds both positives and negatives and is a situation that adds other stressors to relationships. We saw them work through this time and finish the semester closer than when it began and more rooted together. Once back to campus, I remember noticing the joy and energy they had in their relationship. They were so engaged and married while still students at Harding, so we were able to witness this time in their relationship as well. It also seemed like they had settled beautifully into their busy married life and were managing classes, internships, social lives, and all the other things that are part of a student’s senior year experience.

After the accident, I saw the fierce love that Hayley had for Harrison I recognized early on. She demonstrated such strength in caring for him. She continued to draw on family and friends who encouraged her and who she could safely reach out to and trust for guidance and support. She had been married much longer than Harrison and Hayley had been married much longer than Harrison and Hayley this past two years has been from the Lord. They have navigated so many things that many of us who have been married much longer than them have never had to face. Their dedication to love for one another has been so clearly evident. Hayley’s fierce love and support as not only wife but also caregiver and Harrison’s strength and fight to not give up, and taking any chance he has to affirm his love for his beautiful wife that has never wavered. That is beautiful. That is Godly. Christ-centered love.

—Amy Baker, spring 2013 Harding University in Greece visiting professor and instructor of communication sciences and disorders.
Dear Nepal,

You have welcomed me and surprised me. You are a land of extremes. I remember coming here almost two years ago and taking that first ride from Kathmandu to Pokhara where I now live. I remember taking awe-struck photos and videos out of the windows of the bus, marveling at how few people who crowded the tightly packed shops, the dusty road, and even the tops of buses. And then, as the city fell away, I was amazed (and terrified) to see the towering hills around which the bus skirted — nothing but a few feet of pavement between my window and the steep drop ending in the rushing river below. And when we came to Pokhara and the early morning sun greeted my jet-lag weary eyes, I stood in awe at the vast Himalayas spread out before me — snow-capped testaments to God’s limitless power.

And Nepal, I see your burdens. I see that in this powerful land it seems there is not enough — not enough jobs, not enough opportunity, not enough space to grow. I see discouragement and weariness born of natural disaster and government corruption. And I see the burden of gods who cannot save, who only add their extra burden of unattainable perfection, endless striving, their weighty burden of false hope. “The images carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary. They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden” (Isaiah 46:1b-2a).

You have also taught us about faith as we have watched Makua-Metto believers experience pressure or persecution from their neighbors or families as they’ve stepped away from destructive world hypes in the news. We have watched women who can’t read and write, who have survived female genital mutilation, who have withstood so much, and see that there is one “who made a way” (Isaiah 46:12-13). You have given us the opportunity to share the Good News with them and see the transforming power of the Gospel in their lives. We have grown up here — not in the childhood sense, but in the sense of becoming an adult. It has been here in Mozambique among your Makua-Metto people that we have had our idealism and our immaturities seasoned by both the sufferings and joys of real, adult life and the challenges and thrills of ministry.

There was nothing calm about our first visit with you, and we left heartbroken that we lived in a world that allowed for people to scavenge through the same trash as cows, buzzards and dogs. You have taught us about the temporary nature of what the world hypes in the news. We have watched women who can’t read meet Jesus in the sermon on the mount with his scandalous ideas about loving our enemies and argue passionately amongst themselves about exactly what that looks like in their village. Even though the world would cast these women as nobodies who live in the middle of nowhere, their faith and witness puts them in the very center of the gospel Jesus preached.

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It has been amazing to watch churches “grow up” here as well and witness God’s spirit transform a handful of small churches into a network that now includes more than 2,000 Christians. We came here with the call to serve, but we have so often found ourselves on the receiving end — we are humbled and grateful for so many gifts you have given us. We have watched many of your languages, born of natural disaster and government corruption. And I see the burden of gods who cannot save, who only add their extra burden of unattainable perfection, endless striving, their weighty burden of false hope. “The images carried about are burdensome, a burden for the weary. They stoop and bow down together; unable to rescue the burden” (Isaiah 46:1b-2a).

It is here in your land that we learned about joy — even in the midst of awful pain because of Christ’s resurrection we are never without hope, because the kingdom of God is never in trouble! Some days discipling new believers and encouraging new churches was messy and disappointing, but other days were thrilling as young leaders began to catch the vision of imitating the servant leadership of Jesus.

