

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA

Culverhouse
College of Business



2024 ALUMNI REPORT

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Kay M. Palan

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Culverhouse Dean Kay Palan

On the cover:

Making memories and connections at the
Manderson MBA Launch orientation event.

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

OUR PEOPLE ARE OUR POWER.

At Culverhouse College of Business, we pride ourselves on our reputation as a powerhouse b-school that produces graduates who change the business world. This year, as in years before, we rose in national rankings, increased enrollment, published award-winning research, and added value to our community.

Who powers all of this excellence? Our people.

Our people are students, like our first-generation cohort who traveled to San Francisco, meeting with alums and friends of Culverhouse in companies like Goldman Sachs, Quince, and Adobe, broadening their career horizons and introducing them to our vast alumni network (p. 18).

Our people are alums like Ari Deshe, who gave a transformative gift, along with his wife, Ann, of \$1.1 million that allowed us to renovate the fourth floor of Alston Hall and open the breathtaking Deshe Parlor this year (p. 2). They are Ashley MacMakin and her husband Andy, who founded the growing casual gourmet restaurant chain Ashley Macs (p.4). Our people are graduates like Laura McDonald and Will Barto: McDonald helped start Culverhouse Ambassadors, and Barto served as one while at Culverhouse. They are now both successful executives and contributing members of the Culverhouse Board of Visitors (pp. 9-11). And our people are our alumni award winners, recognized for the value they bring to the business world and the honor they bring to our College (p. 36).

But our people aren't just our alums. They are our dedicated staff, who work tirelessly to make Culverhouse the best place in the world to study business. They

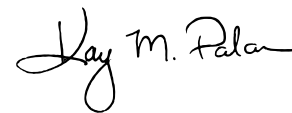
are faculty and spouses of faculty like Stan and Beth Westhohn, whose gift established a fund to support the international business program at Culverhouse, enabling innovative, cross-cultural classroom experiences for students (p. 7). They are friends of Culverhouse like Jeff and Jennifer Davis, who made a substantial gift to support our students based on their youngest son's positive experience at Culverhouse (p. 12). And they are retired professors like Dr. Lonnie Strickland, who treated every student like a valued customer and made indelible marks on the lives of students for over 50 years (p. 17).

Our year in review timeline shows how busy we have been this year (p. 24). That's because at Culverhouse, we push for excellence, and we continue to pursue our goal of recognition as a world-class business college. We are proud of another year of record enrollment, strong giving (p. 20), elite research, unmatched public service, and relentless devotion to student success. These things do not happen by themselves.

At Culverhouse, our people are our power.

We are so glad you are one of them.

Roll Tide!



Dean Kay M. Palan

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Culverhouse College of Business
The University of Alabama

A

ANN & ARI DESHE PARLOR




DESHE FAMILY CUTS RIBBON ON NEW ALSTON FACILITIES

Gifts in 2022 kicked off the \$4 million fundraising campaign to renovate Mary Hewell Alston Hall

Among those returning to the Capstone for the 2023 Homecoming Weekend was the Deshe family, whose significant gifts in 2022 kicked off the \$4 million fundraising campaign to renovate Mary Hewell Alston Hall.

Ann and Ari Deshe's commitment included \$1.1 million to the Alston Hall renovation, \$400,000 to scholarships for first-generation business students, and \$500,000 to the Bloom Hillel Student Center, a gathering place for UA Jewish students.

After the Alabama Crimson Tide vs. Arkansas Razorbacks football matchup, the extended Deshe family, close friends, Culverhouse Dean Kay Palan, and UA President Stuart R. Bell convened in Alston Hall to cut the ribbon formally opening the Ann and Ari Deshe Parlor, Dean's Suite, and Conference Room. 



Facing page: Ann and Ari Deshe cut the ribbon to Deshe Parlor, flanked by University of Alabama President Stuart Bell and Culverhouse Dean Kay Palan. Above: Scenes from the ribbon cutting reception – Ari Deshe at the keys with one of his grandchildren and the Deshes with friends Marillyn and James Hewson.

AT THE TABLE WITH ASHLEY MAC

Culverhouse Alums Build Community Over Good Food

As Culverhouse students, neither Ashley (Marketing, 2002) nor Andy McMakin (Accounting, 2002) planned on opening a restaurant. In fact, Ashley Mac's Kitchen started as a hobby. Andy was working at an accounting firm at the time, and Ashley was at a marketing agency, so she catered for friends and family, on the side, for fun. When other people starting taking notice, the McMakins moved into their first location in Bluff Park, a catering kitchen that was not open to the public.

But not being open to the public was not good enough for the public. Catering customers would ask for a catering menu to take home. They would come by the kitchen and ask to buy servings of items they tried at office events. McMakin was a little surprised but game: "Oh, I guess you can buy a little bit." This grew into their Market Items product line: containers of chicken salad, pimento cheese, frozen entrees.

"We had no cafe at that first little Bluff Park location in 2007," she explained. "So our first official restaurant was in 2010 in Cahaba Heights."

The Best-Laid Plans

One of McMakin's favorite themes is holding on loosely to dreams and plans and figuring out things as you go, along with a tribe of good people and a strong belief in God's guiding hand. After all, she did not plan on opening a restaurant; she was "planning on having a bunch of kids and staying at home." Now, in addition to five Ashley Mac's locations, the McMakins have five

children: one through adoption, two through fostering and two biological. "We do have a bunch of kids," McMakin said, "and I just juggle home and a career as best I can."

McMakin grew up in the kitchen, helping her mother and grandmother cook as early as she can remember. Her large

“*For us, people are so important, and everyone has dignity in their work.*”

family gathered around food, potlucks, big Sunday lunches. McMakin herself loved to bake—cakes and cookies and sweets, all her favorites.

Even now, when the McMakins are not working, they love to cook at home. Her husband and the boys like to grill, and McMakin makes homemade pizza. Their daughter loves to make noodles from scratch.

Though she admits that her kids are typical in often preferring junk food to a home-cooked meal, she insists that they try everything at least once. "They're pretty adventurous eaters," she said.

"I love to get my kids in the kitchen," McMakin went on. "I kind of let them dictate, what are we cooking? We love to do steaks and a lot of simple things, but good quality ingredients. I love



Ashley and Andy McMakin

to go to the Pepper Place market [in downtown Birmingham] on Saturdays. A lot of times I just get stuff there and then decide what to cook from that.”

Growing by the Book

After a year of work, McMakin published the first Ashley Mac’s cookbook, *Ashley Mac’s Kitchen*, in 2023. “I partnered with Hoffman Media, my publisher,” she said. “They were phenomenal and honestly held my hand through the process, through photo shoots, recipe development, and recipe testing.”

The book boasts more than 100 recipes. Many are Ashley Mac’s recipes, but also many that the McMakins enjoy cooking at home with family. As of this writing, the cookbook has shipped to over 36 states. “Now we’re getting lots of people wanting to get Ashley Mac’s in their cities,” McMakin said.

The People Are Big

“There was a book that someone shared with my husband and I one time,” McMakin said, “about a little girl that was building a town of chalk. And so she was drawing on this big outdoor surface with chalk. You get to the end of the book and the people are big and the houses are small.”

The child’s drawing is a metaphor for the McMakins, because they strongly believe that the “house” they are building—a successful restaurant chain serving refined Southern cuisine—is still smaller, perhaps even less important, than the people who are involved.

