

# NORTH CAROLINA A&T MAGAZINE

FALL-WINTER 2022-2023



***DRIVING INTO  
THE FUTURE***

**44 HUMBLE  
BEGINNINGS**

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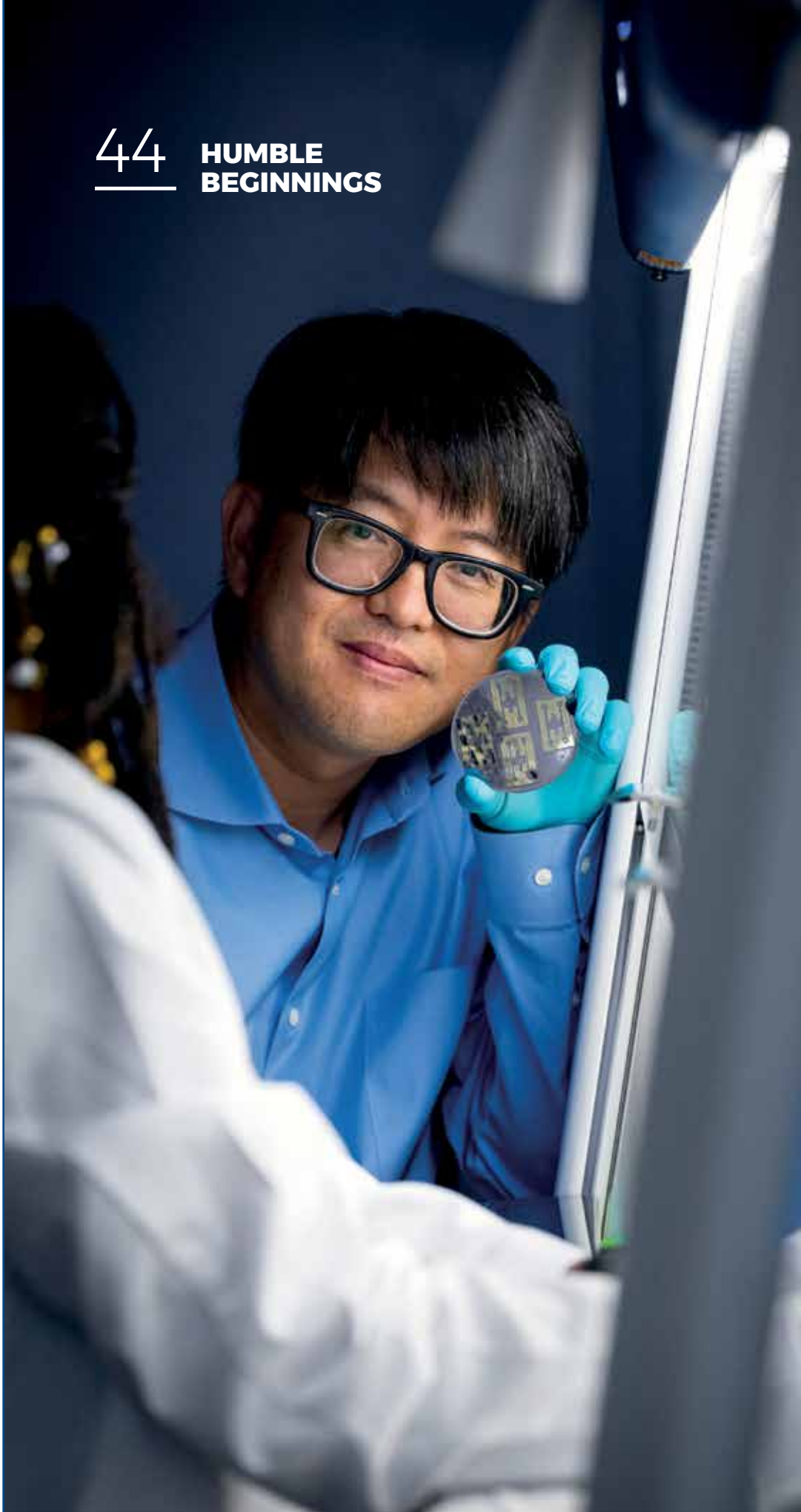
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**CONTENTS**



**57**  
**KEEPING IT  
REAL**



**62**  
**OUT OF THIS  
WORLD**

**46**  
**ON THE COVER**



One of N.C. A&T's Aggie Auto (autonomous)  
shuttles on the test track at Gateway  
Research Park, North Campus

**DEPARTMENTS**

- 2 CAMPUS HIGHLIGHTS**
- 38 ATHLETICS**
- 66 ALUMNI NOTES**
- 70 IN MEMORIAM**
- 72 PEOPLE BEHIND  
THE SCHOLARSHIPS**



**60**  
**HIS LIFE'S  
WORK**

# ‘ENGINEERING NORTH CAROLINA’S FUTURE’ INVESTS \$35M IN N.C. A&T

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University will add new leading faculty, enroll more top engineering students and create world-class research facilities with \$35 million in new capital and operational state funding from the Engineering North Carolina’s Future (ENCF) program.

ENCF is a special initiative of the N.C. General Assembly aimed at dramatically beefing up the high-tech workforce for a state exploding in new business growth, with companies such as Apple, Toyota, Merck, Honda and Boom Supersonic either announcing new campuses or operations in North Carolina over the past year.

Already the nation’s No. 1 university in graduation of Black engineers, North Carolina A&T and its College of Engineering are prepared to do much more with the new allocations from ENCF.

“The substantial and welcome investments for our university will expand our capabilities to prepare talented and highly competitive students in engineering, computer science and related disciplines,” said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr., himself a two-time graduate of A&T in electrical engineering.

“These investments also come as North Carolina A&T is executing strategy across the board to enhance our standing as a research institution and elevate our classification to

RI-Very High Research Activity in the Carnegie Classifications for higher education. This new funding recognizes that momentum, and frankly, it could not have come at a better time.”

ENCF funds will address a range of priorities:

- **Recruitment and retention** of top undergraduate and graduate students, which will enjoy \$2.5 million in new support
- **Creation of four new advanced engineering laboratories**—The Convergence Engineering Applications Lab, the Interdisciplinary Core Research Lab, the Metaverse Engineering Lab and a glass technology research lab
- **Expansion of facilities** in engineering and the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering, supporting the latter’s ascent among the nation’s top nanoscience programs in America

A&T’s national leadership in STEM education generally, and its preeminence in engineering and computer science, make it a high-demand partner for the high-tech sector, as do its expanding degree and certificate programs. The university delivers new graduates who are consistently recognized as exceptionally well prepared for innovation, leadership and impact.

In February of this year, A&T opened the Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering and Research Complex, a new \$90-million facility that boasts cutting-edge technology, including humanoid robotics, a holographic design studio, a state-of-the-art cycloramic driving simulator and advanced support for A&T’s range of self-driving vehicles and autonomous drones.

The ENCF allocations will enable A&T to build on the considerable momentum created by strong student and corporate interest in the Martin Complex. The College of Engineering, which ranks among the nation’s top 150 doctoral degree-granting programs in engineering, enrolled more than 2,300 students this academic year. It is responsible for nearly half of the university’s graduates each year in “critical workforce” disciplines.

Those graduates enjoy exceptional opportunities in the workplace. A&T ranks second among the UNC System’s 16 university campuses in early career earnings for its alumni—a position fueled by engineering and computer science graduates, whose starting salaries typically exceed \$65,000.

The College of Engineering also makes significant contributions to A&T’s annual economic impact, most recently valued at nearly \$1.5 billion, most of which is concentrated in the 10 counties comprising the Piedmont Triad region.

## N.C. A&T HAS ANOTHER RECORD YEAR IN RESEARCH FUNDING

# \$97.3 million in awards

By Jamie Crockett, Science Writer, and Jackie Torok, Director of Media Relations

Sponsored research activities at North Carolina A&T expanded significantly in fiscal year 2022, supported by a second consecutive record year in contracts and grants to A&T faculty with researchers earning \$97.3 million in awards. That marked an increase of \$19.2 million over the previous fiscal year and a nearly 62% in total research funding over the past two years.

Faculty across the university are increasingly prominent as principal or co-principal investigators on significant federally funded projects of interest to North Carolinians and the world of science more broadly.

A&T faculty also were awarded eight U.S. patents in FY22—the most ever in a single fiscal over the university’s 132-year history.

Among the many projects to win funding are efforts to keep food service workers safe from airborne viruses, increase flood-mapping capabilities, reduce household energy expenses, expand Alzheimer’s disease research frontiers and improve automatic speech recognition systems.

“It’s important to underscore that this funding, awarded competitively, is earned through the creativity and focus of our talented faculty,” said North Carolina A&T Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. “It enables them to make important, impactful advances in such areas as autonomous vehicle technology, biomaterials, nanoengineering and more.

“I’m grateful for the outstanding effort they collectively put forward.”

The following are among the projects that received funding in FY22:

◆ **A \$1.05 million N.C. Department of Environmental Quality grant** to principal investigator Raymond Tesiero, Ph.D., in support of two research projects that will provide cost-effective solutions to low-income housing challenges by helping homeowners save energy and reduce household expenses. This and other research and apprenticeship projects in clean energy were piloted alongside colleagues Balakrishna Gokaraju, Ph.D., and Greg Monty, Ph.D., whose work resulted in a major award from the U.S. Department of Commerce last week.

◆ **A \$600,000 USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture grant** to lead investigator Salam Ibrahim, Ph.D., will help establish an airborne virus transmission laboratory model to create and disseminate best practices to keep employees safe and address gaps in evidence-based decision-making that the COVID-19 pandemic revealed in the food-processing industry.

◆ **A \$473,615 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration grant** to Leila Hashemi Beni, Ph.D., will support her team’s work to address gaps in flood extent mapping capabilities by using drones to gather data that is challenging to capture otherwise. The data will assist regional and federal agencies to better manage rescue operations and assess damages following a major storm event.

◆ **A \$324,000 National Institutes of Health National Institute of General Medical Sciences grant** to lead investigator Yeoheung Yun, Ph.D., will expand previous Alzheimer’s disease research by supporting Yun’s development of

a reproducible, 3D membrane-free neuro-gliovascular-immune system. If successful, this project will “reduce animal use, fill the scientific gap between in vitro and vivo models and accelerate drug screening and discovery.” For more on Yun, see page 44.

◆ **A \$320,565 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF)** for collaborative research on speech science to improve automatic speech recognition systems that are becoming ubiquitous in modern life. Joseph D. Stephens, Ph.D., is the principal investigator for the project, which has received funding through the NSF Build and Broaden Program. “We will help the science to become more inclusive by investigating how human listeners understand variable speech, and will help diversify the field by increasing the capacity and involvement of students from groups that are underrepresented in speech science,” said Stephens.

“Our faculty are deepening their leadership and reputations across numerous areas of scientific interest, both on their own and in collaboration with peers across campus and around the country,” said Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development Eric Muth, Ph.D. “The growth for which they were responsible last year is not only great for the projects they’re involved in now, but for those they will pursue in the future.”

Research funding is already off to a brisk start in the current fiscal year, with a \$23.7 million American Rescue Plan Good Jobs Challenge grant announced last week from the U.S. Department of Commerce to create an energy workforce training program.

MAKING NEWS



President Joe Biden

L-R: Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr., second-year elementary education student and February One Scholar Jayden Seay, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona and First Lady Jill Biden

## PRESIDENT AND FIRST LADY BIDEN KICK OFF NATIONAL TOURS AT N.C. A&T

Of all the many places across the country President Joe Biden could have chosen to boost his monumental “Building A Better America” plan, he chose North Carolina A&T. In an April 14 visit that drew media coverage from around the world, the 46th president of the United States enthusiastically explained his decision.

“A&T is an extraordinary university with a great tradition – an HBCU tradition. I’ve been on a lot of

university campuses – as a matter of fact, for four years, I was a full professor at the University of Pennsylvania. And North Carolina A&T is a really impressive place with a lot of very impressive students,” said Biden, surrounded by media and dignitaries following a tour of the Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex.

In a policy speech later that day before a packed ballroom in the

Alumni-Foundation Event Center, the president connected the dots between A&T’s leadership in STEM education and research and the needs of a nation focused on increasing its global standing in the advanced manufacturing sector. “America used to be ranked No. 1 in the world in investing in the future. Now we’re ranked No. 9 on research and development. Other countries are closing in fast,” Biden said. “We can and we must change that.”

Biden’s plan later became the massive CHIPS and Science Act of 2022, which he signed into law in August.

Included in the law are provisions of potential interest to North Carolina A&T students and faculty. A major investment in funding for wireless supply chain innovation, for instance, could have a significant effect on graduates of A&T’s Supply Chain Management and Marketing program, ranked no. 21 nationally for its bachelor’s degree and 19th for the Supply Chain Management concentration of its MBA program.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator and A&T alumnus Michael S. Regan ‘98,

North Carolina Governor Cooper and U.S. Congresswoman Kathy Manning (NC-06) also spoke at the event where A&T senior electrical engineering student Malkam Hawkins introduced the president.

On Sept. 12, First Lady Jill Biden and U.S. Secretary of Education Michael Cardona made North Carolina A&T their first stop for the Department of Education’s Road to Success Back to School Bus Tour for academic year 2022-23.

“Teaching isn’t what we do, it’s who we are,” said Biden, who teaches at Northern Virginia Community College. “Obstacles like student loans, low salaries, large class

sizes and safety concerns have discouraged potential teachers.

“So, if we want to add more bright, talented people into this field, if we want educators to be able to do what they do best, we have to give them the support that they – or you all – deserve, we have to come to places like North Carolina A&T and say, ‘We need you.’”

Cardona agreed saying, “Whatever you’re doing at A&T, and whatever you will do, you know that your school is raising the bar. A&T is a testament to something any good teacher knows: If you set high expectations and you give students access to opportunity, they deliver.”

MAKING NEWS

## N.C. A&T, IBM TO ESTABLISH CYBERSECURITY LEADERSHIP CENTER, BOOST DIVERSITY IN FIELD

By Jamie Crockett, Science Writer

North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University will collaborate with IBM to establish a virtual Cybersecurity Leadership Center aimed at enhancing opportunities for learning, application and professional development for students and faculty.

“North Carolina A&T State University being chosen as one of the first six HBCU (historically Black college and university) Cybersecurity Leadership Centers is a great privilege that will provide our students with access to top-notch education, technology, and industry professionals and will ensure the future cybersecurity workforce will be diverse, experienced and capable of protecting this country,” said Hossein Sarrafzadeh, Ph.D., director of the Center of Excellence in Cybersecurity Research, Education and Outreach (CREO).

“IBM recognizes the untapped talent at HBCUs, and with this investment, they are building a cybersecurity education infrastructure that will propel underrepresented communities to the forefront of security leadership,” Sarrafzadeh added.

N.C. A&T joins this initiative with Clark Atlanta University, Morgan State University, South Carolina State University, Southern University System and Xavier University of Louisiana.

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***“We believe that the most promising job candidates for today’s demanding careers will come from communities that may have been historically overlooked or excluded ...”***

— Justina Nixon-Saintil, vice president, IBM Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental, Social and Governance

IBM will provide access to the following:

- **Cybersecurity curricula.** IBM will develop for each HBCU a customized IBM Security Learning Academy portal—an IBM client offering—including courses designed to help the university enhance its cybersecurity education portfolio.
- **Immersive learning experience.** Faculty and students will have an opportunity to benefit from IBM Security’s Command Center, through which they can experience a highly realistic, simulated cyberattack, designed to prepare them and train them on response techniques. Moreover, faculty will have access to consultation sessions with IBM technical personnel on cybersecurity.
- **Cloud access.** IBM will provide faculty and students with no-cost access to multiple SaaS IBM Cloud environments.

In a recent announcement, IBM noted the Cybersecurity Leadership Center is the result of a pledge the company’s leaders made last year in efforts to “build a more diverse U.S. cyber workforce” and “underscore IBM’s focus on providing STEM job training to traditionally underrepresented communities as part of its commitment to skill 30 million people worldwide by 2030 to create equitable, inclusive economic opportunities while also addressing a longstanding STEM job skills shortage impacting the business community.”

“We believe that the most promising job candidates for today’s demanding careers will come from communities that may have been historically overlooked or excluded due to outdated hiring policies and old-fashioned credentialing,” said Justina Nixon-Saintil, vice president, IBM Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental, Social and Governance. “That’s why we’re uniting the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors to cultivate STEM talent from underrepresented communities to address the world’s most critical challenges.”

The university has cemented its leadership in cybersecurity research and its preparation of the next generation of leaders in the field through CREO and the College of Engineering, which consistently garners national recognition, including recent graduate program rankings for the college and its computer science program in U.S. News & World Report.

The Cybersecurity Leadership Center builds upon an already-existing relationship between A&T and the company, following the university’s designation as an IBM-HBCU Quantum Research Center.

## RESEARCHERS TO EXAMINE MICROBIAL COMMUNITIES



The Engineering Research Center for Precision Microbiome Engineering, or PreMiEr, aims to develop diagnostic tools and engineering approaches that promote building designs for preventing the colonization of harmful bacteria, fungi or viruses while encouraging beneficial microorganisms.

PreMiEr is funded by a five-year, \$26 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF), renewable for a second five-year, \$26 million term. The Duke center is one of four new Engineering Research Centers (ERCs) announced by the agency in August.

"This center touches on the struggles any parent or caregiver undergoes because they want to make the best decisions about what their loved ones are exposed to," said Claudia Gunsch, Ph.D., professor of civil and environmental engineering at Duke and the director of PreMiEr.

"We want to be able to go into hospital rooms or other closed environments and devise treatment strategies for unwanted microbes," Gunsch added. "That's something that is achievable in the short term. For the long term, we want to develop the tools, procedures and knowledge base needed to identify and define what a healthy microbiome looks like and devise approaches for promoting those healthy microbiomes across a wide range of built environments."

Human beings spend more than 90% of their time within built

environments—the homes, offices, cars, hospitals, stores and other manmade enclosures that underpin modern society. Yet very little is known about the ever-present but largely invisible populations of microorganisms (built environment microbiomes) that grow and live in these spaces.

"PreMiEr represents a logical continuation in an ongoing collaboration between Duke and North Carolina A&T State University in microbiome research," said Joseph Graves Jr., professor of biological sciences at N.C. A&T. "Researchers at A&T will be contributing much of the foundational research that will allow us to better understand the microbiomes of built environments."

PreMiEr will focus its efforts through an inclusive and collaborative lens to ensure that any of the questions asked or solutions pursued incorporate a wide range of cultural and societal viewpoints. This is reflected in the structure of the research center, which includes a core area for investigating the societal and ethical implications of microbiome engineering to innovate responsibly.

"We have been particularly interested in how the novel environments that will be produced by long-term space travel will alter the human microbiome," Graves said. "We have already performed one of the only long-term studies of the impact of microgravity and silver (a material used in water purification in space) on a microorganism."

Joining Duke and A&T in this effort are the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, UNC Carolina and North Carolina State University.


Of the more than 40 researchers, almost half are women and nearly 20% belong to historically marginalized groups in STEM, contributing to the development of a diverse workforce capable of tackling these critical challenges into the future.

The NSF ERC program supports convergent research that will lead to strong societal impact. Each ERC has interacting foundational components that go beyond the research project, including engineering workforce development at all participant stages, fostering a culture of diversity and inclusion where all participants gain mutual benefit, and creating value within an innovation ecosystem that will outlast the lifetime of the ERC. The program was created in 1984 to bring technology-based industry and universities together in an effort to strengthen the competitive position of American industry in the global marketplace.

"For decades, NSF Engineering Research Centers have transformed technologies and fostered innovations in the United States through bold research, collaborative partnerships, and a deep commitment to inclusion and broadening participation," said Sethuraman Panchanathan, Ph.D., director of NSF. "The new NSF centers will continue the legacy of impacts that improve lives across the Nation."

North Carolina A&T scientists will join with colleagues at Duke University to study microbial communities within the built environments in which people work, live and play.

## SOCIAL WORK PROGRAMS EARN TOP 10 RANKING

North Carolina A&T has been **RANKED**  **AMONG THE BEST SOCIAL WORK SCHOOLS IN NORTH CAROLINA** for 2022 by Social Work Degree Center.

N.C. A&T is the **ONLY**  **HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY** named to the website's Top 10 list.

STUDENTS CAN EARN **A B.A. IN SOCIOLOGY, A BSW, AN MSW AND PH.D.** in social work, the latter two from the Joint Programs in Social Work with UNC Greensboro.

"The BSW is a four-year program that prepares students to become effective social workers in various roles that ultimately champion human rights at all levels" while "the MSW program focuses on preparing students to work in a multicultural environment," the website notes. "Graduates are ready to promote economic and social justice that benefits the population of North Carolina."

The joint MSW is ranked among **THE TOP 75 SUCH PROGRAMS**  in the United States, according to U.S. News & World Report's Graduate School rankings for 2022.

MAKING NEWS

# AHA AWARDS \$2.3M FOR RESEARCH TO IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

By Lydian Bernhardt, Interim Director of Communications, College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES)

A team from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has been awarded a four-year, \$2.3 million grant from the American Heart Association to study ways to improve outcomes among women who are more likely to experience pregnancy complications because of poor heart health.

Building Equitable Linkages with Interprofessional Education Valuing Everyone (BELIEVE) will be led by Janiya Mitnaul Williams, director of the Human Lactation Program at N.C. A&T; Kimberly D. Harper, perinatal neonatal outreach coordinator at the UNC School of Medicine; Alison Stuebe, M.D., M.Sc., a professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the UNC School of Medicine; and Kimberly C. Harper, Ph.D., an associate professor in A&T's English department whose research interests include Black maternal health and reproductive justice.

