

La

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ENDURING TALES

The Smithsonian comes calling
for compelling storytellers



In 2003, I interviewed Dr. Darryl Felder, a UL Lafayette biology professor. In the course of our conversation, he casually mentioned that he had discovered a new species of crustacean.

Wait a minute. A new species? To me, that sounded like a big deal.

Isn't that worthy of media attention? I asked.

He shrugged. Scientists make discoveries all the time, he said. Even if his discovery were worthy of news coverage, he continued, he didn't have time to talk with reporters. There was too much else to do. He was frequently traveling to far-off places for his research, while juggling teaching and mentoring students.

As the years went by, I kept up with some of his work, which included coediting a massive book that is a detailed inventory of marine life in the Gulf of Mexico. Along with other UL Lafayette faculty members, he later studied the effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill there.

What I didn't realize is that, Felder, some of his colleagues, and some students were steadily contributing to the University's massive Zoological Crustacean Collection. Over 40 years, they amassed 100,000 specimens of 2,000 species from the Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and the Gulf of Mexico, such as the batwing coral crab featured on the cover of this issue.

Felder retired in 2014 but continued to curate the collection. The significance of those specimens lies in their DNA and what it continues to convey to scientists. The information they offer is so valuable that the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History has acquired the entire collection.

What an incredible coda to his life's work.

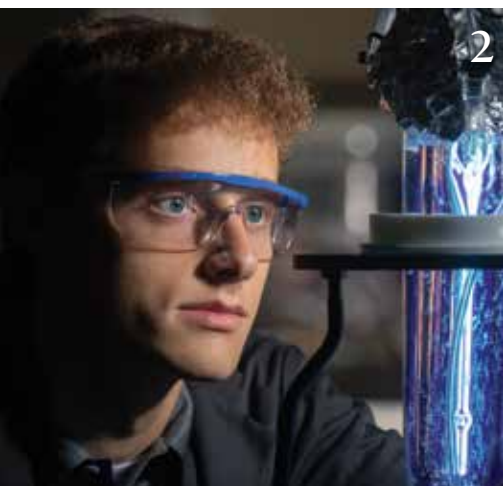
J. Harvey LeBlanc is a UL Lafayette alumnus whose life's work was out of this world. Right after graduation in 1962, he was hired by the company that developed the second stage of the Saturn V rocket. That rocket was used for Apollo missions that sent astronauts around the Earth and to the moon. As a design engineer, he helped send Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin to walk on the lunar surface 50 years ago.

After Apollo 17 in 1972, the sixth and final manned lunar landing, LeBlanc entered the second stage of his career. He began working on development of the space shuttle, which ultimately ferried people and supplies to the international space station. It was a career filled with challenges, triumphs, thrills and accomplishments.

Felder and LeBlanc's life stories are on the following pages, along with stories about a bunch of interesting students, faculty members and alumni who are making a difference in the world in their own way.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *La Louisiane*.

– Kathleen Thames



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The Smithsonian comes calling for compelling storytellers

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Life Support

Researchers build biorefinery system to supply water, air on Mars

BY CHARLIE BIER

NASA intends to put scientists on Mars by 2030. The mission? To explore the viability of establishing human colonies there.

If the plan comes to fruition, scientists will be about 50 million miles away, living in space camps that regulate air pressure, oxygen levels, and temperature – conditions necessary for survival.

The temperature on Mars can dip as low as minus 225 degrees Fahrenheit. The planet's atmosphere is toxic; 96 percent of it is carbon dioxide.

Still, the fourth planet from the sun holds the most promise for supporting human life. It gets enough sunlight to send temperatures as high as 70 degrees. The sunlight is sufficient to power solar panels that could produce energy. It has enough gravity to support human existence.

And, despite a longstanding belief that water exists only as ice or vapor due to cold temperatures and low pressure, scientists have discovered several slopes on Mars where briny water might flow when temperatures rise.

But residency on the Red Planet would require self-sufficiency, ways for inhabitants to convert carbon dioxide into oxygen, for example, or wastewater into drinkable water.

NASA and the Louisiana Board of Regents, through the

LaSPACE program, awarded UL Lafayette's Energy Institute of Louisiana and the University's College of Engineering a three-year, \$2.2 million grant last year to develop a biorefinery system