

MU *today*

M A G A Z I N E

Donor Appreciation Issue | Fall 2024

Loyalty

THROUGH TREASURE:

Commitments of Past and Present
Create the Bright Future
for Methodist University

*(The third of a three-part series
showcasing MU Loyalty through
Time, Talent, and Treasure)*



INSIDE:

Historical Event and Announcement for the School of Medicine
PLUS: Highlights from Homecoming 2024 • Class Notes & More!

Monarch HOMECOMING 2024

Monarchs Making (and sharing) Memories

Methodist University's Homecoming 2024 was nothing short of remarkable, weaving together threads of history, celebration, and fun into a weekend full of unforgettable moments and memories.

The iconic weekend, Oct. 18-20, brought alumni, students, family, faculty, staff, and friends together on campus for a time jam-packed with signature events such as the Alumni Awards Ceremony (*winners listed on next page*), Athletics Hall of Fame Induction (*inductees listed on next page*), a Candlelight Memorial Service, Black Alumni Chapter (BAC) Scholarship Brunch, alumni athletic events, class reunions, and more. Monarchs also had an opportunity to tailgate before cheering on our women's soccer and football teams.

"When I first started playing soccer as a child, I never imagined this moment would come true," said Ruth Keegan '95 (women's soccer), who was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame. "The journey has been filled with hard work, dedication and countless unforgettable memories."

Although MU always stays true to its Homecoming traditions, the University also found several other ways to begin new ones by including the men's and women's lacrosse alumni games, BAC Game Night, and a 50+ Class Year Reunion.

With this year's Homecoming come and gone, it is never too early to think about next year's festivities. Stay tuned to MU's social media accounts to find out the Homecoming dates for 2025. ■





PICTURE PERFECT

Scan the QR Code below, or visit methodist.edu/news, to find a feature story on Homecoming and a link to dozens of photos taken throughout Homecoming 2024.



Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2024

Women's Tennis:
Kaitlin (Flaherty)
Bisplinghoff '11

Men's Basketball:
James Green '84

Women's Soccer:
Ruth Keegan '95

Football

Max Reber '14

Teams of Distinction:
Softball 1999 and 2000



Above: Reber, Keegan, Bisplinghoff, Green

Above Right: MU Softball (1999 & 2000)

Right: Windsor, King, Bryan Jr. (and his wife, Mary Lynn Bryan), Bauer, Mitchell. Biggins was unable to attend.



2024 Alumni Association Award Winners

Distinguished Alumni: MAJ Diedre Windsor (Ret.) '94

Distinguished Young Alumni: Christopher Biggins '14

Outstanding Alumni Service: Dr. Mica (Gay) Mitchell '01

Outstanding Faculty: Dr. Denise Bauer

Outstanding Staff: Rebecca King '12

Philanthropist: Norwood E. Bryan Jr.

A Message from Our President



Stanley T. Wearden, Ph.D.
President of Methodist University

Dear Methodist University Alumni, Students, Faculty, Staff, and Friends,

The cool, crisp air of fall is upon us here in North Carolina, and that's always a special time full of amazing accomplishments – and some of my favorite events of the entire school year.

This fall, which soon will head into the holiday season, has already been one of the most memorable I've ever been a part of. Not just the exciting start of a new semester, and the welcoming of new and returning students, but great efforts by our athletic teams and challenges met in the classroom, and so much more.

As an example, and as you could witness on the two pages prior and hopefully saw via all of our amazing social media platforms, you're reading this message just a few weeks removed from a truly special Homecoming 2024. Students spent a week filled with Monarch spirit, making rally towels, attending a bonfire, holding a cookout, and sharing fellowship in a dozen other ways.

That led up to the arrival of our alumni heading into the weekend.

Young alumni and those who graduated many years ago, came from near and far to rekindle friendships, share memories, and create new ones. Homecoming is always such a special time to remember and celebrate just how great it is to be a Monarch.