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For nine science majors, summer 2017 turned out to be an unlikely combination of RESEARCH AND RIGATONI

By KALEB TURNER
Photography by GRANT SCHOL

s part of the Summer Undergraduate Research in Florence program led by Dr. Dennis Matlock, associate professor of biochemistry and department chair, nine students spent four weeks at the Harding University in Florence campus and in laboratories at Meyer Children’s Hospital practicing hands-on biomedical research and experiencing Italian culture.

Matlock said after a discussion with Dr. Jeff Hopper, dean of international programs, the idea for a biochemistry-based summer program seemed a natural fit for science students who felt they could not study abroad because of class requirements.

“Sometimes our students feel, because of the prerequisite nature of some of their courses, that doing something like this in the summer gives them the opportunity to still be a part of an international program,” Matlock says. “I was happy to see our students be able to be a part of something where their studies met a want to see the world.”

Lance Benson, a senior biochemistry and molecular biology major, said the decision to attend SURF came from the desire to experience a foreign culture and to study clinical applications of his major outside the classroom.

“The idea of studying abroad has been a dream of mine; however, I had not thought it possible due to the number of specialized classes my major required,” Benson says.

“SURF provided the opportunity of a lifetime to experience the Italian culture while pursuing applicable studies in the major I enjoy and hope to pursue a career.”

For four weeks, students stayed in the villa at HUF and became an integral part of the
For Matlock, the simplest way to describe summer 2017 is thankful. “I think if I had to pick one word to summarize this entire experience, it would simply be ‘thankful’. I definitely felt 100 percent of the Harding community behind us — from the international programs office to the administration. I was happy to take care of the science classes, but I realized there was a whole lot more than just the classes. I was so thankful for the support felt from all those other areas to provide the infrastructure. It would not have been possible if I didn’t have their support.”

The program proved to be a perfect mix of arts, culture and sciences, and Matlock is scheduled to make his way back to Florence in summer 2018 with a new group of SURF students for another summer of research and rigatoni.

“FALL 2017”

“HARDING”

Lance Benson and Dr. Giancarlo Perferi work together in the laboratory. Each student was given the opportunity to rotate daily and work with different doctors or to focus on a specific type of testing depending on personal interests.

Harding and local community. From interacting with summer HUF students to visiting with locals and working alongside them in the lab, science students found Florence to be a place easy to call home during the summer.

In the lab, the students worked alongside Dr. Chiara Azzari and her colleagues at Meyer Children’s Hospital. Students completed biochemistry research with practicing clinical professionals in a real-world setting — much different from how most students complete their biochemistry lab in the Pryor-England Center for Science and Engineering on the Seacry campus.

“The people at the laboratory were intentional about making the point that, behind every tube or sample, there is a patient. Often times that was a sick child because of the hospital where we were,” Matlock says. “They could see the relevance. It was right in front of them. They could see something they were doing right there, within a matter of hours, making an impact on the patients in the hospital.”

Junior prepharmacy student Rachel Murray saw just how impactful her work was during the summer. “Since we worked at a children’s hospital, we helped out a lot with newborn screening,” Murray says. “This taught me the importance of newborn screening as it really is the first snapshot into the status of a person’s biochemistry.”

“Actually being able to understand and work with the doctors at the hospital showed me that I am on the right path for my future with medicine and helping people,” Murray says. “It also helped me realize that there are so many different paths that I am able to take with my major and showed me which kinds of pharmacy I would or wouldn’t see myself studying in the future.”

For Matlock, the experience to be there alongside the students and impressed by their ability to adapt, adjust and understand the significance of what they were doing as future medical professionals. “It made me feel really good about the experience they’re getting here at Harding and how prepared they are to be able to integrate so seamlessly into that real-world environment so quickly and effectively,” Matlock says. “Before you knew it, students were standing there with lab membes performing analysis and doing the work. It made me proud to see how well prepared they were for that kind of work. It was truly, truly humbling.”

Matlock also emphasized the level of expertise, knowledge and experience the students were receiving. “Since we worked at a children’s hospital, we helped out a lot with newborn screening,” Murray says. “This taught me more than just biochemistry knowledge. It was right in front of them. They could see something they were doing right there, within a matter of hours, making an impact on the patients in the hospital.”