The project's goal is to assess gaps in current practice, create a curriculum to address them, and implement the curriculum across a network of hospital and community providers.

"The overarching goal of our work is to transform perinatal and reproductive health services so that each mother, birthing person, and health team member is seen, heard and valued," Williams said. "The curriculum that we create will help to establish trust and healing from birth-related trauma and professional moral injury, and share it with a national audience."

"Through this training, birthing people, community members and health team members will be able to engage in holistic, person-centered, collaborative care that can reverse the structural racism and mistrust that drives disparities in maternal and infant outcomes."

Pre-eclampsia, or high blood pressure during pregnancy and in the postpartum period, is the No. 1 killer of Black women during pregnancy or postpartum. Systemic racism is one of the contributors to high blood pressure, Williams said.

"In 2020, a Black birthing woman in the United States was 2.9 times as likely to die as a non-Hispanic white woman," Williams said. "The maternal mortality rate for Black women in

the United States was 55.3 deaths per 100,000 live births, which exceeds the national maternal mortality rates in more than 100 countries worldwide.

"For Black infants, the mortality rate is 10.6 per 1,000 live births, which is higher than that of more than 80 countries. These disparities are rooted in structural racism, and they require holistic solutions that address the cultural norms and practices that define the distribution of health care."

BELIEVE is one of five nationwide projects funded by the American Heart Association as part of its Health Equity Research Network on Disparities in Maternal-Infant Health Outcomes, a \$20 million program with the goal of improving heart health, particularly among women of color.

A&T will also take the lead in engaging a diverse population of participants from among historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) to work with the project. Other collaborators include the University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, The Ohio State University and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.



Janiya Mitnaul Williams, right, works with a student in N.C. A&T's lactation program. Lactation students will help implement a curriculum that Williams and her partners developed with the support of an American Heart Association grant.

BELIEVE has three main components:

- 1). First, the team will partner with community-based organizations and national leaders in Black maternal health to identify gaps in current care and discover the structural changes that are needed to support sustained change and improve maternal outcomes.
- 2). Second, the team will develop and test the BELIEVE curriculum both virtually and in-person. Pre-licensure interdisciplinary teams will include students enrolled in programs such as medicine, nursing, lactation, doula, social work, and nutrition.

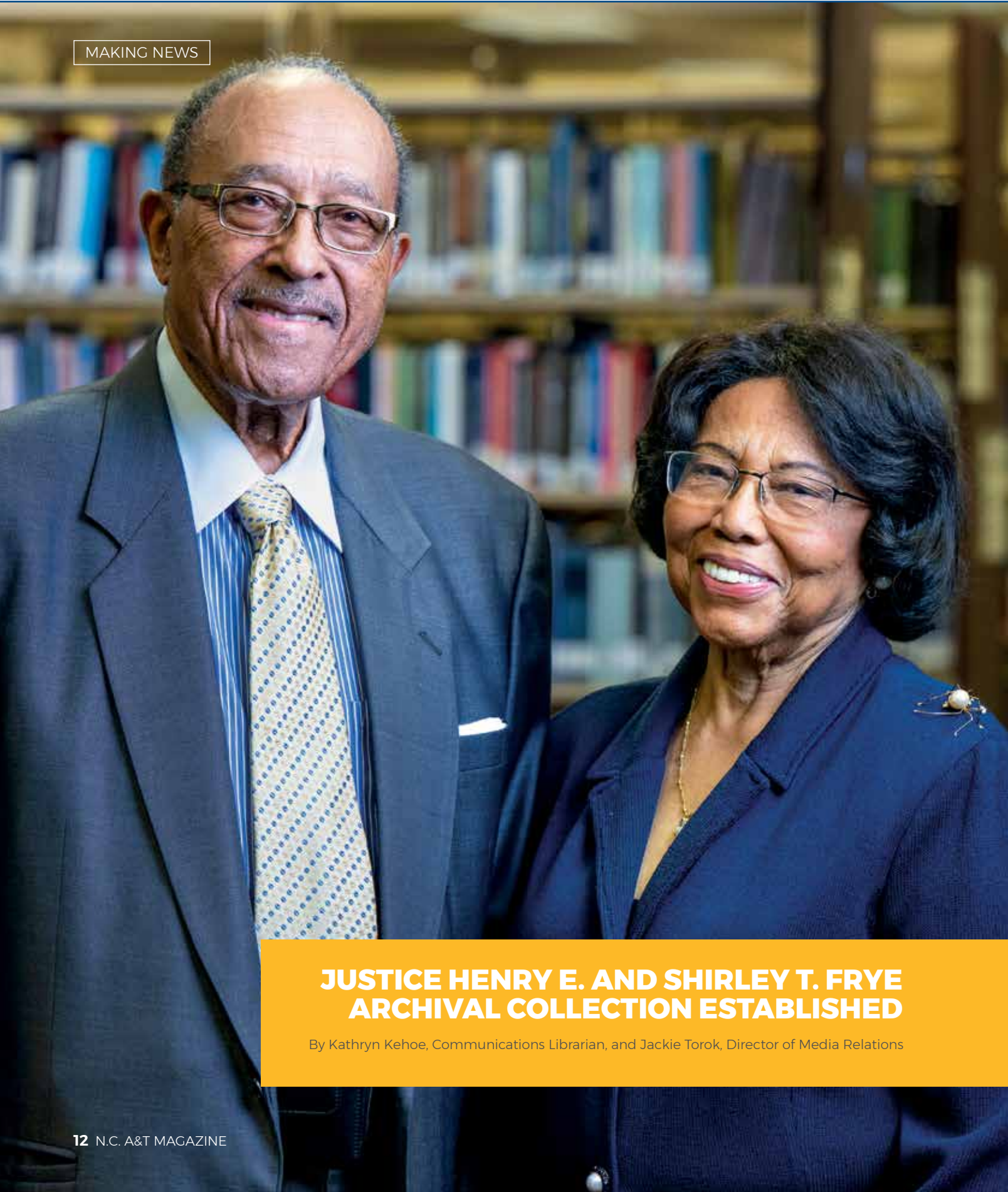
Harper, an expert in technical writing, bias and visual rhetoric, which includes the ways images are used to include or exclude others, will take the lead in writing BELIEVE's curriculum and best practices to help address implicit biases that providers may have. The students in A&T's Lactation Certificate Program, in the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, will take part in the curriculum and help develop its next phases.

Teams from four hospitals in central North Carolina, including Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital, Duke University Hospital and UNC Hospitals, will participate in piloting and development.

- 3). Finally, the team will implement the BELIEVE curriculum and quantify its impact through assessments, simulated interactions among birthing people and health teams, and interviews.

"To work on dismantling systemic racism in the health care system requires this kind of holistic approach," Williams said. "We expect that this curriculum will help to establish the trust and healing that lead to better outcomes."

MAKING NEWS



**JUSTICE HENRY E. AND SHIRLEY T. FRYE ARCHIVAL COLLECTION ESTABLISHED**

By Kathryn Kehoe, Communications Librarian, and Jackie Torok, Director of Media Relations

Seventy years after Chief Justice Henry Frye and Shirley Frye met as undergraduates at North Carolina A&T, the legendary couple donated their personal archives to the university's F.D. Bluford Library.

The acquisition of this collection, which was announced following the university's Student Honors Convocation in April, represents more than five decades of materials that document the Fryes' historic legacy in civil rights, social justice and civic engagement.

The materials will establish the Justice Henry E. and Shirley T. Frye Archival Collection, which will be preserved, protected and made accessible to the university, the public and the world for study, research and discussion.

The Fryes both graduated from N.C. A&T in 1953 and went on to become local, state and national trailblazers, each in their own right.

Shirley Frye, who received the 2022 Triad Business Journal's Outstanding Women in Business Special Achievement Award in May, has earned many accolades in her lifetime, including The (Greensboro, North Carolina) News & Record Woman of the Year Award for 2017 and the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, one of North Carolina's highest civilian honors.

After earning her B.S. in education and English with high honors, Shirley Frye taught at Washington Elementary School then earned a master's degree in special education and psychology to become a special education teacher serving the Greensboro community. Later, she returned to A&T as assistant vice chancellor for development and university relations and as special assistant to the chancellor before her career led her to serve as special assistant to the president and director of planned giving at neighboring Bennett College. She also worked for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and retired as vice president of community relations at WFMY News 2, where she won an Emmy.

Throughout her career, Shirley Frye has also been a devoted community volunteer. She led the integration of Greensboro's two segregated YWCAs in the 1970s, serving as the new organization's first president and with her work used as a model for YWCAs across the country. The city's newest YWCA building is named in her honor. Additionally, she chaired the steering committee

for Action Greensboro, served on the Greensboro City Schools Board of Education and in leadership positions at United Way of Greater Greensboro, N.C. A&T Real Estate Foundation Board, High Point University Board of Trustees and others.

"Shirley Frye is the most requested woman in the archives," said James Stewart, archives and special collections librarian at A&T. "Her leadership and civic engagement are of the highest order and her dedication to public service is matched by that of her husband, Justice Henry Frye."

Henry Frye joined the Air Force upon graduating with highest honors from A&T. When he returned home, he married Shirley Taylor on Aug. 25, 1956—the same day he was denied the right to vote. This act of discrimination fueled his desire to build an equitable America, and in 1959 he became the first African American student to complete all three years of study and graduate from the University of North Carolina School of Law.

His continued hard work and dedication led to a series of additional firsts: the first African American assistant U.S. district attorney (1963); first Black man in the 20th century to be elected to the N.C. General Assembly (1968); first African American appointed to the N.C. Supreme Court (1983); and first African American chief justice of the N.C. Supreme Court (1999).

***The collection represents more than five decades of materials that document the Fryes' legacy in civil rights, social justice and civic engagement.***

While making a career out of making North Carolina history, Henry Frye also remained dedicated to serving Greensboro through endeavors such as establishing Greensboro National Bank to combat lending discrimination against Black business owners in the city. He is also moved by poetry, having memorized Edgar Albert Guest's "It Couldn't Be Done" and writing a poem for his wife on the occasion of their 65th wedding anniversary that was published in The News & Record.

"I am proud that my alma mater, which gave me my foundation to do all I was able to do, is receiving this collection," he said.



MAKING NEWS

## PARTNERSHIP FORMED WITH CHEMOURS TO ENHANCE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

By Jamie Crockett, Science Writer

Over the next three years, North Carolina A&T and The Chemours Company will partner to enhance research, educational and coaching opportunities for faculty and graduate students in areas related to chemistry and chemical engineering.



The company will provide funding for faculty-led research proposals that are of mutual interest and are collaboratively selected following the university's annual request for proposals. The funding also will support at least one graduate student for each project, and the research team will have access to coaching from Chemours' scientists and engineers. Additionally, N.C. A&T and Chemours have agreed to pursue extramural funding, which could support the establishment of a center of excellence in water treatment, among other initiatives.

"N.C. A&T is known for producing strong STEM graduates from richly diverse backgrounds. We're excited to work with Chemours on challenging new technical programs that will drive research with the potential to benefit people everywhere," said Eric Muth, Ph.D., vice chancellor for research and economic development. "Working alongside our distinguished faculty, our students will also benefit from interaction and mentoring from Chemours' leading scientists. We look forward to bringing new opportunities to advance our research and

academic programming consistent with our land-grant mission."

This partnership builds upon Chemours' previous scholarship support of A&T students and the company's 2030 Corporate Responsibility Commitment goals which include a commitment to reduce process emissions of fluorinated organic chemicals by 99% or more.

"Chemours is a company focused on innovation and sustainable solutions, with a bedrock commitment to responsible manufacturing. We're excited to partner with a premier institution like N.C. A&T to help advance new research to meet the world's demands now and in the days to come," said Chemours Vice President of Technology Randal King. "N.C. A&T's students represent the future of chemistry, and we've been fortunate to fund scholarships for several students attending the university through our Future of Chemistry Scholarship program and the Future of STEM Scholars Initiative. This agreement is a natural next step in our relationship, and we look

forward to deepening our partnership with N.C. A&T and engaging with their faculty and students."

A&T is uniquely positioned to contribute to this partnership and the goal of driving new science in water treatment as it is home to leading experts in multiple disciplines across campus whose research interests explore and address PFAS or other environmental challenges.

For example, the research of Dongyang "Sunny" Deng, Ph.D., an associate professor in the Department of Built Environment in the College of Science and Technology, includes a focus on "physical, chemical and biological wastewater treatment technology development and chemical spill and fate in the environment."

Deng previously received the Outstanding Young Investigator award during a university celebration of faculty excellence event. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency also invited her to review "an emerging contaminant proposal regarding PFAS in agricultural wastewater."

Renzun Zhao, Ph.D., an assistant professor of environmental engineering in the College of Engineering, research goals are to "promote environmental sustainability, by understanding the complex water-energy interrelationship and mitigating the environmental impacts by industrial activities, with emphasis on water/wastewater and solid/hazardous waste."

Additionally, Zhao was a mentor for civil engineering undergraduate student Myles Greer for his project selected for Virginia Tech's 2021 Nanotechnology Entrepreneurship Challenge project, which focused on repurposing coal fly ash on a nanoscale.

Zhao recently received an Environmental Enhancement Grant from N.C. Attorney General Josh Stein to lead a project which will partly focus on characterizing, measuring the amount of and removing dissolved organic nitrogen found in liquid waste generated from landfills in eastern North Carolina.

Niroj Aryal, Ph.D., an assistant professor in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences (CAES), focuses partly on emerging pollutants, watershed and stormwater management. He and other CAES colleagues recently published "A Review on Constructed Treatment Wetlands for Removal of Pollutants in the Agricultural Runoff" in Sustainability.

Finally, EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan, who graduated from CAES with a B.S. in earth and environmental science, announced last fall the agency's roadmap to address PFAS contamination as well as implementing a new testing strategy for PFAS manufacturers nationwide.

## N.C. A&T CONTINUES ITS ASCENT IN U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT GRADUATE RANKINGS

North Carolina A&T continued its ascent in the U.S. News & World Report graduate program rankings, showing up with national rankings in four key academic areas.

Graduate programs in the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics led the pack, with its highest ranking yet at No. 94 nationally. The Deese College broke into the top 100 last year, and continues to be the highest-ranked public HBCU graduate business program in the nation.

N.C. A&T's College of Engineering, the nation's top college in graduation of African American engineers, earned two major rankings: No. 146 among all doctoral-granting engineering schools, and No. 175 in computer science. Only three other North Carolina graduate engineering programs rank higher. A&T is ranked No. 175 in computer science, with only four in-state programs ahead.

Finally, A&T is among the nation's top 300 biology programs, with a ranking of 275. The College of Science and Technology program is one of eight across the state to earn a national ranking.

In the U.S. News Online Graduate Program rankings, A&T was already ranked 19th among all universities in information technology and No. 20 in such programs for veterans.

"Our growth in quality in graduate programs is matched by our growth in applications and enrollment, which has grown by more than 14% over the past three years, in the midst of a pandemic," said Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Tonya Smith-Jackson, Ph.D. "As a doctoral-granting land grant institution, we take very seriously our commitment to the students of this state in making strong, meaningful graduate programs available to them. We look forward to continued growth in the years ahead."

A&T is now in its eighth year as America's largest HBCU, according to U.S. Department of Education data. It is ranked No. 1 among all HBCUs by Money magazine and Washington Monthly magazine, as well as the top-ranked public HBCU by Forbes.

MAKING NEWS



## CHANCELLOR'S SPEAKER SERIES ADDRESSES BUILDING BLACK WEALTH AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Earvin "Magic" Johnson



Mellody Hobson

foundational components of investing and finance, integrating a degree with entrepreneurial pursuits, career and plan roadblocks, corporate success and more.

Hobson concluded the conversation with the considerable need to improve financial literacy.

"If I could change one thing, if I were queen for a day, and if I could just wave my wand, it's that we would be teaching money and investing starting in grade school," she said. "I think financial knowledge and the language of money is like a foreign language. The earlier you start, the better you will be."

Johnson shared his personal story of business development and practical knowledge with a capacity-filled audience at North Carolina A&T's Harrison Auditorium on March 29.

Nearly as soon as he took the stage, Johnson admonished attendees to understand one thing above all else: "If you don't dream it, you can't become it." Then he added, "See yourself in that [CEO] position. Here it is 40 years later, and I am that CEO."

Johnson's statement referenced his own story of working as a young janitor of a company, but envisioning himself as the CEO.

Throughout the evening, he referenced the power of investing in urban America by way of increased housing and retail opportunities as well as job creation.

"A lot of money leaves our communities because somebody else owns the businesses. We need our own businesses," he said.

In addition to numerous other ventures, Johnson thrived with Magic Johnson movie theaters and Starbucks franchise stores located in urban areas. Knowing his customer base was key and continues to be key to his success.

By Tonya D. Dixon '04, '21, Director of Digital Content

Global finance expert Mellody Hobson and business mogul Earvin "Magic" Johnson shared their personal stories and tried-and-true advice during their respective keynote presentations for the 2021-22 Chancellor's Speaker Series. To kick off the 2022-23 series, actor, director and director Tracee Ellis Ross took center stage to discuss empowering women.

The first event, on Feb. 17, was virtual, but to the delight of viewers the conversation progressed along the lines of an intimate conversation between trusted advisors—Hobson and moderator/N.C. A&T graduate Ebony Thomas '97.

Hobson addressed one of the top roadblocks to Black wealth creation and proliferation—it is taboo to talk about money—and that it must be dispelled.

"When I was very young, my mother had me paying the check. In the beginning it was handing the money over the counter, then it was counting the change," she said, noting the very act of participating in the process and exchange of money provides a sense of clarity for children at a young age.

The conversation navigated and addressed issues specific to college students, including student loan repayment,

***Mellody Hobson and Earvin "Magic" Johnson share wealth (of knowledge), while Tracee Ellis Ross has a conversation on empowerment.***

MAKING NEWS

On Oct. 4, Ross was met by a sold-out Harrison Auditorium eager to hear her views on “Empowered: A Conversation About Women’s Rights.”

From the moment the curtains opened, the anticipation was high and the energy never waned. Ross and moderator, alumna and obstetrician-gynecologist Dr. Nicole Rankins '98 settled into an engaging conversation that touched on health and welfare, wellness, representation, success and self-empowerment.

In response to her thoughts on the implicit requirement that women must overproduce for equal treatment, Ross said that not only are women enough, but women are worthy and powerful: “Those are facts. Even though the world doesn’t always mirror that back.”

After exploring the complexities and obstacles women historically have had to overcome, the conversation turned toward entrepreneurship, specifically how women are breaking barriers and developing the products and services they want and need. Ross shared the evolution of her haircare line, Pattern Beauty, which has been 10 years in the making.

“I’m excited to have total creative control,” she said.

Ross said she certainly endured doubt, but she knew what she wanted and was willing to wait until she could provide a product she was proud to offer.

“I want to promise something with the [Pattern Beauty] brand ... everything with the company runs through the mission.”

Touching on the recent Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision, Ross and Rankins shared their concerns in a moment that nearly silenced the room.

Out of the country at the time of the announcement, Ross said she was overwhelmed and had to gather her thoughts through journaling. “I am worthy. I am more than the parts of my body. I am a whole being,” she said in summation.

She added that the antidote to fear, whenever it creeps in, is being well informed. “Getting information is part of being empowered,” she said.

“We should all have the right to whatever happens in our bodies. Full stop,” said Rankins. “Historically, as women, we haven’t had control over our own bodies.”

As the conversation drew to a close, Ross discussed how she has evolved and grown into the woman she is today, the importance of intentionality with your own path, advocating for one another and the power of voting.

“Even as a child, when I saw things unfair, I think that was me beginning to be a fighter for justice and showing up for others,” she said. “My freedom is inextricably tied to yours and others. I have decided to be intentional and purposeful about how I use my voice and the agency I have.

“Don’t compare your insides to other people’s outsides. Genuinely make space for yourself in the world and honor your heart. Don’t live a life that’s anyone’s but your own. I just want you guys to thrive.”



**“Don’t compare your insides to other people’s outsides.”**  
 — Tracee Ellis Ross



Dr. Nicole Rankins (moderator) and Tracee Ellis Ross

MAKING NEWS

# N.C. A&T HITS HIGH MARKS

By Jackie Torok, Director of Media Relations

Following a year when A&T generated a record \$181.4 million through the eight-year Campaign for North Carolina A&T—believed to be the largest capital campaign total ever raised by a public historically Black college or university (HBCU)—the university continues to attract national attention for its own success and champion that of its fellow HBCUs.

In June, Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. represented HBCUs across the country as part of the 2022 Business Roundtable Racial Equity and Justice Event, “Bridging the Gap: Creating Wealth through Equitable Opportunity,” in Washington, D.C.

Martin served on a panel with Marvin Ellison, chairman, president and CEO of Lowe’s Companies Inc., and Robert Smith, founder, chairman and CEO of Vista Equity Partners, to speak on “Strengthening Diversity in the Workforce: Partnering with HBCUs” with moderator CNBC Senior White House Correspondent Kayla Tausche.

“Our alumni have been and continue to be an excellent source of support for current students. We know we can count on our alumni to reach back and help their fellow Aggies find success,” said Martin. “We have also heavily invested in student success initiatives—such as free textbooks and iPads and free summer school sessions – that are intended to minimize the debt

students incur to begin with by both reducing their expenses and accelerating their time to degree.”

Provost Emerita Beryl McEwen joined other HBCU leaders on June 17 to address the Professional Pipeline Development Group at the New York Stock Exchange. She shared details on A&T’s research, corporate collaborations and overall ascent as a research university, helping to show what A&T and its HBCU colleagues have to offer members of NYSE looking for new hires and opportunities to collaborate.