The word “memorable” is common during Homecoming, but Fall 2024 will be forever memorable for a few other reasons. History was made in September when we had the opportunity to invite a few hundred guests to the groundbreaking ceremony for the Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine, an MU facility which is being built on the CFVH campus.

That event was held approximately one month ahead of another major announcement related to the School of Medicine. In October, the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), announced the Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine received official candidacy designation. This was a key step in the accreditation process for the new school. (See more on the groundbreaking and designation news on pages 4-5). Once it is accredited and students are admitted, the School of Medicine will begin having a major positive impact on MU, CFVH, and the entire Cape Fear region.

It's very important for all of us to know and remember that amazing

events such as Homecoming, remarkable milestones such as those reached by the School of Medicine, and more importantly the opportunities afforded our Methodist University students on a daily basis, would not be possible without the inspiring contributions made by the supporters of our University.

The cover story of this MU Today (see page 10) is the third of a three-part series that highlights those who offer their gifts of Time, Talent, and/or Treasure, to keep Methodist University moving forward and succeeding. Whether it's through mentorships, scholarships, career networking, or so many other ways, there is a unique loyalty that our alumni, faculty, staff, and friends show over and over again.

To display our heart-felt gratitude, we dedicate this issue to those who show their loyalty through “treasure,” gifts that change the lives of our students and the course of our University. (See the special section list of donors starting on page 6.)

If I didn't see you at Homecoming, I hope you can visit soon, and I look forward to seeing you then!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stanley T. Wearden'.

Stanley T. Wearden, Ph.D.

“ This fall, which soon will head into the holiday season, has already been one of the most memorable I've ever been a part of. **”**



10

COVER STORY

This issue of MU Today brings to a close a three-part series highlighting time, talent, and treasures so many offer to MU. This issue shares a few examples (such as Lt. Carl Douglas, above) who show meaningful loyalty to MU through the gift of “treasure.”

IN THIS ISSUE:

SPECIAL “THANK YOU TO DONORS” SECTION

Cumulative Giving.....	6-9
Top 20 Classes (Giving and Participation)	9
Annual Giving	14-23
Join the President’s Society	19
1956 Legacy Society	23
Endowed Scholarships.....	24-25
Annual Scholarships.....	23
Endowed Professorships, Chairs, and Awards	26
Independent College Fund of North Carolina	27

Other Highlights

Presidential Welcome	2
Get an MU License Plate	21
Class Notes, Engagements, Weddings & Births.....	28
In Memory: Honoring Alumni & Friends.....	31
Loyalty Fund for MU	Back Cover

MU
today
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ALUMNI
SPOTLIGHT

MOMENTS AND MEMORIES | 1

ACADEMIC
SPOTLIGHT

NO MILESTONES UNTURNED | 4

CAMPUS
SPOTLIGHT

PAST AND PRESENT | INSIDE BACK COVER

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10 a.m. / Tuesday, Sept. 10, 2024

GROU



METHODIST UNIVERSITY CAPE FEAR VALLEY HEALTH
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE



ND BREAKING NEWS

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. – Leaders of the new Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine broke ground on a \$60-plus-million facility in September – a significant step toward changing the future of healthcare in Fayetteville and the region.

In front of hundreds of key members of the community, the leadership from MU, Cape Fear Valley Health, and the School of Medicine (SOM) announced the start of construction for a new five-story, 200-room, 130,000-square-foot facility that will be located on the western edge of Cape Fear Valley Medical Center along Village Drive in Fayetteville.

“This is a historic occasion for our local community and all of Southeastern North

Carolina,” said MU President Stanley T. Wearden. “At Methodist University, we’re committed to students and alumni success in the context of a mission that values community service, which is why we have our various Health Sciences programs that will soon include the School of Medicine. But this is not about MU alone. Without our partnership with Cape Fear Valley Health, this could not happen.”

SOM Reaches Accreditation Milestone

The Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine (SOM) received official candidacy designation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) in October. The decision leads to a site visit from the LCME in the spring of 2025 before it reviews and

votes on preliminary accreditation for the SOM as early as the fall of 2025.