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Matlock also emphasized the level of expertise, knowledge and experience the laboratory staff provided to the students during their weeks of study. “I know this is easy to say, but if you look at the staff, they’re literally world-class,” Matlock says. “Dr. Azzari lectures in multiple countries. She’s simply interested, like I and all my colleagues are, in training the next generation and providing those opportunities to grow and learn.”

Life of the SURF student was not all study and research despite their excitement to be a part of such an incredible experience. Staying at the villa, students had the opportunity to make friends with HUF students and to be a part of many trips they took outside of Florence. The group began their summer journey in Rome where they stayed for four days with the HUF students. Matlock said even in Rome, their exposure to medicine and research was evident in the art and history of the ancient city. “I’ll say that it was great being a part of HUF group and schedule,” Matlock says. “We got to do a lot of the same things they did — like being in Rome for four days. To be in Rome and to be in the Sistine Chapel, it’s unmatched. We saw the statue of David where the tour guide was sure to point out to us how anatomically correct David is, like blood vessels on his arms and legs.”

Outside of their trip to Rome, the students spent leisure time at the villa and understanding the local people and culture. Murray said the SURF program taught her more than just biochemistry knowledge. “This was my first time ever to go abroad which was a pretty scary thought at first, but it taught me a lot about independence and self-confidence,” Murray says. “I had a rough year with some tough classes before I left, and it left me feeling not confident in what I wanted to do, but this trip really showed me that I need to believe in my ability and intelligence.”

Matlock said students were quick to want to learn more about Italian culture of the area and broaden their worldview. Between experiences of working in the lab and living in Florence, students were not ready to leave their summer home. “It was just a packed program, and every day provided a fantastic opportunity for the students to learn, whether that was in the lab or around Florence,” Matlock says. “I think it’s easy to say that most didn’t want to leave right away. The students were thankful to be at the villa and be a part of that community there.”

Benson, who had only ever traveled to Canada, said this experience of Italian culture through the lens of Christ’s servants in medicine made a profound impact on his faith. “[SURF] helped to improve my confidence in dealing with unfamiliar situations even if I do not fully understand the language of those with whom I am communicating,” Benson says. “The Italian Christians encouraged me to become more bold in my faith and in evangelism; I am simply one person trying his best to serve God, just the same as our brethren across the world.”

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1950
Douglas Cloud was awarded third place from the Emerging Screenwriters Contest for a script he co-wrote, “No Mercy Rule.” (6325 Williams Grove Drive, Beaumont, TX 77702)

1966
Charles Hearne was inducted into the Texas Association of Basketball Coaches Hall of Fame. In his 30 years of coaching, his overall record was 995-333. He coached 14 varsity teams with 28 of them qualifying for the playoffs. Four teams made it to the state tournament during his tenure as head coach of the state championship. (P.O. Box 206, Grabel, TX 76440)

1970
Art Ford was president of Great Lakes Bible College in Waterloo, Ontario. He served the sister schools of Great Lakes Christian College and Great Lakes Bible College in various roles for 30 years in addition to spending 10 years as a missionary to Papua, New Guinea, and five years in full-time church ministry in Canada. (112 Melrose St., Kingston, ON K7M 9C4 Canada)

Richard Hilton has been appointed by the Mississippi Hospital Association to serve on the board of governors as the Prairie Council Representative. The appointment represents the second time he has been named to the board. He is the OCH Regional Medical Center CEO and administrator. He currently serves on several hospital boards including retirement oversight, political action and Medicaid advice. He has been involved in the Prairie Community Foundation and MIFA Quarter Century Executive Forum and serves as trustee for North Mississippi Medical Center and on Veterans Gulf States Region board. (503 Apache Drive, Starkeville, MS 36779)

1980
Kristy Rollmann Shelton retired from coaching after 34 years. She also completed her third Christian fiction novel, Restoration. She and her husband, Cliff (’79), have taught at Greater Atlanta Christian Schools for 35 years. (3860 Genoa Court, Cumming, GA 30040)

1985
Ed Madden was selected 2017 Distinguished Alumni from Alpha Chi National College Honor Society. He holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of South Carolina’s 2017 Martin Luther King Social Justice Award for faculty. He is a professor in the department of English language and literature at the University of Southern California and director of women’s and gender studies. He also serves as the president of the Alumni Association of the city of Columbia. (1006 Melissa Lane, Columbia, SC 29320)