“For us, people are so important, and everyone has dignity in their work,” McMakin said.

She explained that in the early days of building the business,




when they were not taking home any money, they decided to instead invest in good people.

“Even to this day, our core framework is built around our employees and it’s to improve their lives,” McMakin said. “We are a very employee-centric company and just want to give people opportunities. We are also a second chance employer, so we employ many people who are not employed in other places because of their backgrounds.”

In No Hurry

Now, with a new rebranding, Ashley Mac’s is ready for the future. “As we continue to grow, we’d like to put in some more locations,” McMakin said. “Hopefully Tuscaloosa is on the horizon. Maybe Huntsville, other parts of Auburn, other parts of Alabama. And then honestly, even continuing to build out the Birmingham market.”

But McMakin is in no hurry. “We want to do each location very well,” she explained. “We haven’t franchised, we are all company-owned, and ‘slow and steady wins the race’ is our motto.” 

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Culverhouse Professor, CFO Spouse Give Gift For International Business Fund

In the 1960's-70's, George Westjohn was the first employee for a startup company, a musical instrument distributor. Though he grew up on a small family farm and did not hold a college degree, Westjohn was open-minded and willing to look internationally for business opportunities to help create a successful business in a small town. That business eventually imported musical instruments from Germany, France, and Italy, and then later Japan, Taiwan, and Korea. Even later, the company imported from India, China, and Vietnam. In fact, executives from those countries traveled to the small cornfield town of Effingham, Illinois, exposing Westjohn and his family to a range of cultures, languages, business practices, and lifestyles.

One year, Westjohn brought the whole family to an annual musical instrument trade show in Frankfurt, Germany. Soon after, the 18-year-old son of one of his German suppliers came for an extended stay with the Westjohn family in the U.S.

Westjohn's son, Stan, was 10 at the time.

Understanding Other Cultures to Understand Ourselves

These early experiences led Culverhouse's Dr. Stan Westjohn to pursue research and college teaching in the area of international business. Now an associate professor of international business at Culverhouse and the Bennett Faculty Fellow in International Business, he has led Executive MBA program trips to South Africa, Botswana, Germany, Turkey, Scotland, and Iceland.



Dr. Stan and Beth Westjohn

“*Understanding other cultures helps us better understand ourselves. It prepares us to be more successful in creating mutually beneficial business deals, and promotes innovation, creative thinking, peace and understanding in the world.*”

“It’s not until you experience a place firsthand that you really appreciate how different cultures live,” Westjohn said. “Understanding other cultures helps us better understand ourselves. It prepares us to be more successful in creating mutually beneficial business deals, and promotes innovation, creative thinking, peace and understanding in the world.”

A Gift to Benefit Students

Recently, he and his wife Beth made a gift to establish an international business fund to support the international business program at Culverhouse. “The gift would not have been possible without my amazing wife,” said Westjohn. Beth is a CFO managing a cross-cultural workforce, including a growing team in Mexico, for a global logistics company based in Michigan. “I may know about business theory, but Beth knows about business practice, and I’ve learned so much by observing her career as a corporate controller and later as a CFO who managed two private equity sales.”

Beth credits her husband for coaching her on international and cross-cultural issues, and her mid-career MBA for helping her develop her leadership skills. According to Beth, “we’ve made a great team coaching and counseling each other, and we’re both passionate about education and international business. This is our way of trying to help others realize the benefits of engaging with others around the world.”

The gift is not for research or an endowed professorship. Instead, it is designed for the direct benefit of the students. And it is not only to support international travel, which can be prohibitively expensive for some students, but to also support innovative experiential learning in the classroom.


Innovative Learning in the Classroom

In the international marketing class that Westjohn teaches, students plan how a U.S.-based fast food company could

enter a new international market like India or Colombia. What changes should the company make to the menu or how employees are managed based on culture? Where should they locate? How can they set up a viable supply chain? Are there local suppliers for the beef, chicken, or potatoes?

In the course, students interact directly with consumers and business industry experts in Colombia and India via live synchronous Zoom meetings. Additionally, the international business instructors are working with a vendor who is creating 360-degree videos in these markets, interviewing locals and setting up a virtual reality environment for students to explore.

In a class on cross-cultural communication and teamwork, students participate on global virtual teams with students from other countries, collaborating to solve a real business problem. They are challenged to overcome barriers or differences in cultures, values, and communication styles. They get practical experience coordinating teams across vast geographic distances, including managing inconveniences such as time zones: “Someone’s going to have to stay up for this meeting at nine o’clock at night while someone else is going to have to be up at six o’clock in the morning,” Westjohn explained.

“These are wonderfully valuable experiences for the students, and today we have more foreign-born residents in the U. S. than at any other time in our country’s history,” Westjohn went on. “So even if you never travel outside the country, even if you’re with a company that is not at all involved in international business, there’s a good chance you’re going to encounter people, co-workers, customers, bosses that come from a different cultural background and different cultural perspective. The students in these classes, at least, will be learning the knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in our diverse culture. Roll Tide!” 


THE ORIGINS OF THE CULVERHOUSE AMBASSADORS

An Interview With Laura McDonald

Laura McDonald, a third-generation University of Alabama graduate, recently shared her journey from studying accounting as a Culverhouse College of Business student to becoming senior vice president, chief mortgage and real estate officer at Protective Life Corporation, managing a \$14 billion mortgage loan platform.

In a wide-ranging conversation with David Hart, the outgoing president of the Culverhouse Ambassadors, the official student representatives and front-line recruiters for the college, McDonald focused on her catalyzing role in starting the student organization.

During her time at the university, she and a friend, Tim Lacey, identified a lack of student engagement in the Culverhouse College of Business. They proposed the idea of a student organization to then-Dean Barry Mason, which led to the creation of the Culverhouse Ambassadors, originally known as Bidgood Ambassadors. This organization aimed to enhance the school by recruiting more students and representing the school in an official capacity. McDonald focused on the importance of the organization in building within its members skills in personal branding, effective communication, and relationship cultivation – all factors that still ring true to this day.

She also discussed the importance of giving back and getting involved in causes one is passionate about. For her, involvement with the O'Neill Comprehensive Cancer Center at UAB and membership on the Culverhouse Board of Visitors are just some of the ways she gives back. 



Culverhouse Ambassador David Hart and Laura McDonald.

Watch the conversation between McDonald and Hart on YouTube by scanning the QR code here



LIFE LESSONS

Will Barto's Journey from Culverhouse Ambassador to Executive at Lockton

During the Culverhouse Ambassador interview process, Will Barto (2013) was asked to say the alphabet backwards. Put on the spot, Barto thought fast. He laughed and said, "Anybody who can do that has been practicing because they party way too much."

While Barto enjoyed himself in school, he didn't have a lot of time for such activities. He was admittedly "overcommitted," active in student government and fraternity leadership as well as regular coursework. Still, his off-the-cuff response must have worked, because Barto was accepted into one of the coveted Culverhouse Ambassador slots.

Barto explained that this ability to think on the fly and under pressure is a valuable skill that he was able to hone as an Ambassador. "Being involved with things like Ambassadors makes you practice professional and interpersonal skills that can be tough to refine in college," he said. "Having to give tours to strangers, talk to parents, understand people, communicate our value proposition, even tie a tie in a rush. Those are all things I learned through that process that I'm glad I know and have served me well professionally."