A preliminary accreditation would allow the SOM to begin recruiting students as it aims to welcome its first cohort in the fall of 2026 – pending approvals by both the LCME and SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges).

“By granting this candidate status, the LCME is saying they believe we are moving towards what is necessary for accreditation,” said Dr. Hershey Bell, founding dean of the SOM. “This shows that Methodist University and the Cape Fear Valley Health System have the necessary resources to begin a medical school in our community.” ■

2 p.m. / Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2024

School of Medicine Receives Candidacy Designation from Accrediting Body

SPECIAL REPORT
More Coverage at
methodist.edu/news

TOP 20 CLASSES

IN DOLLARS GIVEN AND PARTICIPATION

Methodist University sincerely appreciates all alumni gifts, whether large or small. The percentage of alumni participation is especially critical, as it impacts rankings and grant opportunities.

TOP 20 Alumni Classes By Dollars Given

Class	Dollars Given	Class	Dollars Given
'70	\$75,825.00	'01	\$10,207.00
'73	\$64,869.56	'14	\$9,288.80
'68	\$57,980.00	'99	\$8,150.00
'66	\$31,785.00	'65	\$6,545.00
'97	\$22,995.00	'13	\$6,471.00
'69	\$22,560.00	'11	\$6,260.68
'67	\$13,487.73	'94	\$5,790.00
'00	\$12,980.74	'10	\$5,780.56
'07	\$12,190.00	'03	\$5,229.56
'71	\$10,980.00	'05	\$4,865.00

TOP 20 Alumni Classes By Participation

Class	Percent	Class	Percent
'24	49.76%	'73	10.88%
'68	20.45%	'81	10.38%
'70	20.13%	'76	9.89%
'65	19.15%	'75	9.76%
'64	18.52%	'74	9.22%
'69	17.69%	'72	9.16%
'66	17.02%	'05	8.84%
'78	16.05%	'23	8.50%
'67	13.79%	'00	8.43%
'71	12.50%	'11	8.08%

Loyalty THROUGH TREASURE:

Commitments of Past and Present Create
the Bright Future for Methodist University

(Part Three of a Three-Part Series) By: Christian Naranjo

Methodist University boasts a rich history of preparing students for a lifetime of meaning and purpose. MU alumni have gone on to become doctors, lawyers, educators, psychiatrists, first responders, social workers, business executives, and much more. Most of all, MU alumni are champions of change – making their community better through intellectual values and ethical principles such as truth, virtue, justice, and love.

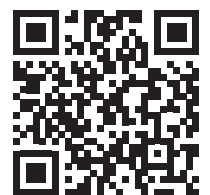
None of the success would be possible, however, without one key ingredient – LOYALTY.

For nearly 70 years, members of the community – on campus and off – have put their faith in MU, creating a legacy of success for the students who walk onto the beautiful 617-acre campus or enter online programs from wherever they may be.

But loyalty is more than conviction; it leads to action. Loyalty can be displayed in many ways, including through time, talent, and treasure. This three-part series highlights some difference makers of MU's past and present who have devoted themselves to the institution. This edition showcases three shining examples of difference makers who have shown loyalty to Methodist University through "Treasure."

From devoted alumna Regina McLaurin '70 to a forward-thinking nonprofit organization in the Golden LEAF Foundation to welcoming staff member Lt. Carl Douglas, it becomes clear that loyalty can come from many different places. All you need is a willingness to utilize your treasure to make Methodist University an even greater institution.

As you explore the stories of McLaurin, the Golden LEAF Foundation, and Lt. Douglas, ask yourself: "How can I be loyal to Methodist University through my treasures?" To get started, visit methodist.edu/loyalty or scan this QR code.





Regina McLaurin '70

A Successful Alumna Who Loves to Give Back to MU

The campus may look a lot different than when she was a student, but Regina McLaurin '70 remains loyal as ever to Methodist University.