McEwen, HBCU colleagues and leaders of the PPDG also rang the closing bell for the stock exchange that day, a special moment that can be viewed online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-leFklnh-o>. (McEwen is pictured front left.)

Before visiting the A&T campus in April, President Biden appointed alumni Willie A. Deese ’77 and Janeen Uzzell ’90 to the 18-member President’s Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

Deese is a retired pharmaceutical executive and corporate board member whose career spans five decades. He most recently served as executive vice president of manufacturing at Merck and Co. Inc. He is recognized for his expertise in manufacturing and supply

chain management as well as his proactive contributions defining healthy, engaged corporate cultures, implementing environmental and sustainability standards, diversity, equity and inclusion practices and policies, and leadership development.

Deese earned his B.S. in business administration from A&T and MBA from Western New England College. The Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics – the first named college at A&T – honors his many contributions to his alma mater, which he credits with providing him the foundational platform upon which he was able to build a successful. He fervently believes that when we level the playing field by providing equitable resources and opportunities for all, it leads to positive outcomes that have an exponential impact on society.

Uzzell is CEO of the National Society of Black Engineers, the largest Black STEM community impacting society and industry. In her former role as chief operating officer for the Wikimedia Foundation, which operates Wikipedia, she drove process improvement and helped launch the Wikimedia Knowledge Equity Fund to address racial inequities in free knowledge. For nearly two decades, she held various roles at General Electric, working in healthcare technologies in some of the world’s most challenging environments. As the head of

Women in Technology, she accelerated the number of women in technical roles.

Uzzell received her B.S. in mechanical engineering from A&T and MBA in international business from Fairleigh Dickinson University. She is a recipient of numerous awards, including the United Nations Global Leadership Award and one of ADWEEK’s Top Black Women Trailblazers in Tech. She fuses her passion for social justice and her leadership to shine light on inequality in tech spaces and forge opportunities for others.

Two other President’s Board of Advisors on HBCUs appointees— Academy Award nominated and SAG and Golden Globe winning actor, filmmaker and activist Taraji P. Henson and 12-time NBA All-Star, two-time Olympic Gold medalist, philanthropist and humanitarian Chris Paul—also have ties to A&T.

The President’s Board advances the goal of the HBCU Initiative, established by the Carter Administration, to increase the capacity of HBCUs to provide the highest-quality education to its students and continue serving as engines of opportunity.

“We are constantly exploring methods and developing strategies to build upon our success and maintain its momentum well into the future,” said Martin. “Our mission is rooted in the charge to create a diverse and inclusive community of change agents who will provide innovative solutions to the issues facing our society and our global economy.”

# UNC BOARD OF GOVERNORS RAISES OUT-OF-STATE ENROLLMENT CAP

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, College of Engineering (COE)

In April, in an endorsement of North Carolina A&T’s growing prominence in drawing highly qualified prospective students from around the globe, the UNC System Board of Governors increased the university’s out-of-state enrollment cap from 30% to 35%.

With the new cap, up to 35% of N.C. A&T’s annual incoming first-year class can be comprised of students from other states and nations. Dramatically growing numbers of such students seek admission to A&T, owing to its recognized national leadership in STEM education, engineering, journalism, agricultural science and liberal arts. Such students may not displace qualified in-state students who meet the university’s admissions standards; as a result, they enroll at A&T with exceptionally high academic profiles (their high school GPA, for instance, are typically above 4.0).

A&T is in its ninth-straight year as the nation’s largest HBCU and is ranked the no. 1 HBCU in America by the UniversityHQ rankings organization.

“As a doctoral, land-grant institution, our mission is to be the people’s university, providing rich educational opportunity to high-achieving students from all backgrounds and origins,” said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. “We are grateful for a new cap that recognizes the impact of our university nationally and the chance to educate more outstanding students in our state, a great many of whom remain here after graduation, increasing the quality and diversity of our workforce.”

An increased interest in HBCUs has led to more applications at all the UNC System’s HBCUs. In 2020, the board increased the 18% enrollment cap to 25% for A&T which proved to benefit the learning environment for high-caliber Aggies.

In 2021, legislation was passed to allow students on full scholarship, including student-athletes, be counted as in-state students when calculating first-year enrollment rates. These measures have continued to present A&T with preeminent growth for the university, the city of Greensboro and the workforce of North Carolina.

In addition to raising the enrollment cap at A&T, the board also voted to raise North Carolina Central University’s cap to 35% and Elizabeth City State University’s cap to 50%.

MAKING NEWS

# N.C. A&T LANDS \$23.7M GOOD JOBS CHALLENGE GRANT FOR CLEAN ENERGY WORKFORCE TRAINING

By Jackie Torok, Director of Media Relations

U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo announced a \$23.7 million American Rescue Plan Good Jobs Challenge grant to North Carolina A&T on Aug. 4, to create STEPs4GROWTH, a clean energy workforce training program.

N.C. A&T's portion of the overall \$500 million Good Jobs Challenge, which is funded by President Biden's American Rescue Plan, is the largest among the 32 worker-centered, industry-led workforce training partnerships across the country and is single-largest award the university has received for research.

"Through this important project, North Carolina A&T will play a leading role in preparing well-trained workers to fill the many skilled jobs in America's rapidly growing clean energy sector," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. "The prescient work of A&T engineering faculty and principal investigators on this grant, Balakrishna Gokaraju and Greg Monty, has culminated in a novel program for delivering education credentials through stackable certificates.

"Their training program will contribute significantly to preparing the highly skilled clean energy workforce of the future."

STEPS4GROWTH will create quality, demand-driven training for the region's growing clean energy sector. With a focus on equity, the program will use mobile training units in 16 economically distressed North Carolina counties to remove barriers to access and deliver training where workers are. STEPs4GROWTH will serve as a national training model that will create a diverse talent pipeline to support the economy.

"This is the first-ever Commerce Department initiative where we are totally focused on job training," said Raimondo. "That's what this is about—real jobs, family-sustaining jobs that everybody can get."

Joining Raimondo on the A&T campus for the historic announcement were Assistant U.S. Commerce Secretary for Economic Development Alejandra Castillo, U.S. Congresswoman Alma Adams '68, Gov. Roy Cooper, N.C. Secretary of Commerce Machel Baker Sanders, N.C. Department of Revenue Secretary Ronald Penny, N.C. Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Elizabeth Biser, N.C. Senator Gladys Robinson and Greensboro Mayor Nancy Vaughn.

Business leaders from Duke Energy, Siemens Energy, Piedmont Services

Group, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the North Carolina Sustainable Energy Association were also on hand.

"We are on the cutting edge of the clean energy economy," said Cooper, noting North Carolina's ranking by CNBC and Business Facilities magazine as the top state in the country to do business. "This transformative grant will invest in our state's diverse workforce as we continue to create high-paying clean energy jobs and bolster North Carolina A&T's reputation as a national leader in preparing students for the economy of the future."

As part of the project, more than 40 employers—including Strata Clean Energy, Enviva, Siemens, Duke and Blue Ridge Power—have committed to hiring 3,000 STEPs4GROWTH trainees over four years, then 1,500 trainees every year afterward.

"I'm happy to pick up the baton here because, as y'all already know, our national champion Aggies know how to run a relay," joked Adams, referring to A&T's national championship 4x400 men's relay team. "As the founder and co-chair of the Congressional Bipartisan HBCU Caucus, I know the power of partnerships with our historically



*U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo high-fives North Carolina A&T mechanical engineering student Sydney Parker as Assistant U.S. Commerce Secretary for Economic Development Alejandra Castillo, left, and N.C. Secretary of Commerce Machel Baker Sanders look on at the Harold L. Martin Sr. Engineering Research and Innovation Complex on Aug. 4.*

Black colleges and universities. Few institutions are so critical, so central to their communities and their alumni, so HBCUs are a perfect place to build lasting relationships to unlock opportunity."

The 32 awardee projects were selected from a competitive pool of 509 applicants. By partnering with stakeholders such as labor unions, community colleges and industry, these projects will solve for local talent needs, increase the supply of trained workers and help workers secure jobs in 15 key industries that are essential to U.S. supply chains, global competitiveness, and regional development.

Through a holistic, integrated partnership approach, these projects will provide tangible opportunities and security for American workers, focusing on serving and supporting a broad range of underserved communities and connecting workers with the training, skills and support services needed to successfully secure a good job.

"The Good Jobs Challenge is bringing together diverse partners and local leaders to advance workforce training programs across the country," said Castillo. "Led by North Carolina A&T, the nation's largest historically Black college and university, this program is bringing together education and

clean energy employers to create an effective, inclusive workforce training program."

"We are on a mission to make sure that every American—regardless of where they live or the color of their skin, how old they are, whether they are in recovery, formerly incarcerated—has a chance to get a real job," said Raimondo. "You guys are working together as a team. When we sit down to say, 'Where do we want to invest the money?' we keep coming back here [to North Carolina] because we trust your stewardship. So, let's make this great."

MAKING NEWS

## EDF, N.C. A&T PARTNER ON FARMING STUDY

By Lydian Bernhardt, Interim Director of Communications, CAES

Climate resilient agricultural practices can help small farms in North Carolina profit in a changing climate, according to new research by Cooperative Extension at North Carolina A&T and the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF), a nationwide nonprofit advocacy group.

A summary report and case studies of three small farms in North Carolina by N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension and EDF share insights for farmers and their advisers to inform their financial decision-making when considering whether to implement climate-smart agriculture practices.

“What we’ve found is way too important to keep to ourselves,” said Mark Blevins, Ed.D., assistant administrator for agricultural and natural resources at N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension.

Variable and extreme weather associated with a changing climate, including severe weather events and hotter summer nights, challenges small farms. The latest research by N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension and EDF summarizes the real-world financial and climate-resilience benefits that practices such as reduced tillage, cover cropping and high tunnel use are providing three small farms in diverse growing regions: the coastal plain, the Piedmont and the mountains.



According to Blevins, the nonprofit—an ongoing partner with the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences—reached out to N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension to collaborate to help smaller, diversified farms in North Carolina with good business records.

“Supporting our small farms across North Carolina to adapt to a changing climate includes educating them on new practices and their financial implications,” said Blevins, adding that the research information will be further shared at field days, demonstrations and other outreach events. “Helping other farmers figure out ways they can better handle weather extremes while improving their bottom line is what this project is all about. Seeing growers talk through these options with others will be a reward in itself, knowing that this case study is opening minds to new possibilities and profitable options on the farm.”

The three farms featured in the project—New Ground Farm in Pembroke; Blackwell’s Farm in Reidsville; and Against the Grain in Zionville—have adopted new practices to adjust to more variable and severe precipitation, changing growing season durations and increasingly frequent hurricanes. The farmers attribute better water management during severe rain events and droughts, less erosion and improved soil health to their use of climate-resilient practices.

“Adjusting farming practices to adapt to a changing climate can generate financial benefits on the farm,” says Vincent Gauthier, senior analyst at EDF. “The farmers we worked with on this project were able to increase their revenue by growing high-value crops efficiently in high tunnels and lower operating costs with reduced tillage and cover crops.”

The case studies include a partial-budget analysis of the three farms to demonstrate the changes in revenue and costs associated with adopting climate-resilient practices.

## ROBESON COUPLE NAMED 2022 SMALL FARMERS OF THE YEAR

By Lydian Bernhardt, Interim Director of Communications, CAES



Small Farms Week, A&T’s annual tribute to small-scale agriculture statewide, features educational programs, panel discussions and farm tours, this year held in hybrid format. The weeklong annual celebration was launched by Extension at A&T 36 years ago to connect with small-scale farmers—including minority farmers and those in limited-resource communities—and ensure they receive the latest research-based information on farming techniques, new tools and technologies. It also gives the public a chance to meet their agricultural neighbors and learn about farm operations and food production.

Millard and Connie Locklear, a Robeson County couple who grow fruits, vegetables and culinary and medicinal herbs, were honored as North Carolina’s 2022 Small Farmers of the Year on March 23, a recognition awarded by N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension as part of its annual Small Farms Week.

Since 2015, the Locklears have grown organic collards, winter and spring root vegetables, and herbs on their 30-acre farm. They also sell poultry products, homemade jellies and jams, pickles, chow-chow and other delicacies for the Southern palate. Their work stresses health, safety and environmental stewardship, and they have worked closely with N.C. A&T Cooperative Extension and other agricultural agencies to develop a food safety plan and support on-farm research and training programs for students.

“Mr. and Mrs. Locklear have both been an integral part of Robeson County Cooperative Extension for the past 15 years,” said Nelson Brownlee, Extension agriculture and natural resources agent in the county. “Their goal has been to add new, innovative practices that improve profitability, protect farm stability, diminish risk, and strengthen their farm’s overall sustainability.”

The Locklears worked with A&T to adopt high tunnel production to lengthen their growing season and control pests. As a result, they have increased their profits by 50%, Brownlee said.

The couple has also become certified in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Harmonized Good Agriculture Practices (GAPs), which allows them to sell to wholesale markets. They have converted land that was damaged from overuse of pesticides into a chemical-free organic farm using integrated pest management techniques.

The Locklears share their knowledge and passion for farming with their community in a variety of ways, including working with the University of North Carolina at Pembroke to offer research opportunities and hands-on experiences for students in the university’s sustainable agriculture program. They have also partnered with the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina to help establish a farmer cooperative and a young farmers program.

“To me, farming skills are life skills,” said Millard Locklear. “It is vital that we teach kids about farming so we can sustain small farming as a viable profession, and let them know where their food actually comes from, how to grow it, prepare it and get more of it.”

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



COX AND ALSTON

Released on May 2 by Arcadia Publishing, the book explores the Black youth organization that was founded in 1935 to promote vocational agriculture education in public schools throughout the South and teach farming skills and leadership and citizenship values to young Black males.

NFA's first national headquarters was at A&T, and S.B. Simmons, an A&T faculty member in agricultural education, served as a senior NFA leader for two decades. Similar in purpose and structure to Future Farmers of America, NFA had more than 58,000 members in 1,000 chapters when it merged with FFA in 1965, a year after the federal Civil Rights Act banned racial segregation.

A&T has what it believes to be the largest collection of NFA materials to be found anywhere — documents, records, correspondence, banners, medals, photographs and many other items. Much of it has never been seen publicly. Thanks to a three-year grant of \$324,422 from the National FFA Foundation, the collection will be digitized and be made accessible online so students, scholars and the public can learn more about an organization that played a vital role during segregation.

The New Farmers of America History and Legacy Collection held by the library will add important pieces to the historical record because agriculture employed so many people throughout the South and the nation during NFA's existence.

Alston is a professor of agricultural education and associate dean of academic studies in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences; Cox is an associate professor of library services and head of serials, government documents and agricultural liaison for F.D. Bluford Library; and Wakefield is a professor and associate dean for academic programs in Alcorn's School of Agriculture and Applied Sciences.

North Carolina A&T professors and alumni, **ANTOINE J. ALSTON, PH.D.**, and **NETTA S. COX**, and Alcorn State University professor Dexter B. Wakefield, Ph.D., have co-authored "Legacy of New Farmers of America," a book about New Farmers of America, a former national youth organization that helped train generations of Black farmers and leaders.



GIDDINGS

**VALERIE GIDDINGS, PH.D.**, interim senior vice provost, **ARWIN SMALLWOOD, PH.D.**, and interim vice provost for undergraduate education, are among the 26 participants in the University of North Carolina System's 2022 Executive Leadership Institute. The 10-month program is designed to build the next generation of top leadership from within the UNC System and focuses on providing an overview of the UNC System, its operations and leadership opportunities.

The Executive Leadership Institute works to share and leverage best practices by building collaboration among participants and their institutions. It includes a focus on enhancing the pool of well-prepared, highly qualified future leaders from Historically Minority-Serving Institutions as well as provides an overall view of the UNC System, its operations and future leadership opportunities.

Giddings, who joined N.C. A&T in 2008, has twice served as associate professor and chair of the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, most recently beginning in 2018. She also spent three years as the college's interim associate dean for research and has received more than \$4 million in research funding for numerous projects with colleagues at A&T.

A professor of history, Smallwood has chaired the Department of History and Political Science and is a Carter G. Woodson Distinguished Lecturer at A&T, which he joined in 2018. In February, he became the first A&T faculty member to receive the Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service, one of the top two annual faculty awards bestowed by the UNC System.



SMALLWOOD



HOLLOWAY

**MELISSA J. HOLLOWAY, J.D.**, vice chancellor and general counsel, Division of Legal Affairs, Risk and Compliance (DLARC), is chair-elect of the National Association of College and University Attorneys (NACUA) for 2022-23. In this position, Holloway will become board chair of NACUA for 2023-24—the first attorney from an HBCU to do so in the association's history.

The premier organization in the field of higher education law, NACUA's mission is to advance the effective practice of higher education attorneys for the benefit of the colleges and universities they serve by educating attorneys and administrators as to the nature of campus legal issues.

A recipient of NACUA's Distinguished Service Award, Holloway has been a member of the association since 2001 and is a past member of its Board of Directors (2016-2019) and immediate past chair of its Committee of Membership and Member Services.

Holloway joined N.C. A&T in May 2019 after serving as deputy general counsel at Ball State University (2015-2019), as general counsel at North Carolina Central University (2009-2015) and as chief legal affairs officer at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay (2001-2009). She spent four years as an associate at the law firm of Foley & Lardner in Milwaukee before entering higher education.

In addition to providing operations, management oversight and supervision of DLARC, Holloway serves as the legal liaison with the University of North Carolina System, the North Carolina Attorney General and external legal counsel.

This year, Holloway was named to the 22-member cohort of senior-level higher education professionals selected to participate in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities Millennium Leadership Initiative. She is also a regular speaker nationally on higher education legal issues.

FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



LUSTER-TEASLEY

Vice Provost **SEPHANIE LUSTER-TEASLEY** has been named interim dean of the College of Engineering.

Luster-Teasley moved into the role on May 16, succeeding Robin N. Coger, Ph.D., who is now provost and senior vice chancellor at East Carolina University, where she also holds an academic appointment in its College of Engineering and Technology.

A 2021 graduate of the UNC Executive Leadership Institute, Luster-Teasley was named A&T's vice provost for undergraduate education in May 2021 after serving in the role on an interim basis since September 2020.

Luster-Teasley has served as a faculty member in the Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering since 2004. In 2010, she led the A&T team that developed the National 4-H Science Youth Day experiment which was used to teach millions of K-8 students worldwide about water quality, energy use and global warming.

During her tenure as department chair (2016–2020), Luster-Teasley increased enrollment from 240 to 321 students, revived alumni support and engagement to include service and donations, and successfully renewed Architectural Engineering Program Accreditation and Civil Engineering Program ABET (Accreditation Board for Engineering & Technology) Accreditation, among many other accomplishments.

Her research specializations include environmental remediation, water sustainability and engineering education. She has received patents from the United States, Great Britain and Canada for development of a controlled-release chemical oxidation polymer system for remediation of water and wastewater—the first African American woman and first faculty member at A&T to receive international patents. Her technology was licensed in 2017 by a company to market nationally

as an emerging remediation method for groundwater and soil contamination.

Luster-Teasley's research has been funded by the U.S. Department of Education for developing a mentoring program for students in STEM disciplines, the National Science Foundation for developing and implementing case studies modules in science labs, the Burroughs Wellcome Fund to implement science programs for middle school girls, and others. She serves as co-principal investigator for the N.C. A&T ADVANCE-IT grant, which seeks to increase equity and help implement programs for female faculty to successfully progress through academia from assistant to full professorship. Overall, her research and professional development grants have yielded more than \$8 million in funding.

In recognition of Luster-Teasley's excellence in teaching, research and service, she has received the 2005 National Women of Color in Technology Educational Leadership Award, the 2006 N.C. A&T State University Rookie Researcher of the Year Award and the 2008 N.C. A&T State University Junior Faculty Teaching Excellence Award.

Additionally, she received the UNC Board of Governors Teaching Excellence Award—one of the highest awards conferred for teaching in the UNC System—in 2013, the DuPont Minorities in Engineering Award at the National American Society for Engineering Education in 2014, the Black Engineer of the Year Innovation Award in 2018, and the ASEE Environmental Service Award and Michigan State University (MSU) Civil and Environmental Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award in 2020. She also was recently invited to serve on the MSU College of Engineering Alumni Advisory Board.

After earning her B.S. in chemical engineering at A&T, she earned an M.S. in chemical engineering and Ph.D. in environmental engineering from Michigan State. She returned to A&T in 2004 after working in private industry as an environmental engineer. Her research interests include environmental remediation, water sustainability and engineering education.



ONGERI

**ELIMELDA MOIGE ONGERI, PH.D.**, has been named dean of the John R. and Kathy R. Hairston College of Health and Human Sciences, where she oversees 11 undergraduate and three graduate programs and the School of Nursing.

Onger, who served in the position on an interim basis (Oct. 1, 2021, until

June 30, 2022), previously was the Hairston College's associate dean for research and innovation and has been a professor of physiology in the college's Department of Kinesiology. Prior to joining the Hairston College, Onger was in the Department of Biology, College of Science and Technology (CoST), where she started as assistant professor in 2010 and rose through the ranks to full professor in 2017.

Since 2019, Onger has served as a co-director of the North Carolina Regional Diabetes Research Center (NCDRC)—a consortium made up of N.C. A&T, Duke University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Wake Forest School of Medicine and funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—and director of the NCDRC Enrichment/Community Engagement Core. The NIH awarded the NCDRC \$5.7 million for their work in 2020, as well as an additional \$250,000 in 2021 to leverage expertise in diabetes and metabolism at the NCDRC to better understand Alzheimer's disease.