As an Ambassador, one assignment was to welcome a prospective BOV member, Tim Kelly, who was visiting campus and who, like Barto, was from Texas. While showing Kelly around, Barto shared that he had done an internship with a large oil and gas services company in Houston. It turned out to be a client of Kelly's. Barto took Kelly's business card but thought little more of it.

Barto intended to pursue work with his internship company, but had to take a semester off college due to a blown ACL, which

threw off the timing of his graduation. He reached out to Kelly at Lockton and was surprised with an opportunity to interview virtually the next day. It was 2013, and they could not get Skype to work, so it ended up being a FaceTime interview. Barto did not even know what job he was applying for. The finance major was calling around to his stepfather's friends to find out what insurance brokers actually did.


"It was definitely a memorable interview and one I still joke about today. I didn't have any technical or classroom experience in insurance, but they heard me out," Barto said. "They looked at what they thought I'd be good at and ultimately found an interesting niche within our organization that matched my skillset: running financial models to structure complex insurance programs. I expected to be there six months and 11 years later, I'm still here."

Barto was in the financial analyst role for the first couple of years at Lockton, but then, a more exciting opportunity arose, working directly with Kelly. "He had a leadership function as well as a sales role," Barto said. "I got to see him in both capacities, which was extremely educational."

Now the vice president, operations at Lockton, Barto supports the chief operating officer in strategic decision-making. "My job is helping solve problems that don't fit cleanly in the day-to-day functions of an insurance broker," he explained. "The majority of our headcount are technical experts. They're either selling insurance or placing insurance. So [I help] when it comes to things like should we enter a new

geography, should we look at a new vertical, where is the new office going to be?”

As an Associate Board of Visitors member, Barto again gets to interact with Culverhouse Ambassadors. He is amazed by them. “I’m blown away by how polished they are. The public speaking skills, the ability to tell a story and hold an audience, all while covering complex topics. I wish I could present as well as they do. It’s a running joke that the College brings in theater kids because of how well the students show,” he said.

“But they aren’t theater kids,” Barto concluded. “They are a handful of examples of the exceptional students coming out of Culverhouse.” 

“*Being involved with things like Ambassadors makes you practice professional and interpersonal skills that can be tough to refine in college.*”

Will Barto with Culverhouse Dean Kay Palan at the 2024 Culverhouse Alumni Awards celebration.





“

I do believe that when you're exposed to other people who have different backgrounds, even if you still might disagree on a wide variety of range of topics, hopefully it's a constructive disagreement because you respect their experiences.

”

Jennifer and Jefferson Davis at their home in Cincinnati, Ohio.

FROM OUT OF STATE

Jennifer and Jefferson Davis are not alums of The University of Alabama, but they love the institution.

The couple, who met as sophomores at Princeton, went on to start careers that have taken them all over the country, eventually landing in Cincinnati, Ohio, where Jennifer is Procter & Gamble's chief executive officer, health care. Jefferson worked in financial auditing. They started a family along the way – a daughter and two sons. As Jennifer's career ramped up, it made more sense for Jefferson to manage the household.

The children grew up and went off to college. The daughter, the eldest, went to the University of California, Berkeley, and the middle son went to the University of Oregon. The youngest – you can see where this is going – went to The University of Alabama.

Now entering his senior year, Cole Davis is involved in the Investment Banking Academy and Culverhouse Investment Management Group student organizations and spent the past summer interning on Wall Street. He's well on his way to a successful post-graduation career.

His parents have seen the successes he's had at Culverhouse, made possible in part by faculty like John Heins of the College's value investing program.

And last year, the Davises made a generous gift to directly support the students of Culverhouse – to maximize impact and make a difference.

This maximization of impact is essential to the Davises. To them, college is an environment that challenges one's way of thinking about the world and propels personal growth. And they've proven their interest in the power of education through gifts to the institutions that their other children went to, including the high school in Cincinnati that their boys attended.

"We wanted to continue our giving at the college level because that's where you begin to think more broadly, you learn, and you step out of your comfort zone," said Jefferson.


Substantial gifts to the University of Cincinnati to support social justice efforts at UC's College of Arts & Sciences and College of Law were designed to

benefit the largest number of students and foster conversations that help them grow. Similarly, their gift to Culverhouse will directly support student experiential learning initiatives and other opportunities for them to connect.

"I do believe that when you're exposed to other people who have different backgrounds, even if you still might disagree on a wide variety of range of topics, hopefully it's a constructive disagreement because you respect their experiences," said Jefferson.

The Davises also see giving and helping as fundamental to their beliefs as practicing Catholics. "It's incumbent upon us to give if we claim to be who we say we are," says Jefferson.

"You have to back it up sometimes with the appropriate actions."

For these parents of an Alabama student – parents who did not attend the Capstone but see the promise of its academics and the power of the campus to foster community and conversation – they are creating a legacy that stands long after Cole Davis graduates. 

A CELEBRATION FOR INSURANCE

Teaching and research as it relates to risk management and insurance has been a hallmark of the Culverhouse College of Business for over a century, ever since the College's inaugural dean, Dr. Lee Bidgood, taught its first insurance course in 1921.

The College would eventually become home to the International Insurance Society (IIS) Insurance Hall of Fame in 1987, thanks to the leadership

of Dr. John Bickley, a professor at Culverhouse renowned for his teaching excellence and industry relationships and the first to hold the Alabama Insurance Industry Chair of Insurance. The International Insurance Society, based in New York City, is the world's most prestigious industry organization. Members represent global insurance leaders, international regulatory authorities, and worldwide insurance scholars from over 90 countries.

With the founding support of over 400 individuals and companies from 50 countries, the purpose of the Insurance Hall of Fame was and continues to be to honor fundamental innovation in the insurance industry.

In 1992, the College opened the Insurance Hall of Fame Museum in Mary Hewell Alston Hall; the building also features the Insurance Hall of Fame Classroom. That same year, the Insurance Hall of Fame Portrait Gallery was established within the aforementioned classroom to house the Hall of Fame Laureate portraits

collection in cooperation with the International Insurance Society.

In 2015, Dai-ichi Life Insurance Co., whose North American subsidiary Protective Life Corporation is located in Birmingham, established the Insurance Hall of Fame endowed support fund. Recently, the Insurance Hall of Fame, Portrait Gallery, and select museum artifacts were relocated to the Don James Quiet Study in Culverhouse's Hewson Hall, the new 108,000-square-foot building anchoring the western edge of The University of Alabama campus.

On October 10, 2023, insurance industry executives and Culverhouse leadership converged in Hewson Hall for a rededication of the historical collection in the new space that included a ribbon-cutting and remarks from Culverhouse Dean Kay Palan; Madeline Lang, president of Gamma Iota Sigma, Epsilon Chapter, an international professional fraternity for student interest in insurance, risk management, and actuarial science as professions; C. Dennis Hughes, Esq.,


“

Let us celebrate and honor this Insurance Hall of Fame Museum with an appreciation of the accomplishments of those that have come before us, and let those accomplishments serve as an inspiration for students and future professionals in service to this industry and society.

”



chair of the Alabama Insurance Planning Commission; and Dr. Karen Epermanis, the John and Mary Louise Loftis Bickley Endowed Teaching Chair in Insurance and Financial Services.