1997
Ray and Wendy Frye McBryar announce the birth of daughter, Riley Grace, Feb. 27, 2017. Ray is a water systems technician, and Wendy is an elementary school teacher. (347 Bel Air Drive, Lucarelli, OR 95648)

2000
Robert C. O’Lynn II was appointed director of the graduate Bible program at Kentucky Christian University. He has been a member of the faculty since 1970. He currently holds the position of professor of preaching at Fuller Theological Seminary. He and his wife, Rachel Parsons, have taught at Greater Atlanta Christian Schools for 35 years. (3860 Genoa Court, Cumming, GA 30040)

2001
Kevin and Christa Cheatham Weatherill announce the birth of twins, Grant Thomas and Harper Joyce, Feb. 17, 2017. Kevin is in school administration, and Christa is a teacher. (4804 Finch Rd., Mistletoe, VA 22720)

2002
Nathan and Laura Ashley Loomer announce the adoption of a son, Bennett C.J., June 22, 2017. He was born June 11, 2017. Nathan is assistant sports information director for Harding, and Laura is administrative assistant in the University’s music department. (123 Freshouze Drive, AR 72758)

2005
Blade and Jessica Osborne Silvers announce the birth of a daughter, Addie Grace, Nov. 2, 2016. The couple has two other daughters, Mallory and Mol-

2006
Stephen (’01) and Laura Cypiankar Harbon announce the birth of a son, Carter David, Oct. 20, 2016. A son and daughter were born to the couple earlier in the year. (4 Round Rock Circle N.E., Rome, GA 30161)

1959

Jon Parfowl recently became preaching minister for the Sunday School Church of Christ in Portsmouth, Ohio. He earned his doctorate in religious education from Harding School of Theology in 2007. He and his wife, Cile, have two children. (347 Bel Air Drive, Lucarelli, OR 95648)

1998
Yesica Sanchez Jones has been named director of the Arkansas Department of Information Services after serving as interim director. Before joining DIS, she was an assistant professor in the department of management information at Harding. She also has served as a solutions developer for Little Rock-based Accius, database developer for Pow- zedd, and Gov. Asa Hutchinson’s outreach liaison to the Hispanic community. (4200 Christina Drive, Rogers, AR 72756)

Luke Savage has been named Medical Properties Trust’s director of European Operations and Acquisitions in Luxembourg City, Luxembourg. He has been with the company for 10 years at a CPA, he previously worked with both KPMG and Ernst & Young. He and his wife, Gina Brown (’90), have three children.

Braden and Tiffany Stewart announce the birth of a daughter, Poppy Rebecca, Jan. 13, 2017. They also have a son, Austin. (3008 Paulinae Circle, Murfreesboro, TN 37132)

1999
Neil Chadlon, an attorney adviser at the Federal Trade Commission, has been appointed to serve as the agency’s chief technologist on an acting basis. He advises the commission and its acting chairman on technology-related matters such as usage, law enforcement actions and policy recommendations. Previously, he was an attorney at Wilkinson Barker Knauer and a law clerk at Stites & Harbort in Portland. (301 W. Washington St., #3, Champaign, IL 61820)

He said it has been eye-opening for him. With the opportunity to go and fight that war.

“God From A to Z” is Jennifer McMullen’s first full-length album release as well as her first a cappella music project.

“God From A to Z” is being released to the public on June 22, 2017. It’s a Christian fiction novel, which teaches attributes of God based on Scripture. The CD features 26 hymns and praise songs she arranged and performed a cappella. (5318 Denis Garden Drive, Shreveport, LA 71105)

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1999
Steve Black was released “What Kind of Watchman Are You?”, a book about sexual assault and how churches and parents can see the warning signs of the abuser and others who help abusers. He and his wife, Jan, have two children. (2701 Triangle Leaf Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76244)

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By JENNIFER HANNIGAN

A community of mission, the University strives to equip its graduates to not only excel in their jobs but also shine the light of Christ to those with whom they come in contact. While many of the more than 50,000 Harding alumni are deserving of recognition, the following have been selected for awards based on their work and example, earning the respect of those around them while serving God, family and community.