For decades, the McLaurin name was synonymous with parking in the Triangle, as her family's business, McLaurin Parking Company, oversaw parking in the area since the 1940s. Regina McLaurin and her five siblings were always involved with the business – managing parking lots for special events and football games since she was teenager. But when it was time for college, she knew Methodist College was the right fit.

"It was close, and I really liked the atmosphere," McLaurin said. "My father's side of the family is from the area, so it felt like I was close to the area, even though I didn't know much about it yet."

McLaurin found her home away from home, majoring in English with a minor in Business. To this day, she reflects on some of her fondest memories as a student.

"I remember my friends and I going down to the Cape Fear River together," she said. "I also remember a friend from my dorm who would sing in the stairwell at night. Her voice would vibrate off the walls and it was just fantastic."

Following her graduation in 1970, McLaurin had her sights set on the family business. She quickly became the CFO and worked for McLaurin Parking Company until it was sold in 2017. In 1979, she was the first woman nominated to the National Parking Association Board of Directors (with which she later became a secretary and president). McLaurin's business acumen also earned her the Methodist College Economics and Business Alumna of the Year in 1984 and the Methodist University Alumni Business Person of the Year in 2017.

During that time, McLaurin has stayed loyal to the University, regularly contributing to the softball program since 2001. She also supported the Softball Fieldhouse Campaign that helped establish the Price Softball Fieldhouse in 2022. In 2017, McLaurin even started an endowed scholarship under her father's name, the William L. McLaurin Endowed Scholarship.

"When my father returned from World War II, he started the business," McLaurin said. "There are pictures of me in a bassinet in the parking lot with my parents as they were working because they couldn't afford anything else. They taught me so much about business and how to treat people."

McLaurin hopes her family's story helps inspire others to find a way to give back through their treasure like she's been fortunate enough to do.

"Methodist University was a good fit for me and gave me a lot over the years," she added. "I like to give back, and hope others are able to, as well."

Golden LEAF

A Forward-Thinking Foundation with Eyes on the Future

When the Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine was first announced in 2023, it was clear the transformative effort was going to change the future of healthcare in the region. With the help of community partners, like the Golden LEAF Foundation, the dream is inching closer than ever to reality.

Golden LEAF, established in 1999 to increase economic opportunity in North Carolina's rural, tobacco-dependent, and economically distressed communities, announced in August that it would provide funding of \$8 million to help equip the new school of medicine. The funding will be an important step towards the goal of welcoming the first cohort of students in the summer of 2026, pending approval by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and SACSCOC (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges).

"This School of Medicine project will have generational impacts through the creation of high-quality jobs while addressing the critical shortage of medical professionals in Southeastern North Carolina," said Golden LEAF President and Chief Executive Officer Scott T. Hamilton (pictured here).

According to Hamilton, one of the key reasons the Golden LEAF Foundation awarded funding to the Methodist University Cape Fear Valley Health School of Medicine (SOM) was the workforce projections in the region.

The new School of Medicine is projected to create more than 250 new jobs and graduate more than 100 doctors each year. Statistically, 67% of physicians who complete both medical school and residency in an area stay in that area for practice – a positive outlook for the region.

"It's a good project for Golden LEAF because of the job outcomes," Hamilton added. "There are a number of tremendous jobs that will be created. Not only the physicians themselves, but also the nurses, support staff, and administrative professionals. It will have a ripple effect on Eastern North Carolina and some of the most economically distressed communities within our state."

The Golden LEAF Foundation is one example of many using their treasures to build up the local community. Various donors from across the region – Methodist University graduates, friends of MU, friends of Cape Fear Valley Health, other agencies, organizations, and more – have displayed their loyalty by contributing financially to the project.

"This project can help transform this regional economy," said Hamilton. "I'm sure alumni can also find the value in making an impact with their funding."

To read the full release about Golden LEAF providing funding – and other SOM news – please visit: methodist.edu/news/som

H. Carl Douglas

A Loyal Staff Member with a Welcoming Spirit

Does this gentleman look familiar to you? If you've been to campus lately (like sometime in the past 30-plus years), he probably does. You may know him as one of the friendly faces greeting you as you pass the Welcome Center of Methodist University's campus, but there's a lot more to Lt. Carl Douglas than what meets the eye.