Dr. Epermanis, in her remarks ahead of a champagne toast, said, “Let us celebrate and honor this Insurance Hall of Fame Museum with an appreciation of the accomplishments of those that have come before us, and let those accomplishments serve as an inspiration for students and future professionals in service to this industry and society.” 



Scenes from the International Insurance Society Insurance Hall of Fame ribbon cutting.



VISIT OUR NEWSROOM



Discover more about Culverhouse alumni and students, read research updates, and download annual reports in the Culverhouse newsroom.
culverhouse.ua.edu/newsroom






Lonnie's Last Lecture

At the conclusion of every semester, Dr. Lonnie Strickland gives his “How to Make \$5 Million” lecture to his GBA 490 Strategic Management students. The lecture is instructive in how to save, invest, and avoid the temptations of a brand-new car.

The real lesson is at the end when Dr. Strickland explains that it's not about becoming rich, but giving back to one's community makes one truly wealthy.

This year marked the occasion of Dr. Strickland's final lecture – he retired at the end of the spring semester.

Leading up to Dr. Lonnie Strickland's final lecture at Culverhouse, former students shared some of the many ways their lives were impacted by his teaching. Discover more at the QR code. 



BY THE BAY


Syncing Up in Silicon Valley

“We are all capable of reaching our potential as individuals, better helping those who come after us,” said KarMiya Little, a first-generation student at Culverhouse. Last fall, Little and a select group of fellow first-generation business students embarked on an experiential learning trip to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Quoc Hoang, director of experiential learning at Culverhouse, organized the trip, connecting Culverhouse’s first-generation students with UA alumni working throughout the Bay Area.

“San Francisco has always been a place that advances big ideas enabled by technology – I wanted our students to really experience that and discover how their academic studies can lead them towards unique career pathways,” Hoang said.

The group – six students in total – started their meetings with UA alums and their colleagues at the downtown San Francisco office of Goldman Sachs. After their meetings at Goldman Sachs concluded, the students headed just a few blocks away to the offices of Quince, an e-commerce clothing and lifestyle startup. They also stopped by Adobe and other firms throughout the area.

Little expressed that she was captivated by the dynamic city, seemingly filled with endless opportunities to innovate or start businesses. Moreover, the insightful discussions held with the alumni brought about a wide array of advice, from what studies students would benefit most from to focusing on how to build confidence in an entry-level position. 



See a complete recap of the trip by scanning the QR code.



Above: Uyen Truong, Jaiden Malcom, Tyler Le, Shaliyah Johnson, Hannah Wells, and KarMiya Little at Adobe headquarters.



The Tide Continues to Rise

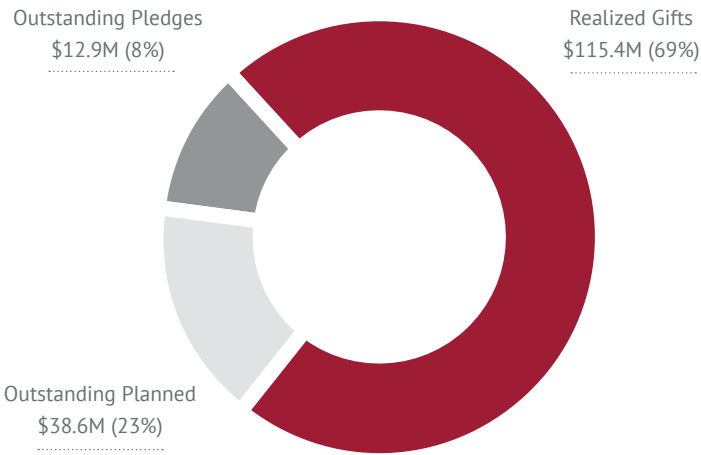
\$166,887,550

Total Culverhouse Gifts and Commitments

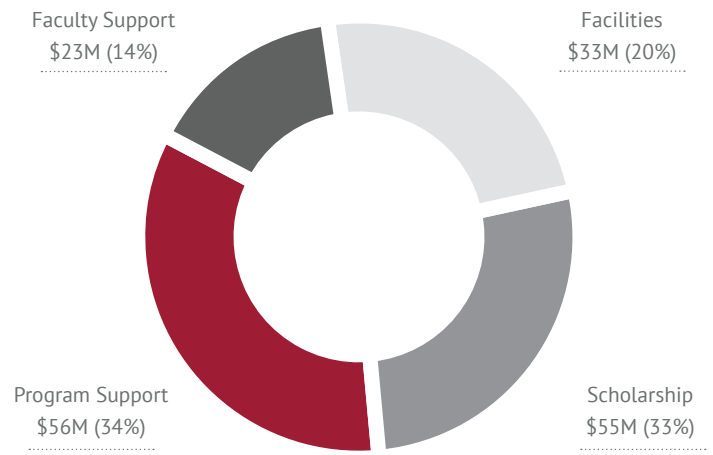
October 1, 2016 - August 9, 2024

Campaign Goal	Percent to Goal	Total Donors	Gifts
\$200.0M	83%	6,162	18,877

Support by Type



Support by Area



First Time Donors	State of Alabama Donors	New Scholarships	Alumni Donors	UA Faculty/Staff Donors	New Faculty Support
1,218	3,448	130	3,846	196	19

The Rising Tide 2.0, the \$1.8 billion campaign for The University of Alabama, is focused on furthering UA's mission of exemplary teaching, research, and service. Culverhouse's target as part of Rising Tide is \$200 million supporting efforts to transform learning, society, and thought leadership within the College.



Get involved with the Culverhouse College of Business. Contact Nick Foster, executive director of development, at nfoster@ua.edu or 205-348-3687 to get started.

Make a gift to Culverhouse on our website at culverhouse.ua.edu.

— A *YEAR* IN *REVIEW* —



JUNE

Culverhouse Announces Business Cybersecurity Bachelor's

Culverhouse announced a new undergraduate degree offering in business cybersecurity that helps grads understand the technical aspects of cybersecurity, as well as business operations, risk management, and compliance. | [1](#)

JUNE

Culverhouse Summer Programs

High schoolers came to campus for Culverhouse's summer programs – the Diversity in Business Bridge Program, Minerva Young Women in Business Summer Program, and the Marillyn A. Hewson Cybersecurity Summer Camp.

JULY

Welcoming Our SEC Colleagues

Culverhouse hosted the annual SEC Business School Advancement Conference, welcoming colleagues from across the conference to Tuscaloosa to learn from and connect with each other. | [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)



AUGUST

Accelerating Student Entrepreneurs

Culverhouse's Alabama Entrepreneur Institute (AEI) hosted the annual summer Crimson Entrepreneurship Academy, a nine-week pre-accelerator for UA students. CEA provides selected student entrepreneurs with a stipend that gives them an opportunity to work on their businesses full time. The 2023 cohort included 26 students with a variety of business ideas. | [5](#)

SEPTEMBER

Going Platinum

A team of STEM Path to the MBA and GBA 172 students became the first-ever freshmen to win a platinum ranking for repurposing a NASA spectroscopy sensor patent originally used for geological purposes into an early stroke detection device named Brainguard. | [6](#)

SEPTEMBER

Grace Hopper Conference

Eleven Culverhouse students traveled to the annual Grace Hopper Celebration, connecting with employers and securing interviews and job offers! | [7](#) [8](#)



SEPTEMBER 9

Sharing Experiences

Hundreds of Culverhouse alumni and friends returned to campus to cheer on the Crimson Tide as they played the University of Texas at Austin. | 9



