July 2008

Our new fiscal year began with exceptional news from 2007-08 — UT Martin’s success in the Capital Campaign for Tennessee — UT’s $1 billion fund-raising campaign. At the spring launch celebration, many friends of the university gathered to learn that our campus had raised $30.5 million, or 76% of our goal. Our campus consistently has the highest percentage of money paid toward the goal within the UT system. I’m excited about the opportunities this will bring for student/faculty retention and enrichment, research opportunities, global initiatives, facilities expansion and campus security.

A really positive note is the commitment of those who know UT Martin best. 54% of current, former and retired employees participated in fund raising by giving to the Family Campaign. I’m really proud of that.

Town square, clock tower, light posts, street signs, even a white pickett fence.
We received notice today that ROTC Cadet Richard Casada continues to honor himself and UT Martin. He received the Legion of Valor Cross for Achievement Award. Only 10 such awards were presented nationwide. He has a 3.97 GPA, received numerous cadet ribbons and honors and is involved in many campus activities. He was also chosen to join senior U.S. military leaders at a National Security Seminar. In April 2009, he’ll go to Lexington, Va., along with key military officials such as Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey and Secretary of the Army Pete Geren. I know the entire university community, and especially the ROTC faculty and student cadre, take pride in his accomplishments.

Mark calendar for official award presentation here in October.
August 9, 2008

Summer Commencement: 159 graduates.

August 31, 2008

It looks like another strong enrollment for fall.

September 2008

Even with tougher admission requirements, our fall enrollment for 2008 set records AGAIN. We had the largest percentage of increase of Tennessee’s four-year public institutions — also a repeat achievement! Even more good news — the enrollment included UT Martin’s largest first-year student class, and as a group, they had a higher grade-point average and ACT scores than previous entering classes.

7,578 students:
Record-high numbers for
- total headcount
- first-year students
- undergraduates
- dual-enrollment students
- total full-time equivalent
- undergraduate full-time equivalent

Remember:
New faculty orientation Aug. 7
Fall faculty meeting Aug. 19
Welcome the 32 new fall faculty

OETF planning meeting

September 8, 2008

Dr. Vaughn May, academic speaker. 7:30 tonight
Homecoming was a perfect time to schedule the Student Recreation Center groundbreaking (rope-pull site) — great fall weather and a large crowd attended. The location couldn't be better — so visible to the community. We want our students to be healthy, and I think they'll appreciate an attractive facility with the latest exercise and sports equipment. After all, they're funding it with student activity fees. Faculty/staff, retirees, alumni and families of UT Martin students and employees can also use the facility for a fee, so it's a benefit with broad impact.

$16.9 million well spent!!

Opens early 2010

- 100,643 sq. ft. of healthy living
- multiple basketball courts/indoor soccer arena
- walking/jogging, running areas; racquetball courts
- weight room; cardio-fitness areas; aerobic room
- multipurpose room; locker rooms

* Enjoyed Quad City during homecoming — there were 57 tents for organizations, reunions, food, entertainment

** Approx. 5,000 people attended

picture from the alumni magazine
October, 2008


October, 2008

Academic Speaker: Dr. Richard Tillinghast, poet and author

November 2008

One of our student organizations brought home honors this weekend. The Ag and Natural Resources Dept. Soil Judging Team claimed 1st place in the Southeast Regional Soil Judging Contest hosted by Virginia Tech in the Blue Ridge Mountains near my Virginia home, and the team qualified for the national contest. This team is the first Tennessee team to appear on the traveling trophy in the last 12 years of competition. Good job!!

The students did especially well individually in a field of 75 competitors — Lindsey Slaughter (Lyles) won 1st place; Kelly Whitson (Troy) was 4th; Hannah Davis (Lewisburg) 11th and Trey Browning (Dresden) 23rd.

November, 2008

Academic Speaker on the 3rd: our own Dr. Michael Gibson

Academic Speaker on the 6th: Dr. Orville Burton, specialist in southern history

November 9, 2008

The Skyhawks football game at Auburn was exciting, and for a while it looked like we might pull off one of the biggest upsets of the year.
One of our students will get the opportunity of a lifetime – to complete an internship at a NASA Center – which is his ultimate career destination. Bradley Gregg, (4.0 GPA engineering major) was notified he’ll spend 15 weeks in the spring at Johnson Space Center in Houston. He’ll get hands-on, real-life experience. Bradley will graduate in May 2010 and plans to earn a doctorate in aerospace engineering before knocking on NASA’s door again.
November 2008

Today was a good day! We broke ground for the McNairy County/Selmer Center expansion. Large, spirited crowd.

More classrooms. 250 students currently enrolled (and growing). 129 graduates to date. U.S. Rep. Marsha Blackburn and State Sen.-elect Dolores Gresham joined us in turning dirt. We are fortunate to have the great support of our elected officials.