Douglas served in the U.S. Army from 1979 to 1986 before making his way to Methodist University in 1989, a place he has remained loyal to for 35 years. Currently, as Lieutenant of Security for MU's Public Safety & Security, Douglas oversees a lot more than the entrance of visitors to campus. He also performs security checks, escorts, background checks, and more to keep the University a safe place.

"Even though we have to enforce the policies and rules of the University, we're just like everyone else on campus," Douglas said. "We go out to eat, shop at the grocery store, go to movies, and have families – just like everyone."

In fact, Douglas can claim fellow Monarchs as family. His wife, Donna Douglas, serves as the vehicle dispatcher/officer manager of Housekeeping & Maintenance at MU and his son, Carl Douglas Jr. '23, recently graduated from Methodist University with a bachelor's degree in Psychology and minor in Criminal Justice.

But for Douglas, he considers all of the students on campus as part of his family.

"The people here make it so special," he added. "I love seeing the students mature during their time here, and I love it when they come back for Homecoming. They'll typically bring back their families and sometimes even their children. It's one of my favorite parts about the job."

Douglas' love for Methodist University can be seen through his actions. On top of his many roles in security, Douglas also gives part of his treasure to MU. He made his first gift in 1995 and started payroll deductions in 2012 before beginning a recurring gift in 2017.

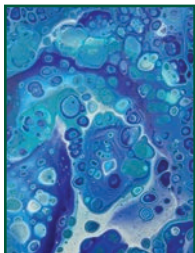
"It's the right thing to do," Douglas said. "As I like to say, it's the Monarch way. As long as I've been here, this place has grown on me so why not give back? We're a community, so we have to look out for one another."

Whether showing loyalty through time, talent, or treasure, Douglas said it is important for all Monarchs to come together for the benefit of students.

"Big or small, you can give," Douglas said. "Even if you can't give monetarily, you can give of your time and talent. When you give, the students at Methodist University see you in a different light. They are our future, so we should pour into them every chance that we get." ■



Ethel Farrell '81 was recently inducted into the Northwood High School (N.C.) Hall of Fame. She competed in basketball, softball and track and field at Northwood, achieving all-county and all-conference recognition in basketball and softball her junior and senior years.



Angie (Conrad) Holmes '92 started a small fluid art business selling acrylic painting creations after she found fluid artists on YouTube when needing to decompress from crisis counselor shifts. Angie's paintings can be seen at scispaintingowl.com.



Marc Tyndale '93 was hired as director of strategic partnerships for Kleen-Rite Corp. In this newly created position as part of the leadership team at Kleen-Rite, Tyndale will assist in developing and advancing important relationships with customers.



James Gunderson '09 led Christopher Newport University's women's soccer team to a NCAA Division III record 74th consecutive game without a loss.



Daniel Renz '14M accepted a position as Risk Management Specialist with the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA), Adjudication and Vetting Services (AVS), High Risk Handling Division in Fort Meade, Md. in June 2024.



Vincent "Chae" Awong-Cole '17 graduated in May 2024 with Ph.D. in Leadership Studies from North Carolina A&T State University.

Regional Events

Join us at a regional event to connect with fellow alumni, hear about exciting MU news, and share your achievements with us. These regional events are typically hosted in a restaurant or home and they feature hors d'oeuvres and beverages. See the current schedule below and check the link to register: methodist.edu/support-mu/alumni/events

New York, N.Y. – Dec. 5

PGA Show, Orlando, Fla. – Jan. 22

Charlotte, N.C. – Feb. 25

Raleigh, N.C. – March 18

Richmond, Va. – April 3

Washington, D.C. – May 15

Fayetteville, N.C. – June 12

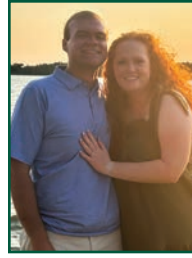
For more information about these events – or to host one in your area – please contact the Alumni Office at 910.630.7200, 800.488.7110 (x7200), or email us at alumnioffice@methodist.edu.

