

# gratitude.



## **PREPARE FOR IMPACT, GENEROUS SUPPORT BOLSTERS LAUNCH OF NEW ACADEMIC UNITS**

**Three new units launched this fall at UT: the College of Music, the Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs, and the College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies.** All three offer new avenues of opportunity for current and prospective students, as well as alumni and donors looking to impact and support them. While the College of Emerging and Collaborative Studies is completely new, two of these units previously existed—the College of Music and the Baker School—and already have an enthusiastic base of supporters who are enabling access and fueling the student experience.



## FUNDING WASHINGTON FELLOWS for the Emerging Baker School of Public Policy and Public Affairs

By Laura Tenpenny ('11)

Georgiana Vines had encounters with Senator Howard H. Baker, Jr. (for whom the Baker School is named) throughout her journalistic career. Vines developed an interest in politics and journalism as a student, even successfully running for a campus-level office, and it launched a career that carried her to the *Knoxville News Sentinel*. She retired after decades of service as associate editor in 2005 and still regularly contributes a political column to the newspaper.

**“I’ve always enjoyed trying to figure out what’s going on in government,” said Vines. “It’s easy to get into the weeds but sometimes in the weeds is where it’s all happening.”**

She established a scholarship in her name that assists undergraduate students interested in those political weeds who participate in Baker School programs, with preference for journalism majors. Most often it aids Vols enrolled in the school’s Washington Fellows program, a two-week immersive course in Washington, DC.

“Scholarships are crucial for providing access so students can participate,” said Director of Undergraduate Studies Jon Ring, who leads the program.

“It’s a heavy dose of public policy content, with students learning eight to 12 hours a day from experts and DC-area professionals, but the biggest takeaway is their increase in confidence,” added Ring. “One of the things we emphasize is that students feel empowered to be in rooms that otherwise seem exclusive. We build students up to jump from earning their degree to meaningful positions.”

Lauren Eckley (Class of 2024) attended the program in spring 2023 and can testify to such newfound confidence.

**“As someone who rarely gets the opportunity to travel, the Washington Fellows program allowed me to observe a major city and meet impressive leaders and alumni working in the nation’s capital,” said Eckley. “We toured the Capitol Building, explored famous museums, and networked with prominent people working in our chosen career paths. I gained a lot of confidence in my career plans, and it opened doors to internship opportunities.”**

Makaela Webb (Class of 2024) participated in the program with Eckley and gained new tools for her future.

“My experience widened my perspective on the number of resources available to help me plan for my future,” said Webb. “I also learned so much about Senator Baker during my time in DC. He believed in doing the right thing, regardless of party politics. I hope to do the same as I pursue my own career. I plan to run for local office one day and practice constitutional or immigration law.”

Eckley and Webb participated in the program thanks to the Georgiana Vines Scholarship, and Vines knows how significant such support can be.

“As a student, I worked during college to help my parents pay tuition,” said Vines. “When I lectured at UT, I came to understand how much financial need concerns students today, so I established this scholarship to assist students pursuing careers like mine and because of my connection to UT and the Knoxville community.”

The Baker School will welcome undergraduates for degree programs beginning in fall 2024, and scholarships will make that possible as the Vines scholarship has for multiple Washington Fellows. ■





## A NEW STANDARD FOR THE NEW COLLEGE OF MUSIC, with Support by Retired Faculty

By Brooks Clark

Last spring Natalie L. Haslam Founding Dean of the College of Music Jeffrey Pappas spoke at the retired faculty luncheon.

“We are becoming a college of music because of your legacies. Your students. Their achievements. A tradition of excellence in instruction,” said Pappas. “All we can leave is our legacy. Each of us will have to choose what that legacy will be. Never did I imagine that the legacy would lead to a College of Music.”

For many retired faculty members and their families, the idea of legacy has ascended to another level—endowed or estate gifts that will live on in the lives of College of Music students in perpetuity. Gary Sperl brought his passion for clarinet not only to his students in Knoxville but also to the students so close to his heart in Tanzania, Africa.

“Gary’s six-figure estate gift to support clarinet will have an impact both in Knoxville and Tanzania that simply can’t be measured,” says Director of Advancement Chris Cox.

Fay Adams created an estate gift to support piano.

“I had a wonderful opportunity working for 44 years at the department, then school, and now College of Music,” said Adams. “I want to give back to help many more piano students who want to fulfill their dream of music.”

Likewise, Cathy Leach has shared her passion for the trumpet not only in her years of teaching at UT but

also in her leadership of national organizations and now in an estate gift that will support trumpet students for decades to come.

“In my own life nothing has meant more than the opportunity to study music and music education at the college level,” said Leach. “I hope that this endowed scholarship will give future students that same opportunity.”

Jim Self taught tuba at UT in the 1970s and left to get his PhD at the University of Southern California, where he has taught for decades and played on some 1,500 movie soundtracks, including the latest Indiana Jones movie, the last three Star Wars movies, and the famous solo in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.

“That’s the big bird in my cage,” said Self.

He has returned to UT as a guest artist and got to know Pappas, Cox, and tuba professor Alex Lapins.

He created an endowment for the Volunteer Brass Quintet as well as a tuba scholarship. He and his wife have also decided to give 25 percent of their estate to UT.

“If I died tomorrow, UT would get a million dollars,” he said with his usual wry delivery.

Marvelene Moore, who taught music education at UT for 35 years, well remembers the financial aid that helped her pursue her studies and wishes to pay that generosity forward with her endowment for scholarships for music education students.

“You will never know how a bit of support can affect someone’s life,” said Moore. ■

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—JEFFREY PAPPAS, COLLEGE OF MUSIC DEAN



See original story and more from *Noteworthy*, the College of Music’s magazine, at [noteworthy.utk.edu](http://noteworthy.utk.edu).



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## 2,240 DONORS HAVE RAISED MORE THAN \$39 MILLION FOR TRI-STAR SCHOLARSHIPS

AS OF NOVEMBER 15, 2023

The Tri-Star Scholarship Program expands Tennessee residents' access to education through three scholarships: UT Pledge, UT Promise, and Flagship. The Pledge scholarship is available to Tennessee residents whose annual family income is less than \$40,000, granting them the funds to pay for tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board.

Learn more about how the Tri-Star Scholarship Program helps talented students fulfill their dreams at [giving.utk.edu/tri-star](https://giving.utk.edu/tri-star).



For Railey Marshall (Class of 2024), a first-generation student in social work, the Tran Mai Family Pledge Scholarship has allowed her to excel at UT through undergraduate research, internships, and lifelong friendships.

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Without my scholarships, there is no way my dreams would be in the making. As a first-generation college student, I could never express how thankful I am to be at the University of Tennessee, and I can't wait to see what the future has for me here.”