Dr. BILLY JOE (’61) and BARBARA GODSEY (’63) THRASHER have dedicated themselves to teaching for a combined 80 years. Billy Joe has served as classroom teacher, coach and athletic director from grade school to junior college level. He also has been in administrative roles as an assistant principal, principal, superintendent and president in both private and public education, his last being president of Columbia (Tennessee) Christian Academy.

“Healing young people grow in their spiritual, mental, social and physical development produces a wonderful sense of satisfaction and fulfillment,” Billy Joe said.

He was honored as Arkansas Outstanding Educator in 1969 by the State Jaycees, is included in Who’s Who among American Educators, and is a member of Phi Delta Kappa honor society. He served on the Arkansas Advisory Council for Secondary Education, the Arkansas Council on Economic Education, and the Tulsa Private School Advisory Council. He was a charter member of the board of directors for Maury Alliance, a Rotary Club Paul Harris Fellow, and served on the Board of Directors for the National Christian School Association and was selected as the 2006 Administrator of the Year. He is a volunteer on the Tuesday Crew at Columbia Academy and also volunteers with the Maury County Boys and Girls Club, serving as chairman of the board in 2013.

“Being able to use what talents God has given us to leave the world a better place than we found it is the greatest work one could possibly do!” he says. “Helen Walton said it best: ‘It’s not what you gather in life but what you scatter in life that tells the kind of life you’ve lived and the kind of person you are.’ As Nehemiah 13:31 says, ‘Lord, remember me for good.’”

Barbara holds a master’s degree from Arkansas State University in early childhood education and retired in 2006 after teaching elementary school 38 years. The couple has participated in mission trips to Central America and Europe. They are members of West Seventh Church of Christ in Columbia, Tennessee, where Billy Joe is a deacon.

“I remember Billy Joe when he first came here and played football,” says Chancellor Emeritus Clifton Ganus Jr. “He was a good player and good leader — a fine young man all the way around. He well represents Harding. He has worked in Christian schools and done an outstanding job. He is an excellent representative of Harding, and we’re very proud of him.”

The Thrashers have two children — Tim and Christy — and two granddaughters.

EDITOR’S NOTE: At press time, the magazine learned of the death of Dr. Thrasher on Sept. 29.

TERRI LEE (’04) has taken her degree in interactive media and used it to connect the Searcy Police Department to the community as public information officer. As spokesperson, Lee is the liaison between the department and media and speaks to community groups like schools and civic organizations about crime prevention, community policing and other law enforcement topics. She says that God led her to this role.

“It definitely wasn’t part of my plan,” says Lee. “I would never have guessed I would be in law enforcement. I have found myself thinking often that I have been put in this position at this time in my life for a reason. When I look back on the journey so far, it is ever apparent how God has guided my steps.”

Prior to this position, Lee was assistant to the sports information director at the University and media relations coordinator, patrol officer and detective for the SPD. She has been honored as SPD Officer of the Year in 2014, SAC Award of Excellence by the Social Security Administration’s Office of Inspector General in 2013, International Ambassador for the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, and speaker at the International Homicide Investigators Association Symposium 2017.

“Admire Terri for her willingness to step out on faith, leave her comfort zone and take on situations head on when others would back down,” says Scott Goode, assistant athletic director for sports information. “She did this for several years in the sports information office at Harding and has continued to display an uncommon inner strength as a member of the Searcy Police Department.”

Lee actively raises money and awareness for Special Olympics through the Law Enforcement Torch Run and teaches Bible classes at Highway Church of Christ.

“A common law enforcement motto is ‘to serve and protect’,” Lee says. “I hope it can be said of me that I put my all into upholding that, not just for this city and its people, but also for the hearts and souls of everyone I come into contact with.”
By helping her sister practice her pronunciation, Jeryn stood out as a student who was always keen to soak up information regarding any communication disorder,” says Dr. Berdie Weaver, dean of the College of Allied Health. “Her interest in assisting current students advance their understanding has been unwavering.”

Laengrich is an advisory board member for the master’s program in communication sciences and disorders. She frankly describes her commitment to serving Africa. “I am the CEO of Mana Nutrition in Fitzgerald, Georgia, one of the leading global providers of peanut-based food (RUTF) to UNICEF and USAID. Mana has produced enough to treat nearly 3 million malnourished children and live in Charlotte, North Carolina. He has his wife, Marnie Razzell (’91), have four children and live in Charlotte, North Carolina. He is the behind-the-scenes driver for our actions.”