ENGAGEMENTS



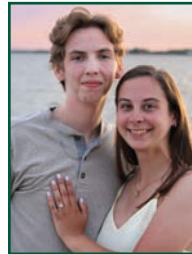
Travon Scott '17 proposed to Christina Baskerville on July 13, 2024. Travon earned his master's degree in Social Work from Howard University (2024) and has begun a new role with Cumberland County Communicare, Inc. as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker Associate (LCSWA) and Licensed Clinical Addictions Specialist

Associate (LCASA). Christina works as an outpatient hospital social worker for Cone Health Moses Cone Hospital.



Caroline Bryant '22 and **Carl Floars '22** got engaged Aug. 27, 2024. The couple met the first week of classes in the PGA Golf Management Program and plan to marry May 31, 2025. Caroline is an assistant golf professional and buyer for The Patterson Club and The Country Club of Florida. Carl is an assistant golf professional for The Country Club of Fairfield

and Pine Tree Golf Club.



Ashlynn Elliott '24 got engaged to Evan Mumford June 8, 2024. The couple plans to be married on July 5, 2025. Ashlynn is a teacher for Worcester County (Md.) Public Schools.

WEDDINGS



Timothy Price '91 married Heather Gordon Sept. 14, 2024 in Bluffton, S.C. Tim is the vice president at Lafayette Ford Lincoln and Heather is a certified surgical first assistant (CSFA) at UNC Health Southeastern Hospital.



Rachel Purser '13 and Leah Hession were married Sept. 18, 2024.



Anna Rose Sink '20, '24D and **Jacob Austin '22** were married Sept. 21, 2024. The couple first met in 2018 during speech class taught by the late Dr. Bill Watt. Three years later they would reunite when Anna Rose returned to Methodist University for the Occupational Therapy Doctoral Program in 2021. Members of the wedding party

included **Christian Austin '20, Carsen Sanchez '20, Spencer Nelson '21, '23M, Robert Wilkerson '21, '24D, Anthony Favor '22, Wesley Hall '22, Morgan Armstrong '24D, and Madison Pyle '24D**. Anna Rose is an occupational therapist, and Jacob is a sales representative for Cintas.

SHARE YOUR NEWS



We want to hear what is going on in your life, additions to the family, engagements, weddings, and certainly honor our alumni and friends "In Memory." One great way to keep your classmates updated is by simply filling out our form online at: methodist.edu/alumni/class-notes or scan the QR code.

BIRTHS



Elicia Williams '12, '14M and her husband, James, welcomed their son, Macklin, to the world on Aug. 15, 2024. Macklin weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces and measured 21.5 inches. Elicia is an intelligence analyst for Nisos.



Nicole (Hardin) Wildeboer '15 and her husband, **Peter Wildeboer '17**, welcomed their second child, Jameson Peter, Feb. 29, 2024. He was born weighing 9 pounds and measuring 21 inches. Nicole is a forensic scientist for North Carolina State Crime Lab and Peter is in the general surgery program at Cape Fear Valley Health.



Stephanie Grisi-Wolf '14 and her husband, Steven, welcomed their second son, Remi Brooks, on June 20, 2024. Remi was 7 pounds and measured 20 inches. Stephanie is the golf retail manager for The Golf Club at Lansdowne in Virginia.



Dr. Alex (Bass) Glass '11 and her husband, Stuart, had their third child, Olivia Claire, on Sept. 26, 2024. She weighed 6 pounds, 4 ounces and measured 19 inches. Alex is owner and provider at Glass Dermatology and Stuart is an emergency medicine physician in Kenansville.



METHODIST UNIVERSITY

[Engage. Enrich. *Empower.*]

Methodist University Alumni E-Newsletter

Make sure we always have your current e-mail address, and you will receive the monthly alumni e-newsletter. The e-newsletter is filled with timely news and useful links to keep you connected to your teams, organizations, faculty, and friends at Methodist!