Our four centers provide valuable access to students throughout our region.

Check on Parsons Center progress. Ribbon-cutting and open house in April???

Send Deidra a note.

November 2008

Our campus has stepped out front to address the ongoing budget crisis. Tennessee’s economic downturn is making us “think differently” about how we serve students and operate the university. The Organization and Efficiency Task Force, an internal group that includes faculty and staff members, was formed and met for the first time in late September. They gathered ideas from across the university for improved efficiencies and cost savings and offered their original report October 31. Now, the Chancellor’s Staff makes its first response to those recommendations.

Great job, committee!

• Have to think “strategic.”
• Use video conferencing to save travel costs
• Have student organizations assist with recycling
• Eliminate paper payment advice for paychecks
The Ohio Valley Conference football championship was so close. Too many turnovers in the first half didn’t help. I feel bad for the kicker (Tom Hansen) having that field goal blocked with 4 seconds to play. We will be OK; maybe we can beat Eastern Kentucky at their place this year. Overall, Jason Simpson and the Skyhawks did a good job. I am happy with the 8-4 record and third-place finish.

November 23, 2008

We survived a tough season and managed to win eight games, but I didn’t think we could get into the FCS playoffs unless we pulled off the win at Auburn. The two big victories against Baker and Concordia were fun, but proved costly now that the season is over.

December 1, 2008

Commencement: 351 graduates

December 13, 2008

WestStar Leadership Program 20th Anniversary — We’ll be celebrating this milestone all year long!!

January 2009
February 2009

This has been a good month for student group recognitions. Both FFA and the Interfraternity Council claimed top awards – each for the 5th consecutive year!!! We are really attracting positive recognition this year in so many areas!

• FFA was named top collegiate chapter in Tennessee.
• IFC brought home the Overall Excellence trophy in competition with 60 universities at the Southeastern Interfraternity Conference in Atlanta.
• We average 70-90 events per month

Each month, the calendar is packed with campus activities of all sorts as these groups and others work very hard to recruit and keep students involved in the university community. Students can join more than 100 organizations – academic clubs, honor societies, service groups, student government, fraternities and sororities, intramural sports and special student associations.

February 3, 2009

Academic Speaker: David Loebel, Music Director and Conductor of the Memphis Symphony Orchestra. *This is his last year with them.

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February 11, 2009

Announced here March 11

Remember to congratulate UTM Recycles! for getting the DOT/Keep Tennessee Beautiful grant.

The UTM Recycles! group recycled 200 tons of cardboard and paper, 25 tons of plastic, 50 tons of scrap metal, 5 tons of aluminum cans, 5 tons of electronic items and 80 tons of food waste into compost. We would double our garbage pickup if we didn’t recycle!
Our enrollment figures continue to reflect good news. A record 7,152 students are enrolled for spring semester, and this tops the previous spring semester high of 6,711 students. That’s the 10th consecutive spring semester increase!

On- and off-campus undergraduate enrollment, dual-enrollment high school students and undergraduate and graduate online programs contributed to this steady growth. Seems more and more students are confident they’ll get a quality education here.

🌟 Fastest-growing 4-year public in state.
🌟 Student-athlete successes in softball, tennis, golf

February 2009

Time for a second response to the Organization and Efficiency Task Force! We need to report one final time where we are with recommendations that were accepted or still under consideration by the Chancellor’s Staff. This hasn’t been easy, and the budget news changes almost daily. I’m thrilled with many of the ideas and where they can take us as a university. These tough times will help us emerge a better university.

• new revenue sources
• reduce number of academic departments by four
• consolidate Extended Campus and Continuing Education and Online and University Studies; transfer Bachelor of University Studies program to the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences
• implement an online catalog for 2009–10
SKYHAWK MEN’S BASKETBALL TEAM
OVC Regular Season Champions

What a dream season!

• Top seed in the conference tournament

• NIT appearance

Then there’s fabulous Lester Hudson –
Sets single-season OVC scoring mark in NIT play—
named OVC player of the year and Male Athlete of the
year for second consecutive season—honorable mention AP
All-American—TSWA Men’s Basketball Player of the
Year—Collegelnsider.com All-American—Lowe’s All-Senior
second team All-American

PLUS 27.5 pts. per game, 1st quadruple double
in NCAA Div. I history! (Nov. 13, 2007)
hawks win conference title

OUVC CHAMPION

UT Martin's victory was a significant moment for the team and its fans. The win secured the OVC title, marking a successful season for the Skyhawks. This achievement was celebrated by the players, coaches, and the university community.

“This is very rewarding, and I am extremely proud of these players and this team,” said Coach Hudson.

The game was a testament to the hard work and dedication of the seniors honored on Senior Night, and it capped off a memorable season for UT Martin.