Jeryn Kuehn Laengrich (’89) has dedicated himself to working caregivers plan and manage the care of their loved ones. She has been awarded the Ray of Hope Award for Appreciation of Unwavering Commitment to the Parkinson’s disease community from the Parkinson’s Benefactors Organization.

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2011
Brian and Kacey Pervall Eastman announce the birth of a daughter, Lorelei Jean, July 20, 2011. Brian is a senior accountant and CPA at Imaginart Consulting, and Kacey is a staff assistant in the department of pediatrics at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center (3100 Salem Ave., Edmond, OK 73012).

Tim (’12) and Jeanne Jones Landjut announce the birth of a daughter, Millie Jean, April 30, 2011. Tim is a business operations analyst for U.S. Bank, and Jeanne is a preschool teacher (22923 Manor Creek Dr., April Dr., Maryland Heights, MO 63046).


2012
Colby and Jennifer Saayt Roberts announce the birth of a daughter, Chandler Grace Dawn, April 28, 2012. Colby works as a modular development manager for Walmart, and Cassendra is a rubylux Symbols. They also have one son, Connor (3002 Dove Drive, Centerton, AR 72719).

Lauren Schialbach was named marketing director for North Texas Performing Arts (3700 Legacy Drive, 49205, Frisco, TX 75034).

2013
Robert Samuel (’11) and Hannah Payne Goodrum announce the birth of a daughter, Sophie Iris, Oct. 12, 2013. Samuel is a retail sales manager at Baker Shooting Range, and Hannah is a homeemaker and volunteer at community theatre. (3921 Pointe Ave., Zachary, LA 70791).

Elinor Ranner was named special assistant to the secretary in the office of the Interior in July. She previously worked as the assistant director for the Young Leaders Program at the Heritage Foundation. (1315 Meadow Chase Drive, Herndon, VA 20170).

2014
Jeannine “Bobbi” Smith received her National Board Certification in adolescent science. She teaches physical science at Truman High School. (2803 Village Meadow Court, Jonesboro, AR 72401).

2015
Jace Davis joined McCollum Consulting Engineers Inc. as a project designer with a focus on water/wastewater design and mechanical applications (1819 N. Spruce St., Little Rock, AR 72205).

Hannah Buchmeyer married Fernando Lopez on Oct. 1, 2016. Hannah is a photographer at Lufkin National School Districts, and Fernando works in human resources at Walmart. (3101 S. 28th Place, #7, Rogers, AR 72758).

2017
Arielle Butler is the graduate assistant for men’s and women’s cross country and men’s and women’s tennis at Covenant College in Georgia.

Alex Williams (’16) married Emma McKean on June 17, 2017. (944 Sandy Drive, Olive Branch, MS 38654).

Passages
Wayne Hemingway Jr. (’43), a97, of Spring, Texas, died May 21, 2017. A talented educator, he taught Bible, math and science, conducted a church’s bell choir and served as principal/administrative at Athens (Alabama) Bible School; Crowley’s Ridge Academy in Paragould, Arkansas; Madison Academy in Huntsville, Alabama; and Northfield Christian School in Houston. He taught middle-school science 20 years in the public schools in South Orange, New Jersey. He retired in 2018 after teaching in the Lone Star College System in Tomball, Texas. He loved directing singing. He was preceded in death in his wife of 69 years, Annilee Chambers (’42); he is survived by three children, Beth (’97), Pat and Louis Ferrell (’80), a sister, Luiss Lemmons, (’47), five grandchildren; and 12 great-grandchildren.

Era Madge “Peddie” Ellis McFatter (’44), 55, of DeQuincy, Louisiana, died May 9, 2017. While at Harding, she worked in the print shop operating a Linotype machine and job press. In 1951 she received her M.Ed. in human development from the University of Maryland. Before marrying, she worked in the Little Rock post office, taught school in Arkansas and Louisiana as well as Pepperdine College, was a home demonstration agent, and a family life specialist. After marriage, she remained active with Baton Rouge Music Club Choirs in Louisiana, served as president of the local and state chapters of the Louisiana Choral Association, and taught Bible classes at Greenwood Boulevard Church of Christ. She was preceded in death by her husband, Herman. She is survived by her children, Mary Lynn Zimpfer (’52) and William Edward II, and five grandchildren.