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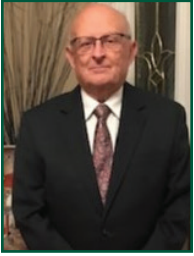
or visit methodist.edu/support-mu/communication-preferences

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Robert Stewart Brodie '68, 78, of Summerfield, N.C. passed away Sept. 26, 2024. Bob worked as a cost accountant in construction real estate. He spent his life serving others. As a teenager he was an Eagle Scout; in the Army he served as a Second Lieutenant; in church he was a deacon; in the Masons he served others; in his family he served everyone; in life he was grace personified.



Rodney Frederick Hobbs '69, 77, of Bunnlevel, N.C. passed away Aug. 1, 2024. Rodney was hired by GAO, the United States General Accounting Organization of Washington, D.C. where he served for 33 years and then retired to coastal South Carolina. After retiring, he pursued a second career in real estate with Litchfield Real Estate in Pawley's

Island, S.C. Rodney was a dedicated member of First Presbyterian Church, where he served as an usher for many years. He is survived by his wife of 21 years, Roxanne.



Karen Job Hagler '70, 76, passed away Aug. 1, 2024. She continued her education and earned a master's degree in Education from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. A dedicated educator, Karen spent her career helping students develop literacy skills and confidence, and established a Reading Recovery program. She is survived by her

husband, Philip, daughter, Kim, grandchildren, and siblings.



Larry Stevens McMillin '76, 89, of Kinston, N.C. passed away Aug. 16, 2024. Larry left school in the 10th grade to join the Army and became a part of the Original Green Beret. He retired as Master Sergeant in the Army Special Forces, earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star embodying the courage and commitment that defined his life. He would later graduate from

Methodist College and go on to retire as a district veterans service officer from the Department of Veterans Affairs. His dedication to the Special Forces never ended as he sold flags for 30 years with proceeds going to the Special Forces Association.



Floyd "Butch" Leroy Trimmer '76, 81, of Fayetteville, N.C. passed away June 25, 2024. After 32 years of service, Butch retired from the U.S. Army as Colonel and served with the Special Forces. He is survived by his wife of 23 years, Carol.



Deborah Lynn Needham '80, 66, of Carthage, N.C. passed away Aug. 28, 2024. Deborah went on to get a master's degree in Counseling in 2006 from Webster University of Myrtle Beach, S.C. She retired from Moore County Schools in 2011. She enjoyed enriching the lives of young people. She is survived by her husband of 41 years,

William Bradley Needham.



Betty "Jackie" Jacqueline Starling '80, 73, of Stedman, N.C., passed away Sept. 28, 2024. Jackie was a successful career teacher, earning accolades in several North Carolina counties until her retirement. She loved music and was a member of the choir at Manna Church, where she attended since its conception.



Bobby Lee Potts '81, 71, passed away Aug. 8, 2024. Bob proudly served his country, first as a Marine for four years and then another four years in the Army. Bob worked for the State of California, Campus Crusade for Christ, and owned many businesses during his lifetime, enjoying his real estate adventures the most. He is

survived by his wife, children, and grandchildren.



John Loren McCullough, Jr. '90, 56, passed away Aug. 29, 2024. A cum laude graduate in business management from Methodist College, John was an NCAA golf champion and later inducted into the MU Athletics Hall of Fame. After pursuing a career in professional golf, including international tours, he established a golf school in the

Philippines to foster young talent. John later returned to the U.S., where he ran his own general contracting business and continued to coach high school golf.



Katherine "Joyce" (Lee) Strickland '94, 89, passed away Sept. 13, 2024. After graduation from Central High School, she became a devoted wife, paralegal and then a loving stay-at-home mom. She returned to college in her early 50's to earn her Bachelor's degree from Methodist College because it was "a goal that I always wanted

to achieve."