Onger has received uninterrupted NIH grant funding for her research since 2012. Last year, under its Maximizing Investigator Research Award mechanism, the NIH awarded Onger a \$1.74 million research grant to study diabetic kidney disease.

Among her recent accolades are the Minority Access Faculty Researcher National Role Model Award, CoST Interdisciplinary Research Team Award, CoST Outstanding Senior Researcher Award, NIH National Institutes of Diabetes, Digestive and Kidney Disease/Network of Minority Health Research Investigators Outstanding Translational Science Research Award, and American Society of Nephrology Travel Award.

Onger is affiliated with The Kidney Center and the North Carolina Nutrition Research Center, both at UNC Chapel Hill. She is a member of the American Society of Nephrology and of Women in Nephrology; a trainee mentor for the renal section of the American Physiological Society; treasurer and board member of the Mentoring Network for African Women in Academia; governing advisory board member of the Kenya Scholars and Studies Association; and oversight committee member, mentor and proposal reviewer for junior faculty in the Network of Minority Health Research Investigators.

Before joining N.C. A&T, Onger was a research associate and assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine and an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Biology at Harrisburg Area Community College.

Onger received her B.S. in animal production from Egerton University, M.S. in comparative mammalian physiology from the University of Nairobi, M.S. in basic medical sciences and Ph.D. in animal physiology, both from Purdue University, and postdoctoral training from Penn State College of Medicine.



FACULTY, STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS



**LISA OWENS-JACKSON, PH.D.**, has been named interim dean of the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics.

Owens-Jackson has been serving in the role since Aug. 1. She replaced Kevin L. James, Ph.D., who had held the deanship since 2017.

OWENS-JACKSON

Owens-Jackson has taken the helm of a college whose graduate programs are ranked among the top 100 in the nation. The Deese College is rated one of the best business schools for women in the United States by College Consensus.

A graduate of the college (B.S. in accounting), Owens-Jackson earned her Master of Accountancy (MACC) from The Ohio State University and her Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University. She joined A&T's business faculty shortly after completing her doctoral program. She most recently served as chair of the Department of Accounting and Economics and associate dean.

During her nearly 20 years at the university, Owens-Jackson has earned numerous awards for academic advising, public service and teaching. In 2017, she won the UNC Board of Governors Award for Excellence in

Teaching and delivered the keynote address at that December's commencement ceremony.

In addition to accolades in higher education, Owens-Jackson has won significant recognition from the financial services industry. She received the KPMG Outstanding Professor in Accounting Award in the 2001-02 academic year. She later was part of the KPMG National Faculty Symposium and the Deloitte Trueblood Faculty Seminar. She was also honored by the American Accounting Association in 2020 for her research on diversity in the profession.

Deese College enrolled 1,892 students in academic year 2021-22. About one-tenth of those students are enrolled in one of the college's four MBA program concentrations and its MACC program.

The first business school in North Carolina's Piedmont Triad region to earn accreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Deese College today is one of fewer than 200 such schools globally to hold that accreditation as well as AACSB's separate certification for its accounting programs.

The college is named for retired pharmaceutical industry executive Willie A. Deese, who earned his bachelor's degree there before embarking on a career that culminated in his service as president of global manufacturing for Merck. It was the first A&T college or school to be named for one of its graduates or supporters.



**VERONICA L. SILLS, ED.D.**, has been named associate vice chancellor for human resources/chief human resources officer. Sills has been serving in the role since July 1. She previously served in an interim capacity.

SILLS

Sills manages a staff of 33 full-time human resource professionals and specialists, including four direct reports and four operational managers, overseeing human resources issues for a university that has more than 2,800 permanent and temporary faculty, staff and student personnel. Human Resources reports to the Division of Business and Finance.

She serves as a member of the Chancellor's Cabinet, collaborating with the university's senior executive leadership team on strategies related to human capital management and leadership development.

Sills previously worked at N.C. A&T from January 2016 to September 2017 as Title IX coordinator. She re-joined A&T four years later as assistant vice chancellor of human resources.

Following eight years in private sector and state agency positions, Sills transitioned into higher education in 2012, when she accepted a position as assistant director of Elon University's Office of Housing and Residence Life. She later worked as a residence coordinator/Title IX investigator in the Office of Housing and Residence Life at UNC Wilmington; a training consultant in the Sexual Assault Training and Prevention Program at East Central University in Oklahoma; and an Equal Employment Opportunity consultant and investigator and then talent solutions manager in Human Resources at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. She has been an adjunct professor of educational leadership at UNC Wilmington since August 2020 and a certified instructor of Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Fundamental in the North Carolina Office of State Human Resources since May 2018.

Sills has a B.S. in criminal justice with a minor in women and gender studies from The College of New Jersey, M.A. in criminal justice and MPA from Rutgers University, M.S. in higher education administration and organizational management from Drexel University, and Ed.D. in educational leadership (higher education) from UNC Wilmington. She holds numerous human resources credentials and memberships.



SMITH

**KECIA WILLIAMS SMITH, CPA, PH.D.**, assistant professor of accounting and director of the Master of Accountancy (MACC) program and Center for Accounting Diversity in the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics, has been named one of the 25 Most Powerful Women in Accounting for 2022 by The American Institute of CPAs (AICPA) and CPA Practice Advisor.

The 25 Most Powerful Women in Accounting awards were created 10 years ago by CPA Practice Advisor and are administered jointly by the AICPA

to celebrate the increasing presence of women at the highest positions in accounting firms and organizations that oversee the profession, and to recognize those who have had the most impact. Each nomination is reviewed by independent judges who select award recipients based on these criteria: being a driving force for innovation and excellence, contributing to the success of her organization and the accounting profession, providing guidance and leadership to contribute to the growth of the profession and representing the profession through

civic and community outreach.

Smith's research includes studies on the readability and tone of the expanded audit report in the United Kingdom; the content and market response of SEC speeches; the determinants and audit quality consequences of small audit firm mergers; the enforcement of international audit firms by the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board (PCAOB); and the explicit evaluation of client preferences on auditor judgment.

Among her research interests are audit regulation, audit quality, regulatory communications, auditor judgment and decision-making, and accounting diversity.

The N.C. A&T accounting alum was an assistant professor of accounting and information systems in Virginia Tech's Pamplin College of Business for three years before returning to her alma mater in 2019. Prior to entering academia, she was a senior manager at Deloitte. Immediately before beginning

her doctoral studies at Texas A&M University, she was an associate director at the PCAOB.

Smith holds a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace Certificate from the University of South Florida Muma College of Business Office of Corporate Training and Professional Education and is an active CPA in North Carolina and Georgia. She was also recently appointed to the PCAOB Standards and Emerging Issues Advisory Group (SEIAG).

STUDENTS



ALSTON

Student researcher **KAYLA ALSTON** is one of 60 undergraduates selected for the 2022 Posters on the Hill conference presented by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR).

Alston is the only participant chosen from North Carolina, as well as the only one representing a historically Black college or university, for CUR's signature advocacy event at the federal level.

Alston, of Greensboro, North Carolina, is a rising fourth-year student pursuing a B.S. in animal science from the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences with a minor in chemistry. She is a member of the University Honors Program and has been on the Dean's List since 2019.

A U.S. Department of Agriculture 1890 National Scholar sponsored by the USDA Agricultural Research Services (ARS), Alston presented her abstract, "On-Site Mastitis Testing," during the virtual conference, CUR's prestigious signature event.



ANDERSON



HENDERSON

The White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities selected **SULLIVAN G. ANDERSON** and **TIERA A. HENDERSON** as 2022 HBCU Competitiveness Scholars.

Anderson and Henderson were among 86 students chosen from 56 HBCUs nationwide to receive the initiative's highest honor based on academic achievements, campus leadership, civic engagement and entrepreneurial spirit.

Anderson, a junior from Chicago, is pursuing a B.S. in economics. A Dowdy Scholar, she is a Management Leadership for Tomorrow Career Prep Fellow, Honors Ambassador for the University Honors Program (UHP) and has been Miss Honors for A&T's Honors Student Advisory Board. She is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society, Omicron Delta Epsilon Economics Honors Society, and Toastmasters.

Second-year graduate student Henderson, of Greensboro, North Carolina, is pursuing an M.S. in school counseling. She earned her B.S. in psychology from Virginia State University, where she also received certification in project management. She serves as chair of communications for the Graduate Student Advisory Council at A&T, where she was inducted into Chi Sigma Iota International Honor Society.



BLACK

**ALEXIS BLACK**, an honors multimedia journalism student from Prince George's County, Maryland, is a member of the 2022 Rhoden Fellows class. She is A&T's fourth fellow, following Alexis Davis, East Dockery and Donovan Dooley's participation in 2021, 2019 and 2018, respectively. She will join five cohort members from Alabama State University, Florida A&M University, Hampton University, Howard University and Xavier University.

Black is a student-athlete, participating on the university's cheerleading team since June 2020. She is a student reporter for Aggie News and a contributor for The A&T Register, focusing on sports reporting and social media management. Additionally, Black is an active member of the National Association of Black Journalists, and is the incoming president of the Associated Press Sports Editors after serving as vice president in 2021.

The fellowship program, established by HBCU graduate William C. Rhoden, a former award-winning sports columnist for The New York Times, is a training initiative for aspiring journalists from historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) in partnership with Andscape, a "reimagining, expansion and diversification of The Underfeated's former platform."



DAYE



MCCRAY

**BRANDON DAYE, ALIYAH MCCRAY '21** and **KENDAL TIDWELL** received grants totaling \$22,500 from the prestigious Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program (DDETFP).

Daye, McCray and Tidwell are studying marketing and supply chain management in the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics. Daye is also studying agribusiness and food industry management in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences.

A Thurgood Marshall College Fund Leadership Scholar, Daye, of Burlington, North Carolina, is president of the Student Food Advisory Board, chair of the Campus Life Committee and senator for the College of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Related Sciences for the Student Government Association.

A 2021-22 DDETFP recipient, McCray, of Raleigh, North Carolina, is an MBA student who earned her B.S. in supply chain management, is in the University Honors Program (UHP) and was a graduate assistant for the Deese College Department of Accounting and Finance.

A recipient of the Deese College Scholarship in 2020, Tidwell, of Indianapolis, is a member of Alpha Lambda Delta National Honor Society, Beta Gamma Sigma International Business Society, the Chancellor's List and UHP.

## STUDENTS

“An apple a day keeps the doctor away” is an old adage many people grew up hearing. But **RICHMOND DJORGBENOO**, a doctoral student at North Carolina A&T, is researching the truth in the old wives’ tale.

Djorgbenoo, a Ph.D. candidate in applied science and technology with a concentration in applied chemistry, has been researching whether flavonoids in apples can help prevent some chronic diseases. He presented his research to legislators at the state capitol during the celebration of Graduate Education Week as well as at UNC’s Three-Minute Thesis event.

Processed foods are a major source of reactive carbonyl species, a dangerous chemical that can react and modify a person’s biomolecules like proteins, amino acids, DNA and lipids. These biomolecule modifications can lead to serious diseases such as cancers, diabetes and kidney disease.

A flavonoid in apples known as Phloretin offers protection to the body’s cells by shielding biomolecules from the attack of the dangerous chemicals in processed food. Djorgbenoo’s research has found that the apple flavonoid entraps 4-HNE, a major biomarker of lipid peroxidation that has been implicated in a number of diseases like cancers, obesity and diabetes.

Djorgbenoo’s research leads him to believe that an apple a day along with other healthful food and exercise choices can, indeed, keep the doctor away.

As part of the “Closing the Gap” initiative from The Gap and ICON360, 12 fashion merchandising and design (FMD) students—**LAUREN BEASLEY, ANIYA CHAVIS, WYSDOM CLIFF, AMBERATTA FAULKNER, HALLE GIBSON, MYA HARRIS, TAYLOR JAMES, ANTHONY MARSHALL, JEWEL MOSER, TRINTIY RASCOE, TATYANA RICHARDSON** and **SOUKEYNA SEYDI**—traveled to New York City for a study tour.

The \$100,000 award given to FMD last June was launched to provide financial support to fashion programs at historically Black colleges and universities.

The study tour, coordinated with educational fashion tour company Banson NYC, allowed students the opportunity to gain access, exposure and insight to one of the world’s major fashion capitals as well as meet with designers such as Kenneth King, Couturier.

Other allocations from the \$100,000 award include new computers and equipment for the CAD Lab, funding for 20 new dress forms, funding to bring an executive in residence to campus and two \$5,000 scholarships from ICON360, received by Moser and Harris.



DUVERGLAS

**CLAUDIA DUVERGLAS** and **JOSETTE STEWART**, third-year supply chain management students in the Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics, are the university’s first 2022 AWESOME Excellence in Education Scholarship winners. AWESOME, which stands for Achieving Women’s Excellence in Supply chain Operations, Management, and Education, gives aspiring business leaders the opportunity to attend conferences and connect with a network of women.

Duverglas, of Boston, is a North Carolina A&T Center for Financial Advancement Scholar and active member of the African Aggies Coalition and Caribbean Students Association, as well as Waves of Change, HBCU Inc. She was recognized by the McKinsey & Co. HBCU Consulting League, is a Management Leadership for Tomorrow Career Prep Fellow and Prudential Financial Scholar.

Stewart, of Cleveland, is a Center for Advanced Mobility Transportation Scholar and president of Supply Chain Aggies. She is a member of Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society, National Society of Leadership and Success and Midwest Aggies. She also is CEO and founder of JB Signature Collection LLC.

Nine Aggies were among 36 students chosen from nine of the state’s historically Black colleges and universities for the North Carolina Governor’s HBCU Internship Program.

Interning with Syngenta were **SAMAYA BROOKS** and **LEONARD JACKAI**, who are studying agribusiness and food industry management in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Science.

**AMARI BUDD**, who is studying industrial and systems engineering in the College of Engineering, interned with Lowe’s.

The Willie A. Deese College of Business and Economics’ **ANIYA CANNON** and **AMAYA MONTGOMERY**, who are studying finance, **LATYIA MCINTYRE**, who is studying management with a concentration in innovation and entrepreneurship, and **MAKAYLA RICHARDSON**, who is studying business administration and management, interned at Wells Fargo, while **YURI SINGLETERY**, who is studying supply chain management, interned at Coca-Cola Consolidated.

**LASONE MIDGETTE**, who is studying visual arts-visual media design in the College of Arts, Humanities and Human Sciences, interned at Blue Cross Blue Shield North Carolina.

The paid, full-time summer internships are for rising juniors or seniors with a minimum cumulative 2.8 GPA and active in student and national organizations.

**TANAE LEWIS**, a junior chemistry student in the College of Science and Technology, was named a 2022 Goldwater Scholar—the fourth to receive the honor in the university’s history.

Named for Sen. Barry Goldwater, the Goldwater Scholarship Program was designed to foster and encourage outstanding students to pursue research careers in the fields of the natural sciences, engineering and mathematics. The federally funded program and the preeminent undergraduate award of its type includes benefits up to \$7,500 for up to two years of eligible educational expenses as well as the opportunity to participate in a lifetime network of STEM researchers.

Lewis, of Youngsville, North Carolina, is one of only 12 students to represent a North Carolina college or university in 2022. A&T is one of five historically Black colleges or universities to have a 2022 Goldwater Scholar.

Additionally, Lewis has been an undergraduate researcher and an intern since June 2021 at the National Institute of Environmental Sciences, part of the National Institutes of Health, where she works to identify how the disruption of a specific RNA processing pathway is associated with neurodegenerative disease.

**SYDNEY ROSS**, a senior multimedia journalism major from Raleigh, North Carolina, participated in The HBCU National Center Class of Summer 2022 cohort, along with 10 students from Howard University, Spelman College, Dillard University, Alabama State University, Kentucky State University, Bethune-Cookman University, Paul Quinn College and Edward Waters College.

Ross interned in the nation’s capital with the Black-owned network launched by renowned journalist and commentator Roland S. Martin.

Ross is a member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ) and also received a \$10,000 NABJ-HBCU Scholarship Initiative award. She is The A&T Register’s “theCulture” section editor and previously served as a lead and section reporter for the news outlet.

Change the Type in 2016, a project and movement “designed to promote positivity into the media and encourage young African-Americans all over the world to be the best they can be.”

The HBCU National Center program was “established by the Hon. Jacqueline M. Lewis to foster experiential learning, mentorship, and networking” and aims to help make internship housing in Washington, D.C., affordable for students at HBCUs.

STUDENTS



Mister and Miss North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, 2021-2022,, **JOSHUA SUITER** and **ZARIA WOODFORD**, respectively, took the grand stage at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood as award presenters for the 94th Academy Awards.

The invitation and opportunity marked the first for any HBCU student.

Woodford and Suiter, who are studying pre-law and professional theatre, respectively, spent the week prior to the event rehearsing, recording and engaging in tours and

interviews, getting the full Oscars experience.

As producer of this year's award ceremony, Will Packer, a graduate of Florida A&M University, had a goal of highlighting HBCUs at the Oscars. Inviting an HBCU king and queen as trophy presenters was a great opportunity to spotlight students and universities. Packer's production company selected Mister and Miss N.C. A&T to be the very first HBCU king and queen to be featured.

A&T alumnus Terrence "Terrence J" Jenkins co-hosted the coveted red-carpet event.

**LARRY "TRE" THOMPSON**, a master's student in the department of mechanical engineering, won first place Mike Freeman Award at the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) 2022 Regional Student Conference. Thompson won in the Region II master's category for the study "Investigation of shock-wave Boundary Layer Interaction for a Mach 1.8 flow isolator."

Thompson and his professor, Michael Atkinson, Ph.D., published the conference paper with the objective "to gain a fundamental understanding of the fluid flow dynamics of unsteady shock-wave/boundary layer interactions." This will help understand the physics structures behind the isolator's back pressure, which could affect how the isolator flows.

The AIAA held six regional student conferences in-person since the pandemic, with more than 170 papers submitted and more than 500 students and professional members attended. This is also the first-year high school members were able to present at the conference.

The AIAA is the world's largest aerospace technical society. With nearly 30,000 individual members from 91 countries, and 100 corporate members, AIAA brings together industry, academia, and government to advance engineering and science in aviation, space and defense.

**KATELYN WILLIAMS**, a Ph.D. student in the industrial and systems engineering department, was one of 15 founders to participate in the competitive 2022 Women's Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) Collegiate Accelerator. She graduated from Hampton University and received a master's degree from A&T, the first in her family to pursue and continue a STEM education at the highest level and become an engineer.

The Wilmington, Delaware, native is founder and CEO of The Curly Scientist, a business platform that supports others who have not received the proper support to succeed in the classroom or in the field. She provides courses, workshops, workbooks and other services for her peers.

The accelerator program offered entrepreneurial webinars, an opportunity to pitch their companies to be considered for seed grants, and will allow participants to join an alumni network of more than 200 women founders.

WBENC is a leading non-profit organization dedicated to helping women-owned businesses thrive, providing provide the most relied upon certification standard for women-owned businesses and the tools to help them succeed.

**CHAD PETERSON** thinks diplomacy is the best approach to international affairs. As a transfer student in the College of Science and Technology Department of Computer Systems Technology, he hopes to use his technical talent to further that approach.

Peterson was selected as one of 15 students nationwide to participate in the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Information Technology (FAIT) Fellowship, the only participant from North Carolina.

"I find other cultures fascinating," Peterson said. "This is a way that aligns with what I believe that also allows me to give back to my country."

Funded by the State Department, this two-year fellowship program seeks to attract highly talented, qualified candidates who are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate IT-related degree and are interested in a United States Foreign Service career.

Peterson, who earned his associate degree in computer programming from Wake Technical Community College, hopes his time at North Carolina A&T will help continue to prepare him for Foreign Service. He was born in Utah but has spent a lot of time in Virginia and calls North Carolina home.

"Coming to an HBCU I think will offer a perspective that it is very important that I understand," he said.

He learned Korean as part of a mission to Korea for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and later as a participant of the Critical Languages Scholarship Program with the Department of State.

The fellowship provides up to \$75,000 in academic funding over two years (junior and senior years of a bachelor's degree program or a two-year master's degree program); two summer internships – one at the Department of State in Washington, D.C., and one at a U.S. embassy or



consulate overseas; professional development and personalized mentoring during the fellowship program.

After successfully completing the FAIT Fellowship program and the Foreign Service entry requirements, FAIT Fellows receive appointments for a minimum of five years as Foreign Service Information Management Specialists and begin careers using their technology skills to support U.S. diplomacy abroad.

Senior elementary education student **T'ASIA WILLIAMSON** has plans to excel within the field of education. If she has it her way, Williamson will become a superintendent. While that is her main goal, she is not as concerned about the timeframe. Her sights are honed in on addressing a more pressing matter.

"I saw a need for passionate black educators, and I decided to fulfill a role that would be enriching and help me reach my goal of someday being a superintendent," she said. I chose elementary education to provide a further impact on the lives of those who will come after me."

From June 13–July 15, Williamson served as a student leader intern for the North Carolina A&T Freedom School Summer Program where she was a full-time teacher for grades 3-5 under the direction of the program principal and funded by Corning, a sponsor.

"The experience was enriching and I would recommend it to anyone interested. My time as a SLI provided me with the

opportunity to expand my teaching caliber and learn more about myself and who I want to be as an educator," she said.

"Freedom School is extremely important. It provides a platform to learn about the diversity of different students. It also allowed me to provide students in areas of educational poverty with the proper summer enrichment resources to ensure no learning is lost through the summer months."

T'Asia was also afforded the opportunity and support of being a Corning Scholar, which she says has been a financial lifeline and vital resource for her educational and career advancement.