Margaret Chaffin Moonsheney (’50), 88, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, died June 27, 2017. She worked at Stein Mart, and was a member of Southwest Church of Christ. At the time of her death, she was survived by her husband of 64 years, James (’50). She also is survived by four children, Van, Jonathan, Teresa McCown (’74) and Dana Gibson (’78), a brother, Jack Chaffin (’50); nine grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

James Moonsheney (’50), 87, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, died May 28, 2016. He was a teacher as well as working at Simple Manufacturing of Trumann, Arkansas; Pennworthy Paper in Memphis, Tennessee; and The Thermos Company in Butteville, Mississippi. He was a member of Southwest Church of Christ. He was preceded in death by his wife, Margaret Chaffin (’50). He is survived by four children, Van, Jonathan, Teresa McCown (’74) and Dana Gibson (’78), a brother, Jack Chaffin (’50); nine grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Richard Ellwood Smith (’50), 88, of Cecil, Arkansas, was a homemaker. They have two other children, Claire and Cooper. (38 Highfield Drive, Monroe, CT 06468).

Travis Lauterbach was named head men’s and women’s golf coach at Lyon College in July 2017. He previously served as an assistant coach at Old Dominion University and head coach at Faulkner University. He is married to Lara Anderson (’07). (36x502)
Dr. Bob Gilliam received one of Harding’s first four Distinguished Teacher awards in 1967. In 1999 he said, “[The award] is based on evaluations by my students and my colleagues. Other than family, those are the most important constituencies in my life. It was quite an honor.” He encouraged many of his students into the teaching profession if he saw evidence of that “hunger for knowledge” and a special “empathy for fellow humans.”

Shannon, Robert and Reid; a sister, Georgia

MURWAS, Wynelle Watson

sas, died June 19, 2016. He was a member of Ozark

Harding and Pepperdine universities and co-

received an Outstanding Teaching Award at both

Quang Nguyen; and seven grandchildren.

Steven Douglas

('84). He is survived by his wife

he co-founded Camp Ruta. After moving to Pen-

served on the boards of Philadelphia Chamber of

Chamber of Commerce where he accomplished

Austria; Kiev, Ukraine; Budapest, Hungary;

Villanova, Pennsylvania. He also taught in Vienna,

earned his Ph.D. from University of Pennsylvania.

Charles Franklin “Bud” Myer Jr.

grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Elizabeth Hickey

Papplinski; a sister,

McAdams, Olga Nell Daugherty and Marolyn Mc-

McCarty; four siblings, Savetta Stader, Bobby

Karen Corker

and a grandchild.

Leah Pannell; a sister,

Gayla Corkle; and a grandchild.

Jonathan Berns Shackle

('08), of Forreston, Illinois, died May 17, 2017. He was a

member of Antioch Church of Christ in Carbondale,

Missouri. He is survived by his wife, Jeene Allen,

during that time, he was awarded six U.S. patents. He

GenCorp Technology Award for his development

Corklin, Indiana. He was a member of the U.S.

a 35-year career as a

Department of Justice. He later moved to Capitol

Kansas City, Missouri. He graduated from University

Law School, where he graduated in 1964.

Jerry Thomas

Cummings; four siblings, Marilyn Anderton,

Janice Ellingson

('91); and three grandchildren; Hettie Harlacs

('89), and Joel (Joel); and 10 grandchildren.

Harvey Dale Allison

('78), of Albuquerque, New Mexico; died June 20, 2016. He

in the Air Force from 1960-1984. He retired in 2006 to

Harding to finish his education. He retired as principal

of Terre Haute North High School in 1998. After

his retirement, he served as a member of the Harding

University Board of Trustees, serving from 2002-

2009. He was a member of the Harding University

Alumni Association and a past chairman of the Harding

University Foundation Board. He was a founder of

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A few of the many scholarship recipients express their gratitude for life-changing kindness and support.

Saying thanks

A seed today, a legacy tomorrow

**SAYING THANKS**

A few of the many scholarship recipients express their gratitude for life-changing kindness and support.