IN MEMORY

HONORING MU ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



Scott D. Higgins '99, 47, of Mahwah, N.J. passed away June 29, 2024. Scott was a golf professional, with over 20+ years of experience in the golf industry. He was a respected member of his profession and known for his dedication, hard work, and passion for the game. Scott is survived by his wife, Tawana, and daughter, Chloe.

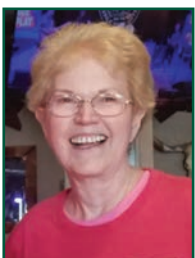


Scott David Beaver, 51, of Brewton, Ala. and Pensacola, Fla. passed away July 17, 2024. Scott played golf when he attended MU, went on to serve in the United States Army Reserve, and was the owner operator of Phillips Energy.



Richard James McGuinness '00, 77, passed away Aug. 22, 2024. A retired U.S. Army Master Sergeant, Richard served 24 years in the Armed Forces, earning numerous commendations and playing a key role in military operations in Central America and beyond. After his military service, he worked as a security advisor and later graduated

magna cum laude from Methodist College with a degree in History and Spanish. Richard was a dedicated member of St. Patrick Catholic Church and an avid football fan. He is survived by his wife, **Aurelia McGuinness '99**.



Mae Smith Parsons '02, 76, passed away Aug. 31, 2024. A dedicated businesswoman, Mae spent 14 years with Piedmont Airlines and US Airways, where she played a key role in implementing innovations in airline operations. After raising her family while traveling the world with her military husband, she later worked as a travel agent

serving military personnel and retired in 2005. Mae returned to school and earned her Business Administration degree from Methodist University at the age of 54.



Nora Bawaan Norton '05, retired U.S. Army CW4, passed away Aug. 9, 2024, at the age of 74. Originally from the Philippines, Nora served her country in the U.S. Army's communications field for 30 years. She earned numerous honors, receiving the Commendation Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.



Ann McCarson Davidson, 88, of Cedartown, Ga. passed away Sept. 29, 2024. An inductee to the National Golf Coaches Association Hall of Fame, Ann guided the Methodist University Monarch golf team to five consecutive national championships during her five seasons as head coach from 1990 to 1995. She produced 17

All-Americans and four national champions. After retiring from MU in 1995, she served the golf industry at camps and tournaments as an LPGA teaching professional.



Johnny Hodges, 63, of Fayetteville, N.C. passed away Aug. 26, 2024. Johnny worked in cart maintenance and service with Cypress Lakes Golf Course.



John R. Keso, 87, passed away Aug. 4, 2024. John honorably served 22 years in the U.S. Army (1954-76), before retiring as a Chief Warrant Officer 3. His military decorations include the Bronze Star (1 Oak Leaf Cluster), the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal (1 Oak Leaf Cluster). After his

military service, John transitioned to civilian life, going back to school and earning a bachelor's and master's degree from Campbell University. Utilizing these degrees, he contributed to the education sector in various capacities including serving as the Director of Financial Aid at MU for many years. ■

Former Faculty/Staff

Former Students

Thomas Sumpter Cole, Jr., 71, passed away Sept. 23, 2024. Thomas attended Methodist University and Middle Tennessee State University. He helped run his family business, Wacky Golf, in Jacksonville, Fla. and Myrtle Beach, S.C. He then worked for Ebtron, Inc. in customer service for 23 years.



Then & NOW

Regardless of the generation, Homecoming was and still remains one of the most exciting times during the school year. It's a time when all of the current students (and all of the alumni and friends who come back to campus) are filled with the Monarch spirit, wearing their green and gold, sharing special times at events and maybe even getting a little crazy!

Maybe?

Go Monarchs!





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POWER IN GIVING, PRIDE IN LEGACY

- Show your Monarch Spirit: wear Monarch gear or green and gold on **February 27**, tag us on social media, and use #MonarchLoyaltyDay
- Tell us why you are Loyal to MU on social media; tag us and use #Loyal2MU
- Use the QR code and donate \$19.56 to MU on or before **February 27**



Scan the QR code to
make a secure gift
online or visit
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Save the Date

MU Loyalty Day

February 27, 2025