"Being a Corning Scholar has provided me with professional development opportunities that have helped mold me into a dedicated and motivated individual," she said. "The financial support allowed me to focus more heavily on my studies and community service opportunities."

## BASKETBALL

## TRUE TO HIMSELF

*Inward reflection during quarantine leads walk-on Justin Brooks to Aggie men's basketball.*

By Jacob Pritchett, Assistant Director for Athletic Communications

Men's basketball guard **JUSTIN BROOKS** fell in love with basketball, like many players do, from a young age. That love turned into a successful varsity career at Auburn High School in Alabama, alongside his older brother Garrison.

Garrison would go on to a four-year career at the University of North Carolina, scoring 1,276 points (50th in program history) and snatching 798 rebounds (21st in program history). He even led the Atlantic Coast Conference in scoring (18.8 points per game) in league play and was voted the conference's Most Improved Player in 2019-20.

"My brother Garrison is honestly my best friend," said Justin. "When I had the chance to play on the same team as him in high school, I couldn't miss out on that."

Justin's route into the college basketball world has not been a straight path, however. While Garrison was turning into an all-conference player at UNC, Justin graduated high school and decided to attend North Carolina A&T as a student only despite holding offers from other schools.

In the spring of his freshman year, quarantine allowed Justin time to reflect on what he wanted out of college. That reflection led to a walk-on spot with the Aggie men's basketball team.

"After playing basketball my whole life, I knew I had much more to give to the game," said Justin. "During quarantine, I had a lot of time to think about what I wanted from college. I talked to God and my parents about the idea of walking on. I would say quarantine was a blessing in disguise because it gave me the drive to want to be on the court again."

One of Justin's favorite things to do is travel. But, of course, he gets to do plenty of that as a men's basketball player. He also enjoys hanging out with friends and, lucky for him, being a part of the men's basketball program gave him one of his closest.

"JB (Justin) and I became close around winter break during the 2020-21 season," said teammate Ahmad Hamilton reflecting on how their friendship began. "We would work out and ride to the games together. As a teammate, he's encouraging, works hard and shows good leadership. We've become roommates since, and around campus, when you see one of us, you'll see both of us."

Basketball has roots planted deeper into the family than just Garrison and Justin. Their uncle, Morris Finley, had a legendary career at the University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB), scoring over 1,500 points. So, while Garrison might be Justin's best friend, Finley influenced his love for the game.

"As a young kid, I would watch him play and listen to him talk about



the game of basketball," said Justin. "I would even go back and watch his highlights from UAB to try and imitate his moves. My uncle is someone I always admired on the basketball court, and he is the reason I wear the number 10."

Justin and Garrison share a passion for the game of basketball, among other similarities between them. Justin's plans for the future, however, are different than they may seem.

Where Garrison dreams of playing professionally, Justin has never aspired to do so. Instead, he's taken an interest in the business side of athletics and, after graduating with a degree in economics, hopes to one day become a financial advisor for professional athletes, including his older brother.

"I'm so proud of him creating his own journey as a man," said Garrison. "He's grown up to be a great role model for our younger brother Trent. Justin also keeps me motivated to keep growing as a man. His journey has not been easy, but he has always been very persistent with anything he works at."

With that level of persistence, Justin is poised for success with any venture he may choose in the future.

## BASKETBALL

## GOAL ORIENTED

*Sean Darks leaves Aggie women's basketball to pursue medical school.*

By Will Toman, Assistant Director for Athletic Communications

Former North Carolina A&T point guard **SEAN KELLY DARKS** only needed two years to graduate with her undergraduate degree, leaving her with two more years to contribute to a championship run for the A&T women's basketball program. Instead, she decided to not play for the Aggies this season but pursue a career as a physician full-time.

Darks is a Cincinnati, Ohio, native who attended Walnut Hills High School. As a high school senior, she attended the University of Cincinnati. Those classes counted toward her college credits when she signed to play with A&T. In addition, Darks enrolled in advanced placement classes starting her freshman year in high school, which also counted toward college credit. So, even though she was a freshman on the court, she was a junior in the classroom.

Darks graduated last May with a 3.91 grade point average and a degree in biology. Her efforts earned the hopeful future doctor a spot on the Big South Conference's all-academic women's basketball team.

A&T head women's basketball coach Tarrell Robinson hopes to have a doctor in the family soon.

"SK, from as far as I can remember, even during the recruiting process, has always been goal-oriented," said Robinson about the 5-foot-8 Darks. "This amazing accomplishment is an example of it. I feel like a proud parent knowing she accomplished another goal she set for herself. Now, she's continuing her journey to check off the rest of her list on the west coast. She has made all of us, including our supportive family, proud."

The 2022-23 school year started with Darks beginning her graduate studies in biology as she furthered her research. Over the summer, she interned at the University of California Irvine Medical School.

"My main project was figuring out colchicine, which is a drug to treat gout and other aging diseases," Darks said. "I'm trying to figure out if that will help treat glaucoma."

Darks took the Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) in August. After that, she applied to medical schools hoping to



earn acceptance in December or January.

"My career is really important to me," Darks said. "Being a doctor, I wanted to do this when I was a kid, so I'm excited that I'm almost at that step to start medical school."

Darks grew up in a basketball family and started at a young age. Her sister, Taylor, graduated from Walnut Hills in 2015 and played her freshman season at Furman before finishing her final three seasons at Florida A&M.

"I started playing, like (age) 2 or 3," Darks said. "My dad coached me my entire career until my last year of high school. So, it's really all been in my family. I watched my sister play growing up, and I enjoyed that."

"When she went to college, then it was on me. I've always been around it, and it's in my family. So, it's kind of been my life."

Darks made an immediate impact on the Aggies. In her freshman season, she averaged 10.5 points, 2.7 assists and 1.9 steals to land her on the All-Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) third team and the All-MEAC rookie team.

Over the next two years, instead of trying to help the Aggies make a seamless transition into their new conference, the Colonial Athletic Association (CAA), with the possibility of winning a title. She will be seeking another title: Dr. Sean Kelly Darks.

BASKETBALL

## LEGENDARY NBA REFEREE, HALL OF FAMER HUGH EVANS DIES

By Brian M. Holloway '97, Associate Athletics Director/Communications



North Carolina A&T Sports Hall of Famer and former longtime NBA referee **HUBERT "HUGH" EVANS '63** died July 8. He was 81.

One of six NBA referees named to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, Evans was inducted posthumously Sept. 9-10 in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Evans was an NBA referee from 1973-2001, officiating 1,969 regular season games, 170 playoff games, 35 NBA Finals contests and four NBA All-Star Games. He was ranked as the second-best official in the league by coaches, general managers and the NBA senior vice presidents during the 1995-96 season.

After retiring in 2001, Evans was an NBA assistant supervisor of officials for two years. He is also a member of the New York City Basketball Hall of Fame.

Evans became the second NBA referee from an HBCU after Ken Hudson, a graduate of Central State university. By the 2021-22 season, nine of the NBA's 73 referees were from HBCUs, according to the National Basketball Referees Association.

A 2002 inductee into the A&T Sports Hall of Fame, Evans played men's basketball for the Aggies under legendary head coach Cal Irvin. He scored 585 points in 72 games. The Aggies went 63-22 (.741) during Evans' time in Aggieland.

BOWLING

## BOWLING EARNS NTCA RECOGNITION FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

By Jacob Pritchett, Assistant Director for Athletic Communications

The North Carolina A&T bowling program was recognized by the National Tenpin Coaches Association (NTCA) for its academic achievements.

A&T, the two-time defending Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference (MEAC) champions, compiled the 10th-highest cumulative grade point average in the nation, according to the NTCA at 3.600. A&T also had six individuals named NTCA All-Academic.

The Aggies were one of 52 schools to achieve the required 3.2 or higher GPA, with eight of those institutions coming from the MEAC. Fellow league member Delaware State finished with the highest GPA in the country at 3.83.

Senior **ERICKA QUESADA**, junior **JADA BASSETTE**, sophomores **LAURA GARCIA** and **MELANIE KATEN**, and freshmen **GRACE STULL** and **MAYA AVILEZ** all finished with a 3.4-plus GPA to earn NTCA All-Academic recognition.

TRACK & FIELD

## NWOKOCHA, SALMON MAKE MORE HISTORY FOR N.C. A&T

By Brian M. Holloway '97, Associate Athletics Director/Communications

Women's outdoor track and field freshman **GRACE NWOKOCHA** (Port Harcourt, Nigeria) arrived at North Carolina A&T in January.

In a short time, she has collected a few items: She won the 100 meters at the prestigious Drake Relays in April; then she won the 100 and 200m at the Big South Conference Outdoor Track and Field Championships in May, leading to her winning the conference's women's outstanding performer and freshman of the year awards.

On June 11, during the final day of the 2022 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships at the University of Oregon's Hayward Field, Nwokocha made school history and added a few more accolades during her brief stint as an A&T Aggie. She finished sixth nationally in the 100m (11.21) and 200m (22.52) to become the first A&T freshman to earn first-team All-American honors in the 100. She also became the first Aggie freshman to secure first-team accolades in the 100 and 200.

Graduate teammate **PAULA SALMON** also had a productive time at the NCAA outdoor championships—she finished fourth nationally in the women's 100-meter hurdles, crossing the finish line in 12.85.



Paula Salmon (center) continues the great legacy of N.C. A&T women's hurdlers by earning first-team All-American honors on June 11.



Grace Nwokocha (center) runs personal bests in the 100 (10.97) and 200 (22.44) to qualify for the respective national finals.

## TRACK &amp; FIELD

# JOHNSON NAMED DIRECTOR OF TRACK AND FIELD

By Brian M. Holloway '97, Associate Athletics Director/Communications

In June, North Carolina A&T Director of Athletics Earl M. Hilton III announced the hiring of three-time Olympian and 1996 Olympic gold medalist **ALLEN JOHNSON** as the Aggies' new director of track and field programs. Johnson replaces Duane Ross who left in May to coach track and field at the University of Tennessee.

Johnson has signed a four-year contract to guide the A&T's six track and field programs: men's and women's cross country, men's and women's indoor track and field and men's and women's outdoor track and field.

"Allen has paid his dues and has earned the opportunity to head an elite track and field program with a rich history like the one at North Carolina A&T," said Hilton. "When looking for the person who can keep A&T track and field moving forward academically and as a top-10 program nationally with aspirations of winning national championships, it became apparent that coach Johnson was that individual.

"When alumni, parents and prospective student-athletes meet coach Johnson, they will be impressed with him as a man of character and integrity as well as an outstanding track and field coach. He will make the program about the student-athletes, and I like that."

The Washington, D.C., native, comes to Aggieland after six seasons as an assistant coach for the North Carolina State Wolfpack, where he coached sprinters and hurdlers. During his time with the Pack, he also served as Team USA's sprints and hurdles coach for the World Championships in Eugene, Oregon, in 2022.

While with the Pack, Johnson coached a 2020 USA Olympic team member and two professional Indoor World Championship USA team members. His sprinters, hurdlers and relay teams broke nine school records between indoor and outdoor during his time there, and the 4x100-meter relay team won three straight ACC championships from 2016-2018.

"I'm honored to have this opportunity to join the North Carolina A&T family, and I look forward to saying 'Aggie Pride!' many times," said Johnson. "I want to thank Chancellor (Harold) Martin and Mr. Hilton for putting tremendous faith in me and my ability to lead this program.

"I also want to thank Duane Ross for his support. I'm really looking forward to this next chapter and continuing the success of North Carolina A&T track and field."

Johnson also spent time at the University of Kentucky (2014-16), where he helped the Wildcat women finish second nationally during the 2015 NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

During Johnson's stay, Kentucky totaled five top-25 finishes between indoor and outdoor track and field. Individually, he guided Nick Anderson to a second-place finish in the 110-meter hurdles at the 2016 NCAA outdoor championships as Anderson went on to compete at USATF Olympic Team Trials. Before Kentucky, Johnson was an assistant at Air Force.

Prior to coaching, Johnson had a spectacular professional track and field career. In addition to his Olympic gold in the 110h in 1996, Johnson earned gold medals in the hurdles at seven IAAF World Championship meets. He finished first in the 110h at the outdoor world championships in 1995 (Gothenburg), 1997 (Athens), 2001 (Edmonton) and 2003 (Paris), while placing first in the 60h at the indoor world championships in 1995 (Barcelona), 2003 (Birmingham) and 2004 (Budapest).

Johnson finished second in the 60h at the 2008 indoor championships in Valencia, Spain, third at the 110h at the 2005 championships in Helsinki, Finland and fourth in the 110h at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Johnson was ranked as the top 110 hurdler in the world for four years by Track & Field News and had many more accomplishments.

Johnson is a graduate of the University of North Carolina. As a collegiate athlete, he won the 1992 NCAA championship in the 55h with a meet-record time of 7.07.

## More on Allen Johnson



### BACKGROUND

- In addition to being an outstanding hurdler at UNC, Johnson stood out in the high jump, long jump, and decathlon. He was a better high jumper than hurdler coming out of high school.
- Johnson's wife Torri Edwards, is a two-time world champion, winning gold in the 100 meters in 2003 (Paris) and gold in the 4x100-meter relay (Osaka) in 2007. She is also a two-time Olympian, winning bronze in the 4x100 at the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games.
- When Johnson was an assistant coach at N.C. State, Torri helped him with sprinters, hurdlers and relays as a volunteer assistant coach. She plans to help him coach at A&T as well.
- Johnson's daughter Tristine attended and participated in track and field at UNC (2010-14). She was a triple and long jumper, with the triple jump being her specialty. She qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Nationals twice during her career.
- Tristine and current A&T throws coach Amber Monroe competed (simultaneously) in the ACC. Monroe attended the University of Miami.
- Son Bryce plays baseball.

### PERSONAL

Birthdate: March 1, 1971  
 Spouse: Torri Edwards Johnson  
 Children: Tristine Johnson Okonye; Bryce Johnson; Ava Johnson  
 Alma Mater: University of North Carolina (UNC)  
 Track and Field Pro Career: 1994-2010

### Q&A

**What does it take to run a successful program?** You have to have a plan, and the plan has to be something that works for you. You can see someone else have a winning plan and understand that plan obviously works, but it may not work for you. You've got to make sure it works for you. You understand there are many ways to get this thing done by just observing programs where I've coached, observing successful programs, and observing this A&T's program from the outside. You have to come up with a plan, stick with the plan and make sure everyone around you is onboard. That we're coming together for the common goal.

**What interested you about A&T's program?** To watch coach (Duane) Ross get as far as he did, you understand it can be done. It was inspiring. In the collegiate environment, non-Power Fives are not supposed to be that successful. But at a place like A&T, you can be successful. There are not going to be roadblocks preventing that from happening.

**What did A&T's success mean to the African American culture from the outside perspective?** I know many people were rooting for A&T because it was a sense of pride. If you go back 50, 60 years, that's where the talent was—at HBCUs. The Power Five schools of the day didn't want to play HBCUs because HBCUs would have mopped the floor with them. So, to see an HBCU on that stage was a sense of pride when you understand the history.

**Talk about your history with Duane Ross.** The first time I remember meeting Duane Ross was at a track meet in Florida. I was a junior and he was a freshman. We were running next to each other, and he hit me over one hurdle, so I hit him back over the next hurdle. We have been competing against each other ever since. We competed against each other in college. After college, we competed against each other in the professional ranks. We made national teams together, and then once I got to N.C. State and he was at A&T, we saw each other a lot more. We would have good conversations. And I would want to know his opinion on building culture because I was watching what he was doing here and tried to implement some of those things at N.C. State from the position of being an assistant. He gave me a lot of wise words and advice from some of his experiences because he had been coaching longer.

**Professor Yeoheung Yun's childhood experiences in rural South Korea undergird a quest for knowledge that led to the UNC System's 2022 O. Max Gardner Award.**

# HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

By Jamie Crockett, Science Writer

The creator of a mini-brain model used to study Alzheimer's disease is the winner of the 2022 O. Max Gardner Award, the most prestigious annual prize for faculty awarded by the 17-campus University of North Carolina System.

Yeoheung Yun, Ph.D., has received numerous recognitions for his innovative work, including mini-brain development research, but he doesn't think he should be considered a hero. "I cannot save the world, quite frankly," Yun said.

But we know not all heroes wear capes. Sometimes they wear lab coats.

Established in the will of the former North Carolina governor, the Gardner Award, first presented in 1949, recognizes faculty who have made "the greatest contribution to the welfare of the human race."

"Dr. Yun's dedication to bioengineering education and his cutting-edge innovations have advanced the understanding of brain ailments and the properties of metals designed to degrade in the body. His notable contributions are affecting societies worldwide," said Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. in nominating Yun for the award. "His record of sustained impact, achievement and scholarship has tremendously benefited society."

Yun's humble beginnings trace back to Iksan City, South Korea.

"I grew up in a really rural, countryside area and during that time the parents were really struggling and trying to find ways to manage and support the family," said Yun. "It's interesting because comparing how my generation was raised and how my son is growing up now, it's completely different."

Yun helped out on the family farm by raising the chicken, growing rice and harvesting food for the family as early as elementary school.

Yun remembers his childhood playing in the soil. Where he lived lacked access to technology and transportation, so he would walk up to an hour through muddy areas just to get to school. And if it was impossible to cross because of flooding, he would take the long journey back home.

He is no stranger to hard work and perseverance, but he also enjoyed the stillness of the countryside.

"Once I retire, I am considering living in a similar rural area where I can do more things I love like fishing," Yun said.

That nostalgic trip down memory lane reminded him of South Korea's high demand for education and parents' deep desire for their children to go to school.

This emphasis on learning eventually led to Yun earning a B.S. and M.S. in mechanical engineering (mechatronics) from Chonbuk National University in South Korea, and a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering (bionano) from the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. He then completed a post-doctoral position in the university's College of Medicine and the College of Engineering.

Yun also served as a research assistant professor in Ohio for two years, and during that time, he and researchers at N.C. A&T collaborated on a successful proposal to create the Engineering Research Center for Revolutionizing Metallic Materials (ERC-RMB).

As part of the proposal, Yun relocated to Greensboro in 2010, and was hired as the director for the FIT-BEST Lab and as the first College of Engineering faculty member to join the bioengineering program at A&T.

Yun's primary fields of research include biomaterials and tissue engineering, cancer biology, neuroscience, organoids, immunology and medical devices. Among his many accomplishments, Yun has developed a neurovascular brain chip that can screen deadly nerve agents, like Sarin gas, allowing doctors to quickly conduct tests to detect which nerve agent is present in the patient's body — critical in treating soldiers and civilians in armed conflicts.

Working in biodegradable metallic devices, he also developed a new understanding of how such metals degrade in the body and created a platform for testing them. That work has the possibility to transform healthcare technologies through sensors that degrade naturally within the body after their work is done.

A nanoscientist as well as a bioengineer, Yun also created the longest carbon nanotube array in the world. Yun earned two patents for the technology, which is used in sensors that monitor certain physiological indicators and helps assess whether related bodily systems are functioning properly.

Yun's long list of work also includes breakthroughs in understanding the mechanisms of T-cells, which are vital to fighting disease, and in mechanobiology, specifically in modeling traumatic brain injuries.

"Engineers develop the technology and it changes every day," said Yun. "My philosophy is that we have to teach the most advanced technology to the students so that they don't lose any competitive advantage."



# DRIVING INTO THE FUTURE

*North Carolina A&T rolls out a fleet of autonomous vehicles*

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, COE,  
and Jamie Crockett, Science Writer

Visions of what the future would look like usually include references of “The Jetsons” — flying cars, hovercrafts, robots and automation.

Welcome to the future.

North Carolina A&T, a campus already served by food delivery robots and humanoid and canine robots in College of Engineering labs, added an exciting new dimension to its portfolio of futuristic innovations as it unveiled three new autonomous shuttles that will soon go into use on campus and nearby roads.

The Aggie Auto shuttles were the stars of a special event at Gateway Research Park’s north campus, where research and development take place for A&T’s steadily growing autonomous vehicle fleet, which now includes six passenger vehicles of varying sizes and capabilities. Gateway has something not found at any other university in the nation: A 2-mile test track that simulates rural driving conditions and allows researchers to test vehicles in real-world conditions.

While the new shuttles continue to be in development, it is expected that they will begin carrying riders in spring 2023, not only taking students around campus, but to downtown Greensboro and back.

On Nov. 1, leaders in local, state and federal transportation were invited to “test ride” the autonomous shuttles on the new Gateway North test track. Federal Highway Administration chief Stephanie Pollack, Greensboro Mayor Nancy Vaughan and Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr. were among those who took part, with each shuttle carrying five passengers at a time.

This test track and autonomous fleet allow N.C. A&T researchers to develop groundbreaking and equitable transportation solutions for low-demand rural areas by providing more efficient customer-focused transportation

*continued page 48*



services via flexible routing and scheduling. The vehicles will also reduce transportation costs because of smaller vehicle sizes and the adoption of ride-sharing strategies.



KARIMODDINI

“It is exciting to see that talented students and researchers at N.C. A&T play such an important role in this transportation domain and push the boundaries of research, innovation and advanced technologies and serve all of society, particularly rural and underserved communities,” said Ali Karimoddini, Ph.D., director of NC-CAV Center of Excellence in Advanced Transportation Technology. Karimoddini is principal investigator on the autonomous vehicles, leading a robust team of faculty, graduate students and undergraduates at Gateway North.

The fleet is comprised of three low-speed self-driving shuttles, a high-speed self-driving van and two regular autonomous sedans.

Each vehicle is classified at SAE autonomy Level 4, meaning they can perform all driving tasks under specific circumstances, and a human driver can override and take control of the car. Additionally, the cars are in compliance

with the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. The new shuttles' maximum speed limit is 25 mph and, at this time, researchers have determined they can confidently drive them autonomously between 15 and 20 mph, depending on the terrain's complexity.