**AS A RECIPIENT of the Coons Family Scholarship, I feel very blessed by the individuals who value the education and spiritual support we students receive in all of Harding’s programs. This scholarship is not just helping me progress through the next few semesters of nursing school at Harding, but it is helping me build a future in which I can serve God and others with a quality Christian education. For this, there are not enough words to say how grateful I am.**

**KARA BRANDT**

Junior nursing major

Woodstock, Georgia

**CHRISTINA CURTIS**

Senior accounting major

Germantown, Tennessee

**SOMETIME people wonder why they are placed somewhere in life. This was a question that ran through my mind after I began my freshman year at Harding. Throughout life, I have never truly had that loving family who was supportive of my dreams to pursue something bigger than myself. Coming-home has given me a new hope—to reach for the heights of my potential. Being surrounded by constant encouragement, persistent drive and enlightened optimism has shown me that the impossible can be possible. This opportunity would not be achievable without the selfless donors who are making my dreams into a reality.**

**CHRISTINA CURTIS**

Senior accounting major

Germantown, Tennessee

**I KNEW Harding was the place God wanted me to study the moment I stepped on campus during my junior year in high school. I had been on other college campuses, but I was unsure of God’s plan for my life until I visited Harding. Every time I came back to campus, I felt a certain about where I should be to get the education I needed to follow my calling. Thank you so much for all you do to make education at Harding possible for me.**

**CAITLIN PEELER**

Sophomore elementary education major

Greer, South Carolina

**THERE IS A HOUSE on Maple Street in Searcy that provides shelter, mentorship and wholesome entertainment to local kids in the community after school. I have been fortunate enough to volunteer there weekly for the last semester and a half, and to know that I have already made a positive impact in these kids’ lives in that short amount of time. Spending time with kids at Maple House has made me a better person because they are reminders that the world does not revolve around me (and I thank God for that). I want to offer my sincerest thanks to the donors who enable me to attend a school like Harding so that I can volunteer and grow at a place like Maple House. Their contributions are not in vain nor do they go unappreciated.**

**COLLIN PHILLIPS**

Senior cognitive neuroscience major

Lebanon, Texas

**I HAVE BEEN blessed to attend Harding for the last two years. I have built friendships I cherish and have had the opportunity to learn from incredible professors who are passionate about their fields. I am so grateful for the faith-based community here, and I know I wouldn’t be able to experience it without the help from generous donors. Because of their donations, I am able to learn in a competitive academic environment, while also being surrounded by fellow believers who daily challenge me in my faith.**

**CAROLINE RITCHIE**

Junior biochemistry and molecular biology major

Nashville, Tennessee

**HARDING HAS provided me with lifelong friends and has shaped me into the person I’ve always wanted to become. All of my professors have been more than helpful, and they genuinely want me to succeed. Some of them even pray before class starts, and that is something that would not be found at another school. God is seen everywhere on campus. Without our donors providing scholarships, there is no way that I would have been able to pursue my post-high school education simply because I didn’t have the funds to fuel my future. However, with the help of donors, I’ve been able to discover an incredible education thus far, and I have gained the most Christ-like friends I’ve ever known through Knights social club. With the help of the generous people who selflessly donate to this wonderful school, young people like myself and others can pursue their dreams of getting a quality, Christian education.**

**JARED SHORTER**

Sophomore marketing major

Puyallup, Washington

**EVERY TIME I get an email about a scholarship, I feel a pang of guilt because I don’t know what I could ever have done to receive such a gift. It’s a lesson in grace as well as a challenge to continue working hard. If I could thank the donors for anything specific, it would have to be the opportunity to travel abroad. Because of their generosity and thoughtfulness, I was able to go to London in Fall 2018. I discovered what it felt like to be at home and fully myself in a place completely new. I often forget that experience was a gift. Thanks to the donors for extending a place to me that is constantly opening my eyes.**

**EVAHANNA THOMPSON**

Senior communication sciences and disorders major

Lynd Haven, Florida

**I HAVE BEEN a legacy tomorrow**

Establish a scholarship through your estate, and your generosity will follow far into the future.

**SAY THANKS DAY**

**End Note**
During the 2016-17 school year, Dr. Monte Cox, dean of the College of Bible and Ministry, gives one of his 13 chapel presentations that were made into a video series to be sold along with his book, *Significant Others: Understanding Our Non-Christian Neighbors*. Read more about the recently released book at harding.edu/mag.