SEPTEMBER 15

A Day for Data

The Culverhouse Business Analytics Symposium, an annual celebration of the power of data in business, welcomed hundreds of data-focused practitioners and strategic thinkers to campus to learn about the latest innovations in the field. | 10



SEPTEMBER

Ranked Among the Best

In *U.S. News and World Report's* 2023-2024 "Best Undergraduate Business Programs," the Culverhouse College of Business at The University of Alabama retained its position as one of the country's top public business schools at 29th among all public offerings and 47th overall. | 11



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SEPTEMBER 21-22

Fall Board of Visitors Meeting

Members of the Culverhouse Board of Visitors returned to Tuscaloosa for the fall meeting featuring presentations from the College's Real Estate and Risk Management, Insurance, and Actuarial Science programs | 12

SEPTEMBER 27

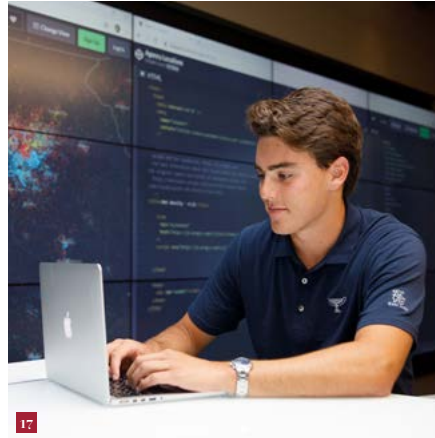
Sharing Her Journey to Regions

On September 27, Daisy Mendoza, vice-president and branch manager at Regions Bank, spoke to Culverhouse students about her career as part of Hispanic Heritage Month. | 13

OCTOBER

MCA goes to DC

Fourteen students from Culverhouse's Management Consulting Academy (MCA) traveled to Washington, D.C. to meet with consulting firms and network with alumni within the city. During the trip, they received valuable insight into the consulting industry while connecting on their experiences with alumni. They even got a tour of the White House thanks to alum Royce Dickerson. | 14 15



OCTOBER

Finishing First at Fisher

Culverhouse first-generation student Joshua Davis and three other fellow undergraduate students – Deborah Oberkor, Jose Andres, and Anai Correa – traveled to Columbus, Ohio to attend the KeyBank and The Ohio State University Fisher College of Business leadership symposium. Davis’ team won the case competition along with \$7,500 in scholarship money. | 16

OCTOBER

UA Receives Google Cybersecurity Clinic Fund Support

The University of Alabama received \$500,000 in grant funding and additional support from Google’s Cybersecurity Clinics Fund to help expand operations and drive forward research and teaching as it relates to cybersecurity. | 17

OCTOBER 26

Women Talk Wealth in NYC

During Fall Break, sophomores visited New York City, connecting with top firms like The Carlyle Group, Solomon Partners, Point72, and Goldman Sachs. This experience was made possible by the dedication and support of alumni such as Ken Tidwell, Cathy Leonhardt, Richard Adams, and Lauren Hardison, whose contributions have strengthened UA’s presence on Wall Street. | 18 19



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NOVEMBER

Burcu Keskin Honored with UA's Blackmon-Moody Award

Dr. Burcu B. Keskin, professor of operations management in the Culverhouse College of Business, was the recipient of the 2023 Blackmon-Moody Outstanding Professor Award. | 20

NOVEMBER 4

CES Tailgate vs. LSU

Alumni and friends rallied together to witness a SEC victory over LSU! | 21 22

NOVEMBER 8

First-Gen Week

First-Gen Week provided a platform for students to connect with peers who share similar experiences and backgrounds. Throughout the week, participants engaged in activities and events that highlighted available resources, fostering a supportive community. | 23



NOVEMBER 14

Hortense and Hubert Lowder Lectures

The Lowder Lecture Series delivered double inspiration with Hubert Joly, former Best Buy CEO, and Hortense le Gentil, leadership coach and author. Joly highlighted the power of purpose in work, while Hortense focused on authentic, empathetic leadership. Their insights left a lasting impact on our students! |

24 25

DECEMBER

Fall 2023 Commencement

505 new graduates of the Culverhouse College of Business walked across the stage at Coleman Coliseum at the Fall 2023 Commencement Ceremony. |

26

JANUARY

Alums Claim Six Young Alumni Awards

UA's National Alumni Association honored six Culverhouse and Manderson alums with the prestigious 18 Under 31 Young Alumni Award. The awardees are: Leigh Brinkerhoff: BA, BS '16, Robert Grady: BS '16, MBA '17, MS '17, Captain Ryan Jacobs: MS '22, Caleb Marshall Lamb: BS '15, MAcc '16, Martha Milner: BS '19, and Jack Roberts: BS '17, MS '18.



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JANUARY

Tidwell, Real Estate Program Ranked In Top Ten For Research Productivity

The real estate program at The University of Alabama and one of its faculty members, Dr. Alan Tidwell, were ranked in the top ten according to worldwide rankings that measure research productivity in the top three real estate journals. | 27

FEBRUARY

CIMG Reunion

The day before the Capstone Student Investment Conference, UA leadership, Culverhouse alumni, and students involved with the Capstone Investment Management Group congregated in Hewson Hall's Don M. James Quiet Study. | 28 29

FEBRUARY

CSIC

The Capstone Student Investment Conference returned with over 300 alumni, students, and friends coming to campus to hear leading voices in finance and investing like Dan Davidowitz of Polen Capital and C.T. Fitzpatrick of Vulcan Value Partners. | 30



31

FEBRUARY

IDA-Led Project Recognized By AACSB

AACSB International announced that a program managed by the Institute of Data and Analytics at the Culverhouse College of Business was included as one of its Innovations That Inspire for 2024. “Promoting Societal Impacts through Data Insights and Collaboration” is about IDA’s spearheading of an effort to combat the opioid epidemic via data-driven approaches. | 31



32

FEBRUARY

BYU Case Competition

Manderson MBA students competed in a case competition at Brigham Young University, focusing on integrating employees’ faith with business goals. After 24 hours of intense work, the team advanced to the finals, finishing second and earning \$3,000 in scholarships. | 32



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FEBRUARY 22

ACREcom

The Alabama Center for Real Estate’s ACREcom 2024 brought together nearly 450 attendees and 20 exhibitors from various industries for a successful event. The conference covered everything from an economic update to a discussion about A.I. and its potential impact on the real estate industry. | 33



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FEBRUARY 23

CAAAN

The Culverhouse African American Alumni Network (CAAAN) Conference brought together African American alumni and current students to celebrate graduates and honor the outstanding achievements of Culverhouse's African American alumni. | 34 35

MARCH 2

UA Innovate Hackathon

Teams had 24 hours to design and implement a technology solution in cybersecurity, data analytics, and prototype innovation in the UA Innovate Hackathon and Innovation Challenge. Participants showcased their skills and competed for a chance to win \$10k in prizes. | 36

MARCH

Women in Business

The Culverhouse Women in Business Conference brought together alumnae, professional women, and current female students for a day of inspiration and development. Sessions covered topics like networking, branding, entrepreneurship, and overcoming workplace challenges, including Q&A with honorees Cindy Martin, Yolanda Sullivan, and Charli Matthews. | 37 38