The fleet allows researchers to test and develop different solutions for a variety of domains — university campuses, urban downtown areas, rural areas and highways. The Aggie Auto shuttles are connected to the cloud, to each other and to home-base infrastructure to form what are known as connected autonomous microtransit vehicles, or CAVs.

To ensure safety, they must first undergo a period of socialization, which consists of mapping the routes they will follow and deploying vehicles one by one. This allows the research team to identify potential challenges and make appropriate technical and route adjustments in collaboration with the City of Greensboro Department of Transportation. The socialization period is also intended to help drivers acclimate to seeing the shuttles in action and sharing the road comfortably and with confidence.

“The Federal Highway Administration is proud to support N.C. A&T's work to develop this test track and bring the concept of connected and automated vehicles one step closer to market, especially for underserved and rural communities,”

said FHWA's Pollack. “The technology N.C. A&T is developing also has the potential to protect vulnerable road users—people who walk, bike or roll—by testing interactions with bike lanes, bus stops and more. These innovations are critical for ensuring the safety of all road users.”

Transportation research has a long history at A&T, beginning with the Transportation Institute's establishment in 1970 and expansion to the Center for Advanced Transportation Mobility, which continues innovative research regarding vehicles, operators and infrastructure.

As a historically Black university, A&T has been a leader in preparing diverse populations to enter transportation-related professions. The university is the home to the first Summer Transportation Institute, now funded by FHWA, which has been running successfully for 30 years.

A&T is also home to the North Carolina Transportation Center of Excellence in Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Technology (NC-CAV), founded in 2019, and the Autonomous Cooperative Control of Emergent Systems of Systems Laboratory, or ACCESS Lab, founded in 2013. Both NC-CAV and ACCESS have worked to model, analyze and improve solutions for complex transportation and autonomy problems.

Other transportation/autonomy research faculty prominent in this work include Abdollah Homaifar, Ph.D., Leila Hashemi-Beni, Ph.D., John Kelly, Ph.D., and Steven Xiaochun Jiang, Ph.D., as well as collaborators from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and North Carolina State University under the NC-CAV Center.

Throughout the history of autonomy at A&T, researchers have worked to expose undergraduate and graduate students to technology. Notably, A&T participated in the four-year international AutoDrive Challenge organized by SAE International and General Motors, and received several awards including the second place in the overall competition in 2019. Faculty researchers Sun Yi, Ph.D., Professor Daniel Acree, Younho Seong, Ph.D., and Balakrishna Gokaraju, Ph.D., joined Karimoddini and numerous Engineering students on the AutoDrive team.

These advancements in autonomous technology have been made possible through federal, state and local partnerships and funding from the National Science Foundation, FHWA, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Downtown Greensboro Inc. as well as industrial partners.

## BEHIND THE SCENES



DANIEL TOBIAS '17, '22



JOSE MATUTE, PH.D.

By Jordan M. Howse

Jose Matute, Ph.D., and Daniel Tobias '17, '22 are two of the student researchers who helped bring the future to the present by creating software and building hardware that enabled the functionality of Aggie Auto's self-driving shuttles.

Matute, a post-doctoral researcher in the ACCESS and NC-CAV labs with Ali Karimoddini, Ph.D., came to North Carolina A&T from Spain where he earned his Ph.D. from Tecnalia Research and Innovation Centre and developed his thesis dissertation on autonomous transit. His previous work in Malaga, Spain, sparked his interest in replicating its success at A&T and in Greensboro.

Tobias came to A&T as an undergraduate and decided to earn

his master's during the pandemic. As an undergraduate student, he worked with Karimoddini on various other autonomous research projects, which made him an excellent student researcher for the autonomous shuttle project.

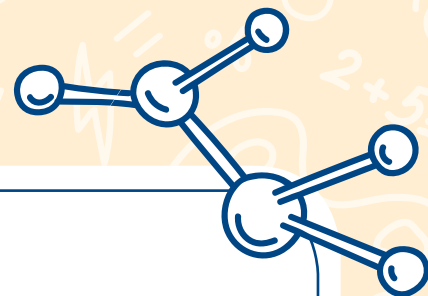
The students have worked on the project for almost a year and started integrating their code and hardware into the vehicle in June. Matute and Tobias are interested in the socialization of the shuttles and the public perception of the self-driving vehicles.

“It's one part inspiration, one part outreach,” Tobias said. “These vehicles can be like a lab for students. We can take some of them apart and back together

again and teach about that process. Departments of transportation are very interested in micromobility and last-mile transportation and we at A&T can help explore those options.”

For Matute, it's a matter of real-world application.

“I've done work on autonomous vehicles and a lot of that was done with simulation,” he said. “It's very rare to have a real autonomous vehicle to work on and to work with. At A&T we have a lot of opportunities to learn about this technology and how it will interact in real-life situations. I hope it will help people—not just academia or industry—be more comfortable and confident in autonomy.”



## Aggie Academy Lab School:

### Building an Aggie Legacy of Education through Community, Relationships and Belonging

By Tonya D. Dixon '04, '21, Director of Digital Content

**L**ess than five miles from its growing physical campus, North Carolina A&T has broadened its reach by establishment of Aggie Academy Laboratory School. It's not additional space for faculty research and experiments, however, the students will certainly have the opportunity to participate in similar hands-on activities and instruction.

The new science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics (STEAM) focused elementary school for third, fourth and fifth graders will primarily serve students who live in East Greensboro.

Students who may have encountered difficulties in traditional classroom settings will be engaged in culturally responsive, sustaining and experiential teaching and learning.

Paula Price, Ph.D., professor and dean of the College of Education (CEd) led the charge for establishing and maintaining oversight of the lab school. It's a passion project that she hardily believes will create a launching pad for students to excel, cultivate a love of learning and propel them to subsequent grade-level advanced placement.

"It's really about changing the life trajectory and disrupting some of the generational poverty that we have had in our community," said Price.

"We will be able to use all the resources of N.C. A&T with students at the elementary level. This means that children in the A&T community will have the opportunity to really experience world class innovations as they learn in a culturally responsive way with hands-on instruction. They will have opportunities to visit the A&T campus; visit our farm as they learn about science and environmental science; and campus laboratories as they learn about physics and engineering."

Aggie Academy is an outgrowth of a 2016 North Carolina General Assembly law requiring the UNC System to create "laboratory" schools to improve student performance in regions that included low-performing schools. Among six already in existence, the system asked N.C. A&T to open a school as well as other institutions.

The school was officially established in early 2022 by votes of the North Carolina A&T Board of Trustees, the University of North Carolina System Board of Governors and the North Carolina State Board of Education.

From inception to opening, the turnaround time required nearly warp-speed preparation and work, but the need was too important and the success of the students too significant for delay.

As students matriculate through Aggie Academy, the university looks to positively impact the entire family unit and community, continuing to fulfil its land-grant mission and responsibility.

"We're excited that we will be able to expand our reach to our public-school children and their families," said Price. "Community, relationships and belonging are among the standards, values and principles of the new school."

It's an exciting, innovative venture but not one the university hasn't already experienced. A&T adds the lab school among its growing presence and expertise in primary education as it currently partners with Guilford County Schools (GCS) housing the STEM Early College at N.C. A&T, the A&T Four Middle College and temporarily the Middle College at Bennett.

While the other schools are solely under the authority of GCS, Aggie Academy will be fully operated and staffed by the university, with limited GCS partnership providing transportation, meals and support services.

Being part of the A&T family means access to top resources as well as the added benefit of student teachers and researchers from the College of Education adding quality and value to students' learning experiences.

"One of the things that excites me, as the dean of education, is that our educator preparation students are going to be very visible in Aggie Academy. As they are learning to be teachers and working on their certification, they will have hands-on experiences teaching children in Aggie Academy in small groups for individualized tutoring and really learning from the direction of the master teachers. It is a win-win for everyone," said Price.

"The children will be able to have extra help from some of our A&T students who are learning to be teachers as well as the [master] teachers at the school."

In addition to the high regard for the Aggie name, the academy stands apart from the crowd through small class sizes providing increased attention for each student and access to university programs for the entire family.

Bridging gaps and gathering dedicated resources and individuals equipped to bring the Aggie Academy vision to pass was also a necessity. The university tapped veteran education administrator Anessa Burgman, Ed.D. as startup coordinator/project manager.

"It's a great opportunity for children to have access to career choices. They will be able to visit and have visitors come and learn so many different things about the world and not only hear about different careers, but see people who are in those careers," said Burgman.



"We will have small class sizes. 14-1. Students have access to technology. Each child will have their own device that they can take home for continued learning. The school will follow Guilford County Schools' calendar. We will have teachers in art, music, PE and a special dedicated teacher to give our students [immersive] experiences in STEAM. We will focus on curriculum that is culturally responsive and that connects to the children of our community and provide them with hands on opportunities to engage."

Aggie Academy presents yet another unique opportunity for A&T and the East Greensboro community to mutually grow and partner together.

"I think it's wonderful for all of us, particularly as a university to really be able to expand our Aggie family to include younger children and their families," said Price.

# FREEDOM SCHOOL AT N.C. A&T:

*Cultural Relevance, Targeted Groups, Tailored Curriculum*



By Tonya D. Dixon '04, '21, Director of Digital Content

*At approximately 8:30 a.m., a synchronized and jubilant chorus of affirmative chants, declarations, celebrations, applause and accolades ring out from Proctor Hall at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Following, a guest reader shares from a favorite poem or book. On this day, Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr., reads a capturing story to enthralled students. Afterward, questions ring out. Before the session concludes, the group belts out a song to thank “the principal” of A&T (how Martin described his role at the university).*

*The routine known as “Harambe”—a Kenyan term translated to mean “all pull together”—is a morning staple for 40 3rd, 4th and 5h grade students enrolled in the N.C. A&T Freedom School Summer Program.*

The College of Education (CEd), in collaboration with funding sponsor Corning Corporation, facilitated the free, five-week-long academic enrichment program that ran from 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m., June 13-July 15.

“Our scholars have been excited to learn through safe, nurturing, non-violent, restorative, and literature-rich environments taught by committed college-age servant leaders,” said Sharlenceia K. O’Neal, Freedom School principal and site coordinator. “We want every child to love to read, develop a positive attitude towards learning and know they can and must make a difference in the world.”

In addition to fully immersive, culturally relevant and responsive learning and curriculum, Freedom School students were exposed to the innerworkings of higher education and college life. A&T served as an open laboratory for their learning, development and transformation. From 8 a.m. breakfast in The Marketplace – one of the university’s dining halls – to daily interactions in mock classrooms outfitted with grade appropriate resources and housed in Proctor Hall, the comprehensive experience broadened their horizons.

Nevertheless, additional resource procurement beyond the university was necessary.

In 2021, A&T and Corning kicked off a five-year partnership with a \$5.5 million gift to prepare students for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), business, and education. While not all dollars were allocated to the program, the Freedom School benefitted from resources invested by the university and Corning Corporation.

“The A&T partnership was a Corning-wide effort, that extends beyond ORESU,” said Millicent Ruffin, Ph.D., director of Community Affairs for Corning’s Office of Racial Equality and Social Unity (ORESU). “Our component is unique in that we decided to fund the College of Education. We believe to effectively encourage students of color to pursue STEM careers, we needed more teachers of color in STEM.”

“My group focuses on supporting underserved communities, where our work will have the biggest impact. We concentrate on the pillars of education, community development and economic growth.”

Allocated funding goes toward students of color in elementary education and those working on their master’s degrees. In 2021, ORESU supported eight undergraduate and four graduate students known as Corning Scholars.

The Freedom School promotes the long-term success of children by preventing summer learning loss through igniting a passion for reading and inspiring a love of learning. The 5-week program fulfills its mission by accomplishing the following:

- Delivering a culturally diverse curriculum that affirms scholars with engaging literature and exposure to the broader community
- Serving families and children who lack access to quality summer enrichment opportunities
- Addressing the whole child by supporting their academic, social and emotional needs
- Offering a work-force development opportunity for college students to gain professional experience, serve as positive role models and enter the teacher pipeline or social service pipeline
- Collaborating with diverse community stakeholders who contribute to and benefit from the partnerships

As the students became familiar with the Freedom School process and cultural connection, the refrain became that of excitement, anticipation and comfort as well as self-assurance to conquer challenges.

“The growth and confidence of the scholars since the beginning of the program really shines through and I was blessed to see [them] so motivated to learn more every day. I feel that it is important to teach them that they can make a difference in all that they do,” said O’Neal. “A quote that I like to leave my scholars with is ‘How can the sky be the limit when there are footprints on the moon? Dream Big!’”

Establishing and facilitating the university’s first Freedom School program didn’t happen overnight. CEd Associate Professor Brian Williams, Ph.D. served as the project manager and one of the program’s biggest supporters.

## 2022 THEME: *Environmental and Racial Justice*

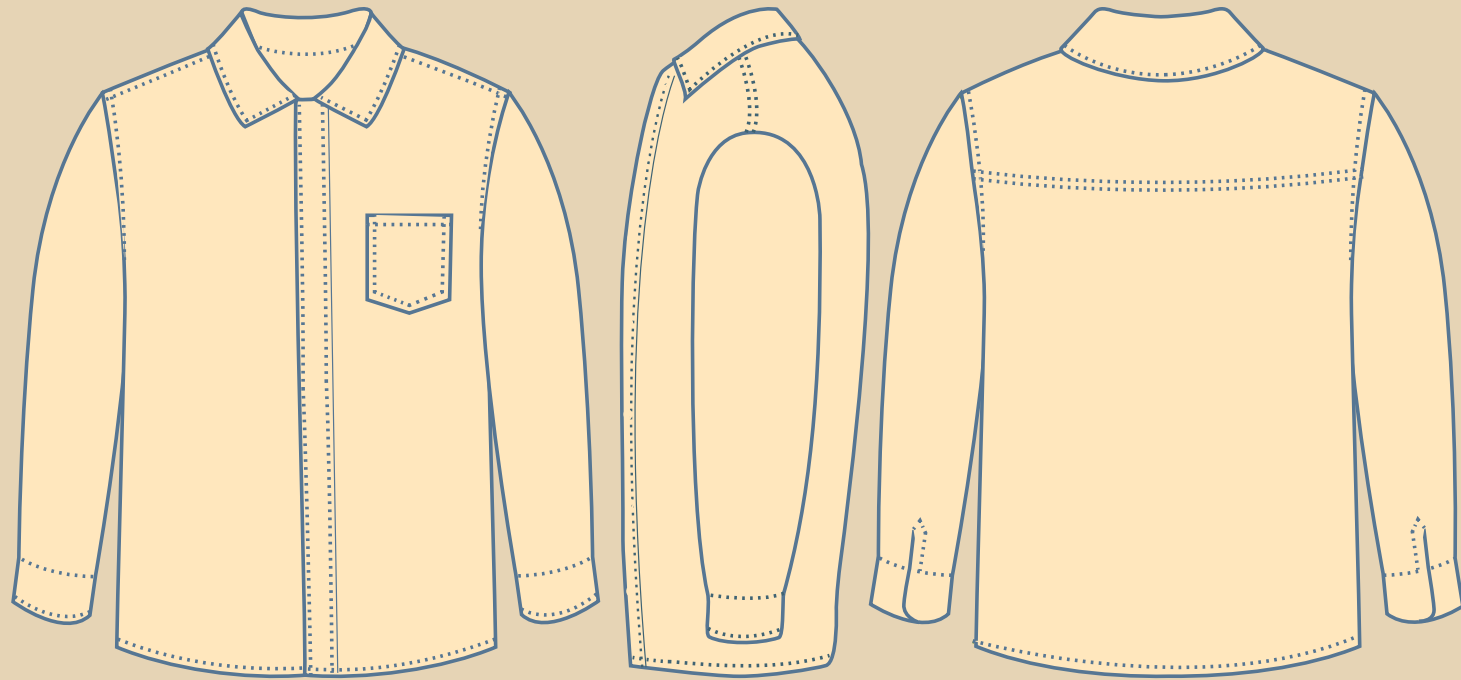
“I believe the N.C. A&T community should be proud of what we have accomplished in just five weeks. Scholars have had the opportunity to learn and grow, both socially and academically. They have learned to operate with open-minds and a sense of possibility, knowing they have the power to change their own circumstances and that of the world,” said Williams.

“The leadership team and staff worked extremely hard to ensure the program was more than a typical summer literacy initiative...and it was! We were intentional about the messages we were sending the scholars, in content and practice. Our goal was to grow the scholars into life-long learners who are committed to making a difference in the world. We never deviated from that goal as we planned learning experiences and off-campus activities that would expand their thinking and aspirations of wanting to lead in their communities.”

For the finale, students performed Harambe, provided a special activity relating to National Day of Social Action, highlighted what they learned throughout the summer experience and presented other activities to family members and university supporters.

“The work was not in vain as scholars showed academic growth and enhanced leadership qualities each week. I’m thankful Corning funded this great opportunity. Our program was truly a place where scholars felt safe, confident, loved, and celebrated by staff who looked like them and came from similar backgrounds,” said Williams.

“We created a sturdy bridge between the university and community. I’m sure we’ll see some of the same faces in future programming and as future Aggies! I firmly believe there is no school like Freedom School and this is just the beginning of A&T’s impact with the program.”



## A&T FASHION MERCHANDISING STUDENTS INTERNING AT NATION'S TOP RETAILERS

By Lydian Bernhardt, Interim Director of Communications, CAES

North Carolina A&T students lit up the nation's top-tier retail and apparel brands this summer as interns at some of the most recognizable brands in the world.

Students in the Fashion Merchandising and Design program, in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences Department of Family and Consumer Sciences, completed summer internships at companies that include Winston-Salem's major conglomerate, Hanesbrands; lifestyle retailer Urban Outfitters and its satellite companies in Pennsylvania; and New York retail giants Saks Fifth Avenue and Bloomingdale's.

"Most fashion students' dream internship experience is one that places them in areas where they can be inspired by diverse culture and creative viewpoints and immerse themselves among major national and international fashion brands," said Elizabeth Newcomb Hopfer, Ph.D., an associate professor in the program. "Unfortunately, our N.C. A&T fashion students have historically faced challenges securing their dream internships, in part due to longstanding discrimination in the fashion industry that has reduced opportunities for students from HBCUs.

"The other faculty members and I are exceedingly proud of each student participating in a summer internship," Newcomb said. "We are equally excited about the connections that these internships will afford the program to make for future students pursuing our degree."

Amberatta Faulkner, senior and president of the student-led organization Fashion XCetera, is interning at Hanesbrands Inc., the owner of brands such as Hanes, Champion, Bali and L'eggs. Working in the licensed sports apparel field for Champion, Faulkner's task was to help the brand appeal to a younger, female audience in college bookstores.

"Women are the biggest consumers of fashion, period, because they buy for their entire family, so we're trying to make the merchandise in the (N.C. A&T) bookstore more to the female audience," said Faulkner. "What can we bring in? 'What types of new products can we sell?' We're working on those sorts of questions."

Faulkner said that she appreciates Champion's willingness to expand its demographic in age and culture.

"They are very open to our opinions of how they can better their brand and appeal to the younger crowd," said Faulkner. "Some brands are stuck on their consumer, but I feel like Champion is willing to break out and go to different colleges. They're

looking into HBCUs and expanding into the HBCU audience. That's something some brands won't do because they're very stuck in their ways of certain things."

In Pennsylvania, junior Mya Harris is exploring the history of N.C. A&T and working under women's design structure wear for Urban Outfitters' Summer Class.

"This class has really been able to be in my zone as far as creating," Harris said of interning for the Philadelphia-based lifestyle retailer. "Creating at home—it's different. But since I've been able to go out more and explore the world, and be involved in different aspects of the fashion industry, I've been able to push

FAULKNER



MARSHALL



HARRIS



CHAVIS





Senior Samya Gilliam-Frazier, left, and two other Free People student interns toured this FP Movement store in Pennsylvania as part of their internship.

myself more creatively in what I do come up with and design.”

In what she described as a “triple internship,” Harris is balancing three ongoing tasks: she is working on a retrospective of what she’s learning while working for the company; being available for on-the-spot activities, such as photography; and creating a collection that best represents her college.

“The basis of Summer Class is to tell your school’s story,” said Harris. “For me, it is really important to tell the history of A&T and push the unknown facts. People know ‘largest public HBCU’ and ‘largest producer of Black engineers and agriscience students,’ but people don’t know, for example, the history of the Aggie bulldog or how the name has progressed over the years.”

Samya Gilliam-Frazier, who is interning with Free People’s FP Movement (owned by Urban Outfitters’ parent company URBN) in Pennsylvania, had to overcome injuries from a car accident in May 2021 before she could apply for the internship this year.

“For about two weeks, I was bedridden,” said Gilliam-Frazier, “and then it was another two months before I could start to use my left hand and arm, after physical and

functional therapy. Dr. Newcomb really worked with me and prioritized helping me get into an internship.”

Following a successful online interview with Free People – “I was just trying to be as confident and happy as I could be,” she said – Gilliam-Frazier arrived in Pennsylvania as a design intern at FP Movement for to-and-from casualwear. Apart from her day-to-day tasks, such as filing summits, tech packs and other allocation aspects, Gilliam-Frazier embarked on two ongoing projects, one of which, like Harris’, involved A&T designs in the Summer Class.

“For Free People, we have to design our own bodies and our own silhouettes. So, my pants are not sweatpants. I completely made the pants. It’s completely my idea, which I felt was so creative. I’m so happy I had the experience to do that. Of course, they need to have the A&T logo or mascot. I did one bottom, one top, a heavyweight and a sock.”