UTM’s first-ever OVC championship trophy was awarded to the team, capping off a remarkable season.
March 2009

We just announced the return of Maymester, and the student feedback has been positive. A three-week mini-term tucked in between spring semester and the first summer session is just enough time to knock out a class or two before settling in for summer sessions or heading back home for work. Good, student-friendly initiative that STILL GETS THE JOB DONE.

March 17: Academic Speaker, Dr. Kimberly Gray, “Energy and the Environment: The Central Challenge of Sustainability”

History does repeat itself. (This time, 1970s idea without the polyester!!)

April 2, 2009

Academic Speaker: Dr. Robert Hazen, Among the most versatile and prolific scientists active today, will speak about Genesis: The Scientific Quest for Life’s Origins

April 9, 2009

Sad news. We were all touched to hear that Kathleen Elam passed away today. The March Kathleen Elam Appreciation Night at the OVC men’s basketball tournament is a special memory now more than ever. Ms. Kathleen and her husband, the late Tom Elam, were such amazing, staunch supporters of UT Martin throughout the years.

The naming of the multipurpose room in the Bob Carroll Football Building as the Kathleen Elam Room is a tribute to her longtime contributions to athletics and academics.

The couple’s $1 million pledge in 1996 coincided with the naming of the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center. She continued with nearly $1.9 million in gifts to the university after his death. She’ll be missed by those who knew her love of sports, regard for UT Martin and concern for the future of this area.
What a year it has been for our extended-campus centers....

Fall groundbreaking for Selmer expansion back in Nov. and today’s opening of the new Parsons Center. Once again, the community turned out in droves to get a first look at the beautiful center. There was standing room only as Jim Ayers and others told just what the center means to the area. Many people expressed appreciation for making sure a college education is a reality for so many Decatur County students. Time and time again, people came up to me and said how proud they were about the center and what UT Martin is doing in their community.

Send Jason Rushing thank-you note for wonderful address.
May 2009

**SOFTBALL, TOO!**

The softball team gets the prize this year for best comeback effort. The team turned a 4th-place regular-season finish into a tournament title: After dropping the opening tourney game, they played their way to the title. Very admirable.

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**OVC softball crown fits UTM for 1st time**

By UTM Sports Information

JACKSONVILLE, Ala. — The UT Martin softball team made history on Saturday, claiming its first-ever Ohio Valley Conference championship after a 4-1 bettering of Southeast Missouri.

Savannah Roberts homered twice in the tournament, and the win also marks only the second time that a team has forced the deciding game in the conference tournament and gone on to win the championship.

UTM downed SEMO 3-2 in eight innings in Saturday’s first game of the championship round, and repeated as OVC tournament champions.
May 9, 2009

Another large spring commencement — 622 graduates

Good athletics news continues. This time it was the women’s equestrian team — third consecutive time to qualify for the Varsity Equestrian National Championship, AND they left no doubt why they are among the best teams.

We’ve definitely had a good run in sports this year.

May 2009

Hudson graduates!

June 26, 2009

We’ve all been anxiously awaiting the NBA draft results. Today, Lester Hudson DRAFTED!! Boston Celtics. Memphis to Boston... What a story.

ESPN had a really nice article about Lester a while ago: http://sports.espn.go.com/ncb/columns/story?id=3252464
June 2009

No surprise here — As usual, rodeo team finished top in the nationals in Casper, Wyo. We’ve almost come to expect this level of performance, but I don’t want to take it for granted. Great job to the team and Coach Luthi!

June 18, 2009

We observed the Kid College 25th Anniversary today.

1984 – 2009 = 9,246 Kid College participants!

Time Capsule (to dig up in 25 yrs.)

about 500 people attended the celebration.

Nice turnout.

Ron Ramage, Kid College Onsite Coordinator

June 2009

We announced availability of an online Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (with a major in management). With this and our other online bachelor and master’s degree programs, it’s so convenient for our students balancing job, family and other responsibilities to get or complete a degree. I’m reminded time and time again about how important our role in this region really is.
In times like these — if you don’t continue to move forward, you’re going to be left behind …

More than $38 million in capital and maintenance projects, some that spanned several years, were completed this year. Just as amazing — $32 million in additional capital improvement projects are under way or set to begin. We continue to make the investments needed to provide a first-rate educational environment for our growing student body.

• Brehm Hall addition
• major of the Fine Arts Building — really looking forward to seeing the first play
• construction of a new baseball/softball fieldhouse — so needed
• new sports lighting for baseball and softball fields
• new turf on the football field — you should see this.

It’s amazing.

Strong, steady growth

I think we are poised to make really great progress in the year to come. I’m looking forward to it!
Thanks to the following for their assistance:
Bud Grimes, Kara Hooper, Nari Lamb, Rita Mitchell,
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