MARCH

Spring BOV

The Culverhouse College of Business Board of Visitors descended upon Gulf Shores, Alabama for the spring meeting. Among the discussions and committee meetings was a presentation from students and staff involved in the College's UA Business LEAD program and student-focused business accelerator. | [39](#)

APRIL 11

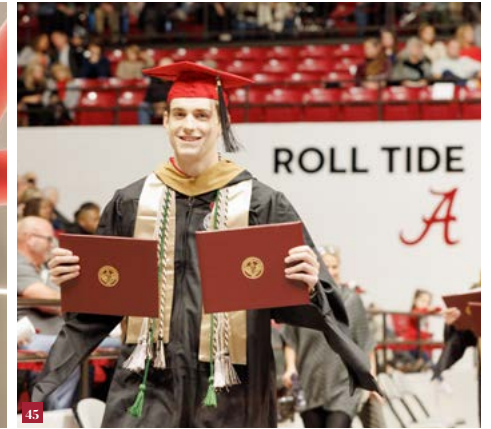
Aldag

The Alabama Entrepreneurship Institute hosted the annual Edward K. Aldag, Jr. Student Business Plan competition with 60 teams competing for nearly \$100,000 in prizes. | [40](#)

APRIL

Manderson MBA Ranked 29th In Nation Among Public Programs For 2024

U.S. News & World Report ranked the MBA 55th in the nation for the second year in a row in its 2024-2025 "Best Graduate Schools" list and 29th among offerings from public institutions. | [41](#)



APRIL

LEAD at Kaulton

At the invitation of Tuscaloosa's mayor, Culverhouse's student-led LEADnxt program went to the city's Kaulton Park neighborhood to assist in a clean-up effort. | 42

APRIL

J. Craig Smith Integrity Award

Michah Hodes and Sam Guerrero were named the J. Craig Smith Integrity award recipients for 2024. The award honors students embodying J. Craig Smith's integrity and compassion in both business and personal realms. Recipients demonstrate strong character, rigorous ethical reasoning, and a dedication to enhancing community well-being. | 43

MAY

Spring Commencement

Celebrating the Class of 2023-2024! We proudly welcomed 2,707 undergraduate and 500 graduate students into our alumni family. As they carry forward our legacy of excellence, we look forward to the impact they will make in their future endeavors. | 44 45



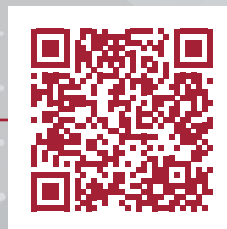
2024 ALUMNI AWARDS

As part of a fellowship 60,000-strong, these alumni are advocates for our programs and help shepherd future students our way. They serve as mentors and sounding boards. And they challenge convention and urge on change.

EACH OF OUR ALUMNI HAVE CHARTED a unique course on their way to success. Some are in the early stages of their careers or have made an imprint over the course of many decades. The common bond is a deep level of respect from their colleagues and fellow alumni that has been earned through demonstrated hard work, devotion to the things that matter, and commitment to Culverhouse.

On April 12, Culverhouse celebrated the contributions of a group of exceptional alumni, all of whom have demonstrated devotion to their alma mater.

Our alumni are trailblazers within their industries and continue to make a positive impact on the world. We are proud of their innovations and accomplishments! To learn more about the 2024 awardees, scan the QR code below or visit alumni.culverhouse.ua.edu.





**OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
JOHN BASCHAB



**OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
CATHY LEONHARDT



**YOUNG ALUMNI
OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
WILL BARTO



**YOUNG ALUMNI
OUTSTANDING
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
CORINNE JOHNSON



**OUTSTANDING
SERVICE AWARD**
PALMER WHITING



**ACCOUNTING ALUMNI
LEADERSHIP AWARD**
VIRGINIA STATON



**ECONOMICS, FINANCE
AND LEGAL STUDIES
ALUMNI LEADERSHIP
AWARD**
JAMES KEMP



**INFORMATION
SYSTEMS, STATISTICS,
AND MANAGEMENT
SCIENCE ALUMNI
LEADERSHIP AWARD**
CHRIS BAYHAM



**MANAGEMENT
ALUMNI LEADERSHIP
AWARD**
JAMES FOWLER



**MARKETING ALUMNI
LEADERSHIP AWARD**
DAVIS BLAIR

Connect with Culverhouse in 2024 and 2025

2024

Fall 2024 Board of Visitors Meeting

September 5-6 | The University of Alabama

Lowder Lecture Series: Tom Hough

September 17 | The University of Alabama

Lowder Lecture Series: Jennifer Davis

September 26 | The University of Alabama

Culverhouse Executives Society Pre-game Picnic | UA vs. University of Georgia

September 28 | Hewson Hall Courtyard,
The University of Alabama

Culverhouse Business Analytics Symposium

October 4-5 | The University of Alabama

Barry Mason Alumni Award Lecture: Donald M. James

October 10 | The University of Alabama

Tuscaloosa Culverhouse Executives Society Networking Reception

October 15 | The University Club

Culverhouse Executives Society Pre-game Picnic | UA vs. University of Missouri — Homecoming

October 26 | Hewson Hall Courtyard,
The University of Alabama

Alabama Business Hall of Fame

November 14 | Haven, Birmingham, Alabama

Mobile Culverhouse Executives Society Networking Reception

December 11 | Location TBD

Birmingham Culverhouse Executives Society Networking Reception

December 12 | Location TBD

2025

Culverhouse African American Alumni Network Student Development Conference

February 28 | Location TBD

Culverhouse Investment Management Group Reunion

February 28 | The University of Alabama

Capstone Student Investment Conference (CSIC)

March 1 | The University of Alabama

Spring 2025 Board of Visitors Meeting

March 20-21 | Point Clear, Alabama

Women in Business Conference

March 28 | Location TBD

Contact Lottie Pearce at lbpearce@ua.edu for more info about the above events. Spring 2025 Culverhouse Executives Society events are not yet scheduled.