In New York City, senior Anthony Marshall said that being on set was the biggest highlight of his photo shoot production internship at luxury retailer Saks Fifth Avenue.

“I started off wanting to be a visual merchandiser,” said Marshall. “I’m passionate about styling and set

design. I’m also a theater minor, so I’m passionate about the performance aspect, and videography, as well. I really enjoy being on set and being able to network with people in so many different roles.”

Marshall said shadowing the art director, stylist, producer and other team members were among the best parts of the experience.

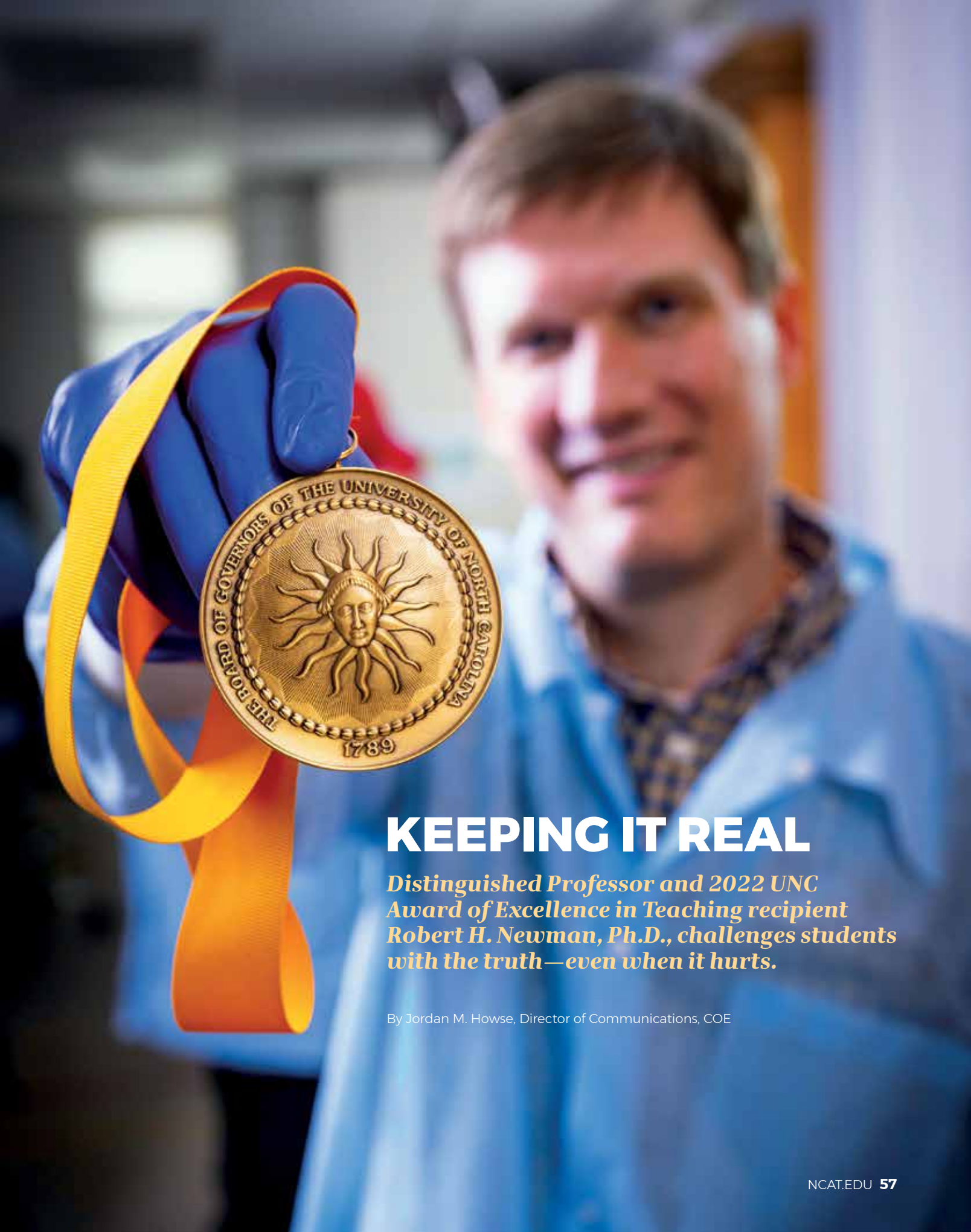
“I’ve really been able to get a great understanding about the ‘before process’ of these people, getting into the roles that they have and able to get a better understanding of my strengths and weaknesses, and what I need to further work on to get into some of these roles in the future,” he said.

Aniya Chavis has been making the rounds in New York City at Bloomingdale’s as a buyer intern for ready-to-wear portfolios at Bloomingdale’s. Her responsibilities range from shadowing a senior buyer to starring in an Instagram video for the retailer.

“One of the cosmetic buyers emailed the coordinator in charge of the internship program and said, ‘We’re launching a new skincare brand at Bloomingdale’s and we’d love for the interns to come and volunteer if they have time and they want to,’” Chavis said. “So, I emailed them and said, ‘Yes, I’d love to volunteer and help you guys.’”

From the 17th floor in the Bloomingdale’s office building, Chavis and other interns acted in a montage video of “customers” looking excitedly into a shopping bag at a mystery product, later revealed to be the retailer’s skincare lineup.

“Having that experience, and getting the feel of how the fashion directors work, was really fun,” said Chavis. “Being on Instagram with my family being able to see it, and getting the exposure in different departments, was probably the best thing out of the experience.”



## KEEPING IT REAL

*Distinguished Professor and 2022 UNC Award of Excellence in Teaching recipient Robert H. Newman, Ph.D., challenges students with the truth—even when it hurts.*

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, COE

During his 10 years at North Carolina A&T, Robert H. Newman, Ph.D., has worked tirelessly on his breakthrough cellular pathway research and has excelled in mentoring students along the way.

The University of North Carolina Board of Governors took notice and selected Newman as the university's 2022 recipient of the Award for Excellence in Teaching.

The UNC Board of Governors recognizes a professor annually from each system institution with the prestigious award. Established by the board in 1993 to highlight the importance of teaching, the awards recognize the extraordinary contributions of faculty members systemwide. Each of the winners received a commemorative bronze medallion and a \$12,500 cash prize.

Newman, the Nathan F. Simms Distinguished Professor in the College of Science and Technology (COST) Department of Biology, said his teaching philosophy is built upon three core elements: clear and engaging classroom instruction that promotes student participation, sparks intellectual exploration,

and leads to in-depth understanding of biological concepts; experiential laboratory training that challenges students to think critically and pursue new avenues of scientific discovery; and effective mentorship that promotes student success through open and honest communication with his students.

"I have a special sense of satisfaction knowing that the guidance and advice that I have given these students will positively impact both their lives and their careers," Newman wrote in his nomination packet. "As I continue to grow as an educator, I am excited to share the knowledge and skills that I have obtained in the classroom, in the laboratory, and as a mentor with undergraduate and graduate students who are in the early stages of their scientific careers, as well as with postdocs and even junior faculty members as they develop their research programs at N.C. A&T."

Newman joined the Department of Biology in 2012 and has taught a range of undergraduate and graduate courses. He has developed three courses and redesigned three courses to incorporate active learning and authentic research experiences into the curriculum. He has worked



***Newman believes it is essential for him to provide students with open and honest assessment of the situation, even if that means asking tough questions or helping the student confront hard truths.***



diligently to develop a research program that maximizes undergraduate student participation and scientific development through independent research.

"Dr. Newman has been a tremendous asset to the College of Science and Technology," said Abdellah Ahmidouch, Ph.D., COST Dean. "His work on cellular pathway signaling could lead to medical breakthroughs and has yielded millions in research dollars. He works extremely well with students, both graduate and undergraduate. The hands-on experience and the skills they developed at his lab have allowed many of them to get to prestigious graduate programs or medical schools."

He also helped found the university's first international Genetically Engineered Machines (iGEM) synthetic biology team, serving as the team mentor since its inception. Synthetic biology is an emerging biological discipline that uses molecular biology approaches to "forward engineer" biological systems to perform novel functions. To date, this program has provided research experiences to more than 35 undergraduate students and five high school students, leading to presentations at 11 scientific conferences.

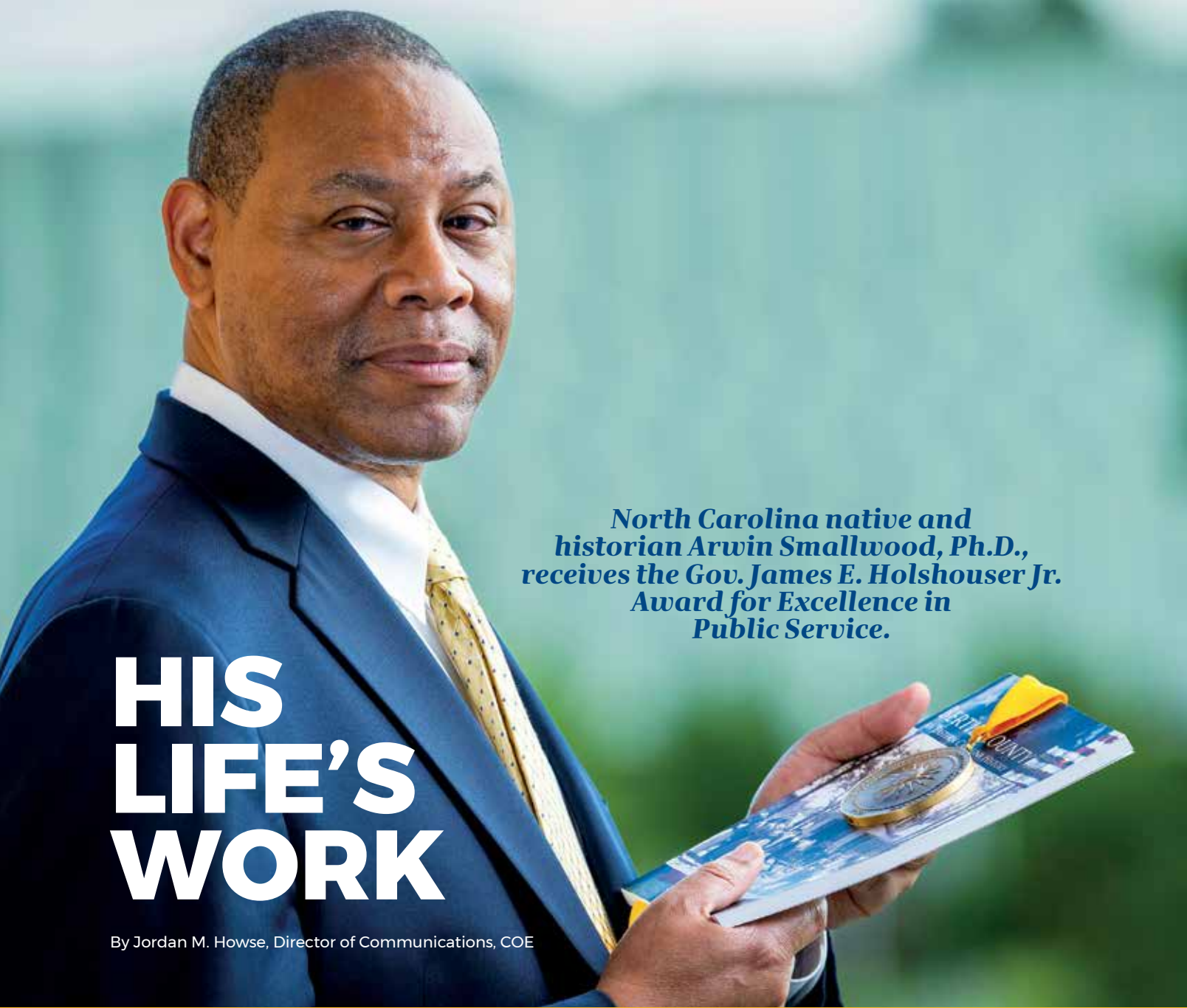
Newman said he believes it is essential for him to provide students with open and honest assessment of the situation,

even if that means asking tough questions or helping the student confront hard truths.

Corregio Peagler '22, who was an undergraduate researcher with Newman, said working with Newman as an undergraduate prepared him for his life after graduation.

"During my freshman year, I expressed interest in being a part of (Newman's) research lab," Peagler said. "Initially, I was intimidated by the complex topics that his research lab focused on. However, as I spent time with Dr. Newman, his ability to explain these complex topics in a way that made sense to a freshman who had not seen this material before was unmatched by any other professor I have come in to contact with.

"As I prepare for medical school and have been exposed to some of the material through my summer program at the George Washington School of Medicine, I have relied on much of the molecular biology research skills and knowledge he helped me cultivate in his lab," he said. "I am proud to be one of his mentees and know that the work ethic and science curiosity he instilled in me will take me far in medical school and beyond."



**North Carolina native and historian Arwin Smallwood, Ph.D., receives the Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service.**

# HIS LIFE'S WORK

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, COE

***Smallwood's extensive knowledge of how Indigenous Peoples, African Americans and Europeans interacted in the state that is now known as North Carolina has been invaluable to many, including native North Carolinians.***

As a university that is ranked for its innovative teaching, it is no surprise to any of North Carolina A&T's stakeholders that professors here excel at not only teaching but mentoring, researching and setting a positive example for their students.

What may come as a surprise is that this year marks the first time professors at A&T have received both University of North Carolina Board of Governors top honors—the O. Max Gardner Award and the Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service—in the same year.

Arwin Smallwood, Ph.D., acclaimed A&T historian, was recognized by the board with the Holshouser Award, one of the top two annual faculty awards bestowed by the UNC System.

Smallwood is the first A&T faculty member to be chosen for the honor, which was first presented in 2014.

A professor of history, Smallwood is the interim vice provost for undergraduate education and a Carter G. Woodson Distinguished Lecturer, named by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History.

The Holshouser prize was launched in 2007 as the Public Service Award to “encourage, identify, recognize and reward public service by faculty of the university. Faculty of any of the 17 institutions of the University of North Carolina are eligible.” The BOG renamed the award for Holshouser two months after his death in 2013. Smallwood is its eighth recipient.

Smallwood's contribution to his community begins with his love for the state of North Carolina. Raised in the northeastern area of the state and educated at North Carolina Central University for his bachelor's and master's degrees in history, Smallwood said he is truly honored to receive the award.

“It's a recognition of my life's work,” he said. “I have lived and worked in other states, but it is a great honor to come home and be recognized with this prestigious award. It means a great deal to me.”

His extensive knowledge of how Indigenous Peoples, African Americans and Europeans interacted in the state that is now known as North Carolina has been invaluable to many, including native North Carolinians.

“A lot of people do not know about the precolonial history of our state,” he said. “Now that our state has doubled in size, this is my effort to educate everyone about our history here.”

Smallwood has made many presentations to groups big and small over the past decade that reveal a scholar deeply knowledgeable in his field of research.

Whether interpreting North Carolina history through deeds for enslaved people at an academic gathering or making a presentation on the early history of Tuscarora Indians at the Conference on Iroquois Research,

***In a video presentation recognizing Smallwood's academic impact, his students lauded him for “seeing something in me that I didn't see in myself.”***

Smallwood digs deeply into the stories of peoples too often ignored. He ensures they are not lost to time but instead incorporated into this state's larger epic and shared with both fellow historians and ordinary North Carolinians.

Charles Johnson, Ph.D., the director of public history at North Carolina Central, has worked with Smallwood on several projects over the last five years.

“He's a phenomenal person who has always had a lot of spirit and intelligence,” Johnson said. “What strikes me is how much his subject matters to him and that comes across in all that he does.”

Johnson said Smallwood also makes a concerted effort to give students research experience as well as make diverse hires in the workplace.

Along the way, Smallwood has made singular contributions to the history of this state, as BOG Chair Randall Ramsey and member Anna Spangler Nelson made clear, calling him a transformational public servant whose work speaks to the highest aspirations of North Carolina.

“N.C. A&T is indeed fortunate to have you as a member of its faculty,” said UNC System President Peter Hans in presenting the award. “The Board of Governors takes great pleasure in presenting you the 2022 Gov. James E. Holshouser Jr. Award for Excellence in Public Service. ... We are all immensely grateful for your talent and your work in making North Carolina a better place to live and work.”

Joined by his wife, son, daughter, father-in-law and other family members, a visibly moved Smallwood accepted the honor, taking care to note he is a product of the UNC

System before moving on to The Ohio State University for his doctorate.

Serving in faculty positions at Ohio State, Bradley University, the University of Memphis and now A&T, he has amassed an exceptionally long record of publications, including multiple books on topics ranging from local history (“Bertie County: An Eastern Carolina History”) to international texts (“The Atlas of African-American History and Politics: From the Slave Trade to Modern Times”).

Proclaiming his profound love for the state of North Carolina and passion for telling its story, Smallwood thanked his late parents, wife and family for encouraging his scholarship. “I'm very honored to be here and to receive this distinguished award,” said Smallwood before being embraced by Chancellor Harold L. Martin Sr.

“This award focuses on individuals who are making a significant difference in our community, our state and nation,” said Martin, praising Smallwood's effectiveness in transferring his passion for history to his students by nurturing their excitement about understanding our past. As BOG member Nelson noted, “Through his teaching, research and service, Dr. Smallwood connects students with the community at large.”

In a video presentation recognizing Smallwood's academic impact, his students lauded him for “seeing something in me that I didn't see in myself.”

“Having someone who knows you're capable and wants you to be the best professional you can be is just incredible,” they said.



A woman with short, curly dark hair, wearing a blue patterned top and purple lipstick, is smiling and holding a large, textured globe. The background is a vibrant, colorful display of light patterns, possibly a digital art installation or a museum exhibit. The overall scene is bright and celebratory.

# OUT OF THIS WORLD

**FROM STARS, COMETS AND ASTEROIDS TO SPACECRAFTS, FOR PLANETARY GEOPHYSICIST LYNNAE QUICK '05, SPACE ROCKS!**

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, COE

**LYNNAE QUICK '05** is one of a handful of Black female planetary geophysicists. She studies the icy moons of Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.

Before reaching for the stars, she started out as an Aggie Born, Aggie Bred student at North Carolina A&T. A native of Greensboro, North Carolina, she graduated from James Benson Dudley High School and graduated summa cum laude from A&T with a B.S. in physics. She earned an M.S. in physics, with a concentration in astrophysics, from The Catholic University of America.



***She even has her own piece of space: Asteroid 37349 was named Lynnaequick in her honor.***

Quick obtained both an M.A. and a Ph.D. in earth and planetary science from Johns Hopkins University in 2011 and 2013, respectively. Between 2013 and 2015, she was a NASA Postdoctoral Program Fellow at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.

She even has her own piece of space: Asteroid 37349 was named Lynnaequick in her honor.

As a research scientist in planetary studies at Goddard Space Flight Center, she studies the moves and geological processes happening on the moons, which includes volcanic eruptions in the oceans beneath the icy surfaces of the moons. She uses math to model the features on the moons' surfaces.

Quick's interest in planetary science started in her earth science class at Dudley.

"One of the units was astronomy and we talked about the life cycle of stars and these big explosions called supernovas and that some of them end up as black holes," she said. "I

remember raising my hand and asking my teacher, 'People actually get paid to study things like this?' And I was like, 'Sign me up!'"

Luckily, in her senior year of high school, Quick took physics with a teacher who knew one of the five Black women at the time who had a Ph.D. in astronomy and set up a phone call. The teacher put Quick in touch with the astronomer and she advised Quick on what her path to studying astronomy could be like.

"At 16, it sounded like a lot of school, and I did not want to be in school that long," she said with a laugh. "But she said to me that time is going to pass either way so you may as well get your Ph.D., and that makes all the sense in the world to me now."

Her interests evolved from the life cycle of stars to the characterization of planets. So, while working on her Ph.D., she reached out to Rosalie Lopez, Ph.D., who was studying Io, a moon of Jupiter known for its volcanic activity.

Lopez, who worked in Pasadena, California, suggested Quick reach out to Louise Proctor, Ph.D., and Elizabeth Turtle, Ph.D., who were closer to the Washington, D.C. area at Johns Hopkins. Quick interned with Proctor studying Europa, an icy moon of Jupiter that has an ocean beneath its surface.

"It's kind of a winding road," she said. "Getting your degree and getting your Ph.D. and having so much of that be dependent on the person you work with, you have to make sure you find someone who can work with you, who believes in you and who doesn't see you as a stereotype."

Quick has made significant contributions to the study of cryovolcanism as a process on dwarf planet Ceres, including the formation of the enigmatic faculae, or "bright spots," in which she was the first to model the movement of material

from a deep brine reservoir in Ceres' interior to its emplacement via eruptions at the surface. She has revisited modeling the formation of lava domes on planet Venus and of cryolava domes on Europa and has repeatedly provided new insights into detection requirements for geyser-like plumes and their associated eruption products on Europa.

She has also placed constraints on the propensity for volcanism on extrasolar planets and found that a significant number of extrasolar planets may be ocean worlds, resembling the icy moons of the giant planets in internal structure and composition.

Quick is now part of a team, led by Turtle, that built a camera that will be on a spacecraft to explore Europa.

The spacecraft is intended to launch in 2024 and should get to Europa in 2030.

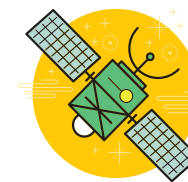
"It won't be the first spacecraft to go to Europa, but we don't have a lot of high-resolution images," she said. "I'm really excited to be a part of that."