Mr. Charles E. Adair	Mr. Nathan Cox Jr.	Mr. William Hewson	Mrs. Karole F. Lloyd	Mrs. Lana Sellers
Mr. Michael Adair	Mr. Jordan Crow	Mrs. Marilyn A. Hewson	Ms. Kelsi Long	Mr. Dennis W. Shuler
Mrs. Anita Allcorn-Walker	Mr. Bruce Culpepper	Mr. Peter T. Hodo III	Mr. Frank Lott	Mrs. Jennifer Silhan
Mr. Owen W. Aronov	Mr. Frank D'Amico III	Mr. James S. Holbrook Jr.	Mr. Peter L. Lowe	Mr. Steve Sledge
Mr. Michael Bailey	Mrs. Kate Danella	Mr. Jamie M. Holman	Mr. W. Davis Malone III	Mr. Mark Smith
Ms. Taylor Baker	Ms. Leigh Davis	Ms. Busy Hopper Deeter	Mr. Allen Mayer	Mr. Mark Clay Smith
Mr. William Barnhill	Mr. Richard Davis	Mr. Kamal Hosein	Ms. Laura McDonald	Mr. Phillip D. Smith
Mr. William M. Barto	Mr. G. Hilton Dean	Mr. G. Thomas Hough	Mr. Thomas E. McMillan III	Ms. Ti Keisha "TK" Smith
Mr. Brian Barze	Mrs. Jill Deer	Mr. Daniel Hughes	Mr. Thomas E. McMillan Jr.	Mr. Harvey L. Snider Jr.
Mr. John Baschab	Ms. Lessley Dennington	Mr. Doug Hulsey	Mr. Christopher C. Melton Sr.	Mrs. Lori Snodgrass
Mr. Ted Baudendistel	Mr. Samuel A. Di Piazza Jr.	Mr. J. Scott Hunter	Mr. D. Stephen Menzies	Mr. Bryan Statham
Mr. Jeffrey Bayer	Mr. Chris Dietrick	Mr. Peter Inge	Ms. Angi Meyers	Mr. Daniel A. Staley
Mr. Christopher A. Bayham	Mr. J. Mark Dunning	Mr. Robert Ingram	Mrs. Karen R. Miller	Mr. William H. Stender Jr.
Mr. Daniel E. Beggs	Mr. Mark Earley	Ms. Aly James	Mr. Mark Millsap	Mr. Joe Stough
Mr. Matthew Benak	Mr. Claude Edwards	Mr. Donald M. James	Mr. Chris Mitchell	Mr. Timothy E. Stuart
Mr. Donald W. Birdwell	Mr. Andy Eidson	Ms. Corinne Johnson	Mr. Ron Morrison	Mr. Matthew Studer
Ms. September Blain	Ms. Rebekah Elgin-Council	Mrs. Hope H. Johnson	Mr. Larry E. Newman	Mr. Yamah Tabibi
Mr. John Bochnak	Mrs. Wendy Evesque	Mr. Joseph H. Johnson	Mr. Rob Norwood	Mr. John R. Thomas
Mr. Young J. Boozer III	Mr. Gary P. Fayard	Mr. Lawrence Johnson	Ms. Leslie O'Harrow	Mr. R. Waid Thompson
Ms. Wendy Boyd	Ms. Cara Fields	Mr. Robert Jolly	Mrs. Lily Overton	Mr. C. Reynolds Thompson III
Mr. Christopher Boyle	Mr. C.T. Fitzpatrick	Mr. James R. Jones	Mr. Timothy M. Parker Jr.	Mr. Ken Douglas Tidwell
Mr. C. Clayton Bromberg	Mr. Andrew Fowler	Mr. Patrick Jones	Mr. Geoffrey Patton	Mrs. Candice Todd
Mr. William W. Brooke	Mrs. Cherie Fuzzell	Mr. Carl E. Jones Jr.	Mr. J. Jordan Plaster	Mr. John M. Turner Jr.
Mr. Ronald G. Bruno	Mr. Johnny Garrison	Mr. D. Paul Jones Jr.	Mr. David Popwell	Mr. William T. Ventress Jr.
Mr. Keith Buchanan	Mrs. Leslie Gattuso	Ms. Kourtney Kellen	Mr. William M. Proctor	Mr. Reginald J. Walker
Mr. Kyle Buchanan	Mr. Ted W. Giles	Mr. Kenneth Kelly	Mrs. Ashley Regner	Mr. Myles Ward
Mr. Stephen Buko	Mr. Wayne H. Gillis	Mr. Timothy F. Kelly	Ms. Susan O. Rheney	Mr. Cade Warner
Mr. Richard A. Burch	Mr. Greg Graves	Mr. James M. Kemp Jr.	Mr. John H. Roberts	Mr. Palmer G. Whiting
Mrs. Karen Jones Campbell	Mr. W. Stanley Gregory	Mrs. Jenifer Kimbrough	Mr. Terry Roberts	Mr. Charles Wilkinson
Mr. Samuel Carden	Mrs. Sara Gresham	Mr. Taylor Knott	Mr. Darryl T. Robinson	Mr. Duncan F. Williams
Mr. Todd Hinton Carpenter	Mr. Alan Grissom	Mr. Arie Kouandjio	Mr. Richard H. Robinson	Mr. Jackson Williams
Mr. Scott Cloud	Ms. Ann Haas	Mr. Caleb Lamb	Mr. Michael D. Ross	Mr. Thomas J. Willings
Mr. J. Weldon Cole	Mr. O. B. Grayson Hall Jr.	Ms. Christine Lassister	Mr. David Ruggles	Mr. Nicholas Willis
Mr. Ryan Coleman	Mr. Blake Hamby	Mr. Chad Lavender	Mr. Matt Salmonson	Mr. Huey Wilson
Mr. J. Houston Cook	Ms. Kathleen Hammons	Mr. Goodman Ledyard	Mr. Ernest Scarbrough	Mr. Kemmons Wilson Jr.
Mr. David J. Cooper Sr.	Mrs. Teresa Harmon	Ms. Sherrie LeMier-Potts	Mr. Michael P. Scott	Mr. Spence Wilson Jr.
Mr. Doug Cox	Mr. Brad Hayes	Ms. Cathy Leonhardt	Mr. William O. Scroggins	Mr. Matt Witter
Mr. Chandler F. Cox Jr.	Mr. Ken Haynes	Mr. Derek Lewis	Ms. Alma Gates Scroggins	Mr. Bryan Yokley

Board of Visitors

2022-2027 Strategic Plan

Updated at the end of 2021, the Culverhouse College of Business strategic plan outlines the College's major goals, specific objectives, strategies for achieving those objectives, and specific annual plans.

Provide transformational learning experiences both in and outside the classroom.

Adapt and innovate curriculum, educational opportunities, and programs based on College strengths and the needs of a dynamic marketplace.

Develop and maintain distinctive academic programs that attract students and for which Culverhouse is nationally known.

Expand students' involvement with signature immersive learning opportunities.

Develop and implement a comprehensive executive education program that provides opportunities for lifelong learning and a platform for co-creating and sharing learning with all stakeholders.

Expand accessibility of graduate programs.

Evaluate doctoral education college-wide and identify/implement changes that will strengthen programs.

Provide an inclusive and supportive collegiate experience that enables students to achieve their fullest potential.

Increase undergraduate and graduate student enrollment while shifting the incoming student demographic breakdown closer to that of the state.

Improve the rates of student retention, persistence, and graduation by focusing on high-impact practices and increasing the personal connection to our students.

Create a student-centered hub that provides comprehensive, individualized support and professional development for all Culverhouse students.

Enhance impact and visibility of our thought leadership, discovery, and knowledge creation.

Build on current capabilities across the College and embrace impactful research and scholarship.

Provide infrastructure, funding, and developmental support that strengthens and grows the research capabilities and programs to meet the critical needs of the key constituents.

Foster research capabilities among undergraduate and graduate students.

Showcase Culverhouse's research capabilities and impact.

Cultivate an inclusive community where respect for individual contributions is a core value, enacted by all.

Recruit, retain, develop, and reward outstanding faculty, staff, and administrators to work with current and future generations of Culverhouse students.

Elevate diversity and inclusion as cultural values of the Culverhouse College of Business.

Develop effective channels to ensure an engaging and open working environment while encouraging continued growth and celebrating the accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students.

Leverage outreach and external relations activities to positively impact individuals, communities, and business.

Establish new and strengthen existing relationships with external constituents that help Culverhouse meet its mission and support our values.

Strengthen existing relationships with alumni and increase the number of alumni who are actively engaged with the College.

Enhance presence of Culverhouse as a top business school and solidify our reputation through marketing and communication efforts.

Increase involvement in endeavors and partnerships resulting in positive societal impact, especially improving quality of life and economic development in the underserved and Black-Belt regions in Alabama.