In addition to her scientific pursuits, Quick is exceptionally engaged in the broader research community through her proactive leadership in space missions. This includes her work as a co-investigator on NASA missions such as Europa Clipper and Dragonfly; as a member of the steering committee for NASA's Outer Planets Assessment Group; a member of the Planetary Science Decadal Survey 2023-2032 panel on ocean worlds and dwarf planets; and as co-chair of the Earth and

Planetary Systems Sciences section of the National Society of Black Physicists (NSBP).

Her advocacy work to diversify the field is particularly notable. She has mentored and taught early career planetary scientists and is leading the Dragonfly Mission's Student and Early Career Investigator Program.

Before joining NASA as a civil servant staff scientist, Quick was a staff scientist in the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Earth and Planetary Studies, making her the first African American staff scientist in the center's history. She is the sixth African American woman to obtain a Ph.D. in planetary science.



***Quick is part of a team that built a camera that will be on a spacecraft to explore Europa. The spacecraft is intended to launch in 2024 and should get to Europa in 2030.***





1980s

## LEAVING THE FARM

By Jordan M. Howse, Director of Communications, COE

There was never another choice of college for **LEON MOSES '80**. Growing up on a farm in Northampton County, North Carolina, he thought he wanted to escape farm life and North Carolina A&T was going to be how he did it. But in 1976, his brother Ben brought him to A&T's University Farm.

"My escape route turned to the place I spent every day since," Moses said.

As the farm's superintendent, Moses oversaw and shaped the more than 400 acres known as the university's largest classroom.

After more than 40 years on the University Farm, Moses retired in June 2022.

Moses graduated cum laude in May 1980 and started working at A&T the same month. He started as a

research assistant in the plant science department until 1983.

"I got fired from this job and went straight to my mentor's office, Dr. (Samuel J.) Dunn," he said. "Dr. Dunn told me to go and keep working on his research, instead of what I was working on before. He told the professor who fired me, 'One day Leon will be doing more for this college than anyone else.'"

Moses worked as a research technician in plant science (now natural resources) for 24 years. Then he started to work toward the superintendent position.

"Then, the farm was dilapidated and kind of a thorn in the university's side," Moses said. "I wrote out a plan for the farm and (Caroline Turner, former research supervisor) shared it with the dean. I used that plan to build up what we've been doing out here."

In 2004, Moses took over as the farm superintendent and put his plan to turn the farm into a premier model farm began.

The first thing that had to change, Moses said, was the culture. He had to make sure the mindset of workers reflected that the farm should always look chancellor-ready.

"For a lot of people, the farm is the first thing they see when they drive off the highway," Moses said. "We've got a team for beautification who are out there every week. We keep it to that standard every single day."

Moses, a hot rod enthusiast and Bible teacher, has been using his time in retirement to work on his three muscle cars and continue to lead as a deacon in his church, New Light Missionary Baptist Church.

1990s

**LAWREN E. GREENE '99** recently completed a Ph.D. in information technology project management at Capella University. Greene earned his B.S. in economics at N.C. A&T, M.S. in MIS at Kean University in 2004, and M.S. in HRM at Thomas Edison State College in 2014.

With over 25 years of experience delivering social web solutions, Greene is the founder of Transaction City, a start-up global eMarketplace. He also works on an emerging online action comic and has written two autobiographical poetical anthologies. The New Jersey native resides in Tampa, Florida.

**ASHLEIGH WILSON** has joined The Washington Post as an SEO editor after serving as an audience engagement producer at the Houston Chronicle, where she led the dayside programming of the homepage, tracked audience data and trends, optimized content and projects, and was the deputy editor of "HouWeAre," a newsletter on identity, race and culture in one of America's most diverse cities. Previously, Wilson was a web producer and Alexa briefing host at Newsday, a homepage producer at the Arizona Republic and a digital producer in New York.

The Northern Virginia native has a B.S. in journalism and mass communication from N.C. A&T.



Chris Harrison, coordinator of the landscape architecture program, works on a design with a student. Harrison and some of his students won an international competition to design a park in South Carolina honoring its history as a Black community founded by freed slaves.

2000s

**W. CHRIS HARRISON '07** won an international competition for his proposed design of a planned new heritage-based public space in South Carolina's Lowcountry.

Harrison, who is also an assistant professor of natural resources and environmental design in N.C. A&T's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, created the design that will be used to create the John L. Scanlon Memorial Park near Charleston.

Harrison's winning design for this planned half-acre park blends history and the natural world to tell the story of a marsh front community that lies near Charleston Harbor. The area was once home to Sewee Indians; the Gullah people, the descendants of enslaved persons who live along the coast of the southeastern United States; and former slaves who settled there after the Civil War.

The proposed park design includes a spiral walkway that leads visitors to a spirit circle in the park's center. There's also a weave pavilion, which is a living sculpture of interlaced willow trees that resemble the baskets made by the Gullah people. The design also includes several cast bronze statues; plantings of rice, cotton and indigo, which were once grown on nearby plantations; and virtual and augmented reality features so visitors can use their phones to hear the stories of these people and where they once lived.

Harrison called his proposal Praise House Park because he envisions the entire park to be a sacred space that serves as a refuge, gathering spot and a place for spiritual reflection. A praise house was a simple wooden structure built by enslaved persons that served as the center of many Black communities during and after slavery times.

The memorial park will be named for John Scanlon, a Black carpenter who led a cooperative association known as the Charleston Land Company. Scanlon and other former enslaved men purchased shares in the company for \$10 apiece and, in 1868, bought a 614-acre plantation.



**DESMOND L. KEMP '04** graduated from Indiana University Purdue University-Indianapolis in May 2022 with a Ph.D. in American Studies. Kemp is the first African American to complete the program. While at IUPUI, he was named a fellow for the Center for Research on Inclusion and Social Policy and the first Emerging Africana Scholar for the Center for Africana Studies and Culture.

Kemp was awarded one of the top 50 Elite graduate students in April. In September, he began a two-year fellowship with the ACLS Leading Edge Fellowship program at the Deep Center in Savannah, Georgia, where he will serve as the research and policy analyst.

Kemp men (Aggie Legacy), L-R: Anthony Kemp '98, Arthur B. Kemp '59 and '65), Desmond L. Kemp, Ph.D. '04, Nathan Kemp '15 and Arthur D. Kemp, Ph.D. '80. Photo by Mia Moore

2020s

**NASYA BLACKWELL '20** has been chosen to participate in the 2022 Princeton in Africa (PiAf) program as a Fellow with Emerging Public Leaders in Accra, Ghana for 2022-23. Blackwell is the first fellow from North Carolina A&T and the only historically Black college or university graduate in this year's 27-member cohort.

PiAf develops young leaders committed to Africa's advancement by offering yearlong fellowship opportunities with a variety of organizations that work across the African continent. The program matches talented and passionate college graduates with organizations working across Africa for yearlong service placements.

Since PiAf's founding in 1999, more than 600 fellows have helped improve education and public health, source fresh water and alternative energy, increase family incomes, and more.

Blackwell, of Washington, D.C., graduated cum laude with a B.A. in political science and a B.A. in English with a minor in Spanish. She was a member of the Blue and Gold Marching Machine.

A semifinalist in the 2021-22 Fulbright Program grant cycle, Blackwell completed the intensive Spanish language and culture program at Veritas Universidad in San Jose, Costa Rica, as a Benjamin A. Gilman Scholar in 2019. She also completed the ISEP Global Engagement program at the University of Ghana in Accra, and she served as an official representative of the Department of State and Meridian International during the 2018 U.S. Congress-Republic of Korea National Assembly Exchange Program in Seoul, South Korea.

Blackwell works for the U.S. House of Representatives as a constituent liaison in the office of Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes-Norton. Her government affairs portfolio includes interning as a Congressional Black Caucus intern in the office of Congressman Hakeem Jeffries and interning with the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) Bipartisan Caucus in the offices of Congressman Mark Walker and fellow A&T alumna Congresswoman Alma Adams '68.

**TAYLOR MITCHELL '22**, a graduate of the environmental studies program in the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, spent the summer as the inaugural 1890 Universities Foundation intern on the U.S. House Agriculture Committee. The program seeks to connect students from universities within the 1890 land-grant system with exposure to public policymaking.

At N.C. A&T, Mitchell was a Student Government Association senator, president of the Earth and Environmental Science Club and a member of the CAES Dean's Student Cabinet. Currently, she is pursuing a master's degree in sustainable systems at the University of Michigan with the ultimate goal of earning a Ph.D.

On Capitol Hill, Mitchell got a first-hand look at policymaking and the legislative process as it affects agriculture, including production and commodity prices, farm credit and farm security, rural electrification and soil conservation. She also participated in research.

**ALUMNI  
(2022)**

**WILLIAM J. PETERSON**, March 30  
**THOMAS L. SEAGROVES**, Feb. 18  
**THOMASINA W. SNELL**, Jan. 1

**1900s**

**JOCELYN SANDERS-WARE '00**, April 1

**1930s**

**ANNIE M. BRIDGES '39**, April 6

**1940s**

**STEPHEN B. CANTY '47**, May 1  
**LACY H. CAPLE '47**, May 11  
**ROBERT T. EDWARDS '47**, Jan. 30  
**ROBERT L. MITCHELL '47**, May 9

**1950s**

**MELVINE C. BLAKELEY '51**, March 16  
**WILEY E. BOWLING JR. '54**, May 2  
**ROLAND D. ELLIS '59**, June 1  
**GEORGE G. GEIGER SR. '52**, Jan. 27  
**ELIZABETH L. HEILIG '53**, June 10  
**WADDELL PEARSON '52**, April 18  
**MOZELLA RITTER '53**, Feb. 3  
**ROLAND T. WALLACE '57**, March 7  
**CLINE J. WARREN '52**, May 6

**1960s**

**SANDRA C. ALEXANDER '69**, June 10  
**ALBERT J. ALSTON '67**, Jan. 28  
**LEWIS J. BELLINGER '65**, April 8  
**NANCY S. BEST '68**, March 14  
**JACK C. BLAKE '68**, Jan. 10  
**CATHERINE M. CHAMBERS '60**, Feb. 1  
**CHARLES DEBOSE '60**, Jan. 28  
**HUBERT "HUGH" EVANS**, July 8  
**MARY C. HAYNES '65**, March 7  
**VANN H. MCDONALD SR. '61**, Feb. 18  
**GENE PAGE '65**, May 17  
**SYLVIA C. REDDING '64**, May 7  
**LEROY STEWART '66**, Feb. 6  
**ALFRED C. WADDELL '66**, May 4  
**SULLIVAN A. WELBORNE JR. '61**, Sept. 14

**JAMES H. WILLIS '63**, June 1  
**RAYMOND W. WILLIAMS '67**, Jan. 20  
**THOMAS R. WOODSON '65**, Jan. 24

**1970s**

**ROSA BULLOCK ALLEN**, Aug. 15  
**WILLIE J. BOULWARE '73**, Jan. 6  
**CHERYL LEE RANSEY CHEEKS '73**, April 29  
**ELIZABETH L. CLANTON '73**, April 12  
**DIANE D. DEAN '71**, Feb. 18  
**CALVIN S. JOHNSON '74**, May 24  
**DIANNE H. MANCINI '72**, Jan. 6  
**ISAIAH R. SHARPE III '71**, Feb. 23  
**CECIL L. WHITFIELD JR. '77**, Feb. 19  
**JOHN D. WHITE '70**, June 6  
**LIZZIE M. WILLIAMS '71**, Jan. 30

**1980s**

**CAROLYN Q. COLEMAN '85**, Jan. 26  
**JANICE M. GEORGE-JONES '83**, Feb. 8  
**ALLEN T. GIBBS '84**, April 7  
**WILLARD E. PALMER '87**, Feb. 27  
**CARLTON SPENCER '82**, Feb. 24

**1990s**

**ABAY GIDEY '95**, March 30  
**SUSAN G. HOFFNER '92**, Feb. 23  
**LISA D. HOPSON '94**, May 16  
**TERRELL M. KING '90**, Jan. 1  
**SAMORI SELF '96**, May 31  
**LELYN K. WILLIAMS '91**, May 5  
**HAROLD L. WILLIAMS '92**, April 25

**2000s**

**CECIL MITCHELL '00**, March 4

**2010s**

**DEVONTE L. BABILI '14**, April 11  
**BRANDON J. CRUTCHFIELD '14**, Feb. 23  
**PURLAMBER J. FOSTER '10**, Jan. 18  
**SHANICE T. JOHNSON '16**, March 31

**STUDENTS,  
EMPLOYEES  
& OTHERS  
(2022)**

**JOSEPH DANZY**, student services specialist, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships), Aug. 8

**CHARLES DANIEL KEARNS**, graduate student, mental health counseling-rehabilitation, Sept. 29

**TIMOTHY LYON "TIM" LINKER**, assistant vice chancellor for research administration, Division of Research and Economic Development, Aug. 30

**LAYAH G. MCCLLOUD**, sophomore, animal science, Oct. 15

**AIYANNA T. ROACH**, sophomore, psychology, Nov. 11

**TATIANA ROBINSON**, undergraduate student, liberal studies, May 19

**KANEYCHA D. TURNER**, freshman, management/business administration, Oct. 25



## BROTHERLY LOVE

*Pollard Stanford establishes the Stanford Brothers Endowment to support students facing financial hardship and to honor the brothers' gridiron legacy.*

By Alana V. Allen '07, Director of Alumni Communications

In the late 1950s and '60s, the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University athletics program was at an all-time high, winning numerous championships in the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association (CIAA). For those enjoying A&T's current athletics success, the mood and euphoria were similar back in the day. In the midst of that incredible period, three brothers came to A&T to play football. They went by the name of Stanford.

The trio – Pollard '61, Lorenzo '61 and Carl '63 – not only brought a powerful family dynamic to Aggie football, they became the first group of three siblings in the CIAA to play a collegiate sport at the same time in 1960.



POLLARD STANFORD

seven siblings with Pollard being the oldest, Lorenzo, the middle son, and Carl, the youngest.

"I initially was enrolled at the University of Wisconsin on a full-scholarship my freshmen year, when my brother, Lorenzo, called me and asked would I transfer to North Carolina A&T to play football with him," said Pollard. At the time, I didn't know it was a big deal for brothers to play together in our conference, and there was actually a feature story about us being the first siblings."

All three brothers secured two CIAA football championship titles in 1958 and 1959.

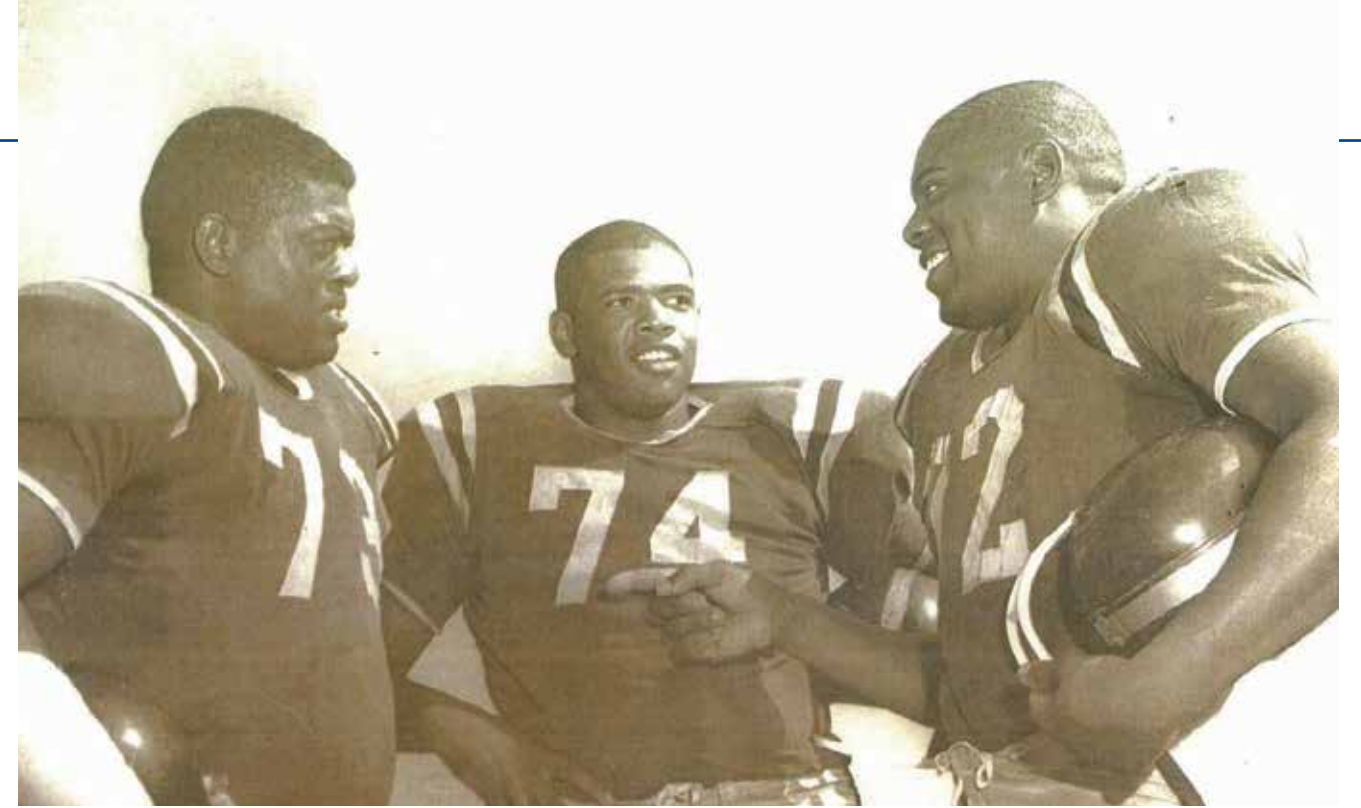
In 1960, Pollard served as president of the Letterman's Club of A&T,

when four freshmen—David Richmond, Franklin McCain, Ezell Blair Jr. (Jibreel Khazan) and Joseph McNeil—ignited the national sit-in movement at the F.W. Woolworth store. Known as the A&T Four, the students refused to leave a segregated lunch counter after purchasing school supplies. This simple act of defiance electrified the nation and prompted similar sit-ins in other southern cities.

"As an athlete and student leader, I felt obligated to get involved with the sit-in. There were people down there that I was extremely concerned about, and I wanted to represent all A&T athletes," said Pollard.

In the first couple of days of the movement, students from A&T, Bennett College, James B. Dudley High School, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and Guilford College joined in with the A&T Four. The Greensboro sit-in would last from Feb. 1 to July 26, 1960.

"There is so much more to the story with the sit-in, it was a lot of people involved that skyrocketed this movement off



THE STANFORD BROTHERS (L-R): POLLARD '61, CARL '63 AND LORENZO '61

the ground. There would be hundreds of students in the streets of downtown Greensboro coming each day, and it became very difficult for the police to lock up everyone," said Pollard.

During this time, the students involved in the sit-in suffered violence and degrading acts from being spat upon to enduring racial slurs. Others had food condiments smeared on their clothing, and some women protestors had handfuls of hair pulled out.

"In the first couple of days, I was standing in the restaurant, and I could feel a group of white men staring at me. I could hear them saying very loud, due to my size, 'This is a bad n----r, burn him with a cigarette!'," recalled Pollard. "The next thing I know, one of the guys walks towards me and took his cigarette and placed it on my chest, I could smell my skin burning, and I never fought back.

"When those boys didn't see me react, they backed up and I could see it in their faces they had made a mistake. They called us everything and would shoot their shotguns in the air chasing us back to campus."

The sit-ins were probably the most dramatic events during Dr. Warmoth T. Gibbs' tenure as president of A&T. The administration received a lot of pressure from state government officials to expel students involved in the movement.

"I was threatened that I would lose my scholarship for being involved, and other athletes received threats as well.

However, we still went downtown because it was the right thing to do. There were so many athletes involved that no one lost their financial aid because there wouldn't be any players left on the respective teams," he said.

After things calmed down following the success of the sit-ins, the brothers each graduated from A&T. Two of the Stanfords secured positions to play in the NFL: Lorenzo was recruited to play for the Dallas Texans [which later became the Baltimore Colts], and the [CFL's] Hamilton Tiger-Cats in Hamilton, Ontario, for seven years. Carl played for the Detroit Lions for three years.

"Black professional players were not paid a lot of money in the 1960s, and for some, if you wanted to play sports, you would have to move to Canada for the opportunity," said Pollard. "I really looked up to my brother, Lorenzo, mostly because he was an All-American football player and was inducted into the North Carolina A&T Sports Hall of Fame."

After graduation, Pollard pursued a career in social work in the state of New Jersey. He retired after 32 years of service and moved back to Greensboro. He is the only surviving brother and continues to share their legacy with the public through articles in various news outlets.

"For years, I have been a dedicated and devoted donor to North Carolina A&T, and I believe that all alumni should contribute to our great university," said Pollard.



# NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

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## JSNN, DEVCOM SOLDIER CENTER PARTNER TO ENHANCE NANOSCALE MATERIALS FOR SOLDIER PROTECTION



A new partnership between the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development (DEVCOM) Soldier Center and the Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering at Gateway Research Park will develop advanced nanoscale materials for soldier protection that promise to be lighter, faster, safer and stronger than ever before.

The Innovative Collaborative Laboratory for Nanotechnologies to Empower Future Soldier (ICONS), initiated by a \$1.05 million cooperative agreement from the DEVCOM Soldier Center, is the only collaborative lab of its kind in North Carolina and the first established with a historically Black college or university (HBCU) or minority-serving institution (MSI) anywhere in the nation. ICONS will be co-led by two JSNN professors, Kristen Dellinger, Ph.D., in the Department of Nanoengineering at N.C. A&T, and Tetyana Ignatova, Ph.D., in UNCG's Department of Nanoscience.