Increase the awareness, utilization, and impact of externally-facing College centers.

Grow and manage financial, physical, and virtual (technology) resources to support the College mission and strategic initiatives.

Implement processes and tools to increase efficient use of resources.

Increase financial resources.

Prepare contingency plans for any potential disruptions to College operations and resources.

Measures of Success

Rankings and Academics

Continuous upward movement in undergraduate and MBA rankings

Undergraduate: Top 25 public business schools

MBA: Top 20 public MBA programs

Recognized Centers of Excellence

Student Growth

Increased undergraduate & graduate enrollments

Increased graduation & retention rates

Increased placement rates

Research

Consistent production of high quality & impactful research

Increased academic publications

Increased external funding proposals and awards

Culture

Increased diversity among students, staff & faculty

Increased faculty & staff retention

Increased climate of inclusivity

Outreach

Enhanced collaborative partnerships with business & industry

Increased alumni engagement

Focused initiatives impacting society

Sustainability

Increased financial resources

Enhanced physical resources

Continuous AACSB accreditation for business and accounting

SIX INDUCTED INTO THE ALABAMA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

THE ALABAMA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME inducted six new members for 2023 in a black-tie ceremony on November 9 at Haven in downtown Birmingham, attended by about 450 individuals.

The inductees for 2023 included:

Herman E. Bulls is vice chairman, Americas, as well as international director and the founder of Jones Lang LaSalle's (JLL) highly acclaimed public institutions practice, which he started to serve governmental and higher education clients. In addition to his current work at JLL, Bulls is the founder, president, and CEO of Bulls Advisory Group, a real estate advisory and management consulting firm. Born in Florence, Alabama, he served in the United States Army after graduating from the United States Military Academy at West Point with an engineering degree and completing the Army's Airborne and Ranger courses.

Thomas "Tom" Hough spent most of his career working for Ernst & Young in positions of escalating responsibility. By his retirement in 2014, he was leading EY's Americas Assurance Practice, serving on the firm's executive board and a member of the Global Assurance Executive Committee. He graduated from The University of Alabama with bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting.

Phillip McWane is chairman of McWane, Inc., the Birmingham, Alabama-based manufacturer of ductile iron products such as pipes, hydrants, and other critical goods used in construction and water infrastructure. Under

McWane's leadership, the company, a cornerstone of the Alabama business community, became a market leader. He graduated from Auburn University with a bachelor's degree in industrial management.

James W. "Jimmy" Rane is the founder, chairman, and CEO of Great Southern Wood Preserving, Inc., a company he founded in Abbeville, Alabama, in 1970 and which has since grown to become one of the world's largest manufacturers of pressure-treated lumber. He graduated high school from Marion Military Institute. He earned his bachelor's in business administration from Auburn University, as well as a J.D. from the Samford University Cumberland School of Law.

Frank Stitt III is the owner and executive chef of Highlands Bar and Grill, Bottega Restaurant, Bottega Café, and Chez Fonfon in Birmingham, Alabama. Stitt's culinary journey began to take shape when he moved to San Francisco, and he honed his kitchen skills at various Bay Area restaurants before returning to his home state of Alabama to launch Highlands in 1982. He attended Tufts University and the University of California, Berkeley.

Michael D. Thompson is chairman of the board of Thompson Tractor Co., a dealer of heavy earthmoving machinery and engines through the South, and president and CEO of Fairway Investments. Fairway manages millions of square feet of retail, office, multi-family, hospitality, and industrial property across the country. He earned a bachelor's degree in general business from The University of Alabama.

Mike Ross, chairman of the Hall of Fame Board, welcomed attendees to the event and provided the invocation. Dr. Kay M. Palan, dean of the Culverhouse College of Business, introduced each inductee to the stage after the playing of videos highlighting the individual inductees' careers and community contributions.

Some of the distinguished guests in attendance included area higher-ed leadership, including Dr. Stuart Bell, president of The University of Alabama, Beck Taylor, president of Samford University, and Dr. Ray Watts, president of The University of Alabama at Birmingham, as well as University of Alabama System Chancellor Finis St. John IV. Congressman Robert Aderholt and former Senator Richard Shelby also attended the ceremony.

Several former inductees from over the years also attended the event.

ABOUT THE ALABAMA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME

Founded in 1973, the Alabama Business Hall of Fame honors, preserves and perpetuates the names and outstanding accomplishments of business personalities who have brought lasting



THE 2024 ALABAMA BUSINESS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

The Alabama Business Hall of Fame Class of 2024 will be inducted in a ceremony on Thursday, November 14 at Haven in Birmingham. The inductees are:


Mr. Rob Burton of Birmingham, AL; Mr. Raymond J. Harbert of Birmingham, AL; Mr. Thomas Ashley Harris of Hope Hull, AL; Dr. Marnix E. Heersink of Dothan, AL; Mr. Thomas H. Lowder of Birmingham, AL; Mr. Claude B. Nielsen of Birmingham, AL; and Mr. Nick Saban of Tuscaloosa, AL.

fame to the State of Alabama, whether it occurred in Alabama or not.

The Alabama Business Hall of Fame is located in Hewson Hall on The University of Alabama campus.

The Hall of Fame is governed by a 26-member Board of Directors. This body established the criteria for selecting inductees, and determines the eligibility and election process for how these candidates shall be elected to the Hall of Fame. All candidates must have been deceased or in retirement at least three years, except for those who are 65 years of age and older, and still active in business. To be eligible for selection, an individual must have made a significant impact on the development of their community and state by promoting the free enterprise system and entrepreneurship.

This board of directors is composed of Alabama Business Hall of Fame members, business leaders who are alumni and/or affiliates of a diverse representation of the state's higher education institutions, and each congressional district in the state of Alabama.

We are extremely proud of this group of distinguished Alabama business personalities to be inducted into the Alabama Business Hall of Fame. Individually and collectively, these individuals have greatly influenced the economic, political, and cultural aspects of life in the State of Alabama and the United States. 

Top row, clockwise: Mr. Herman E. Bulls; Mr. Tom Hough; Mr. C. Phillip McWane; Mr. James W. Rane; Mr. Frank Stitt III; and Mr. Michael D. Thompson.

Middle Row: Mike Ross, chair of the Alabama Business Hall of Fame board, welcomed guests and inductees.

Bottom Row: Scenes from the induction ceremony.

NOMINATE AN INDUCTEE


The Alabama Business Hall of Fame recognizes those who have brought fame and honor to the state of Alabama through not only their achievements as business leaders and entrepreneurs, but their ardent commitment to civic leadership, philanthropy, and humanitarianism.

All inductees are heavily committed to their communities, serving in leadership roles on boards, donating their time and resources to causes, and inspiring future generations of business leaders.

To nominate someone to the Alabama Business Hall of Fame, contact Courtney Miller at courtney.miller@ua.edu. The criteria are:

1. A candidate must have by his or her business accomplishments, whether they occurred in Alabama or not, brought fame and honor to the state of Alabama.
2. He/She should have made a significant impact on the development of their community and state by promoting the free enterprise system and entrepreneurship; by demonstrating civic leadership, philanthropy and humanitarianism toward fellow citizens.
3. All candidates must have been in retirement at least three (3) years, except those who are 65 years of age and older prior to the date of induction and who are still active in their careers.



ALABAMA  BUSINESS
Hall of Fame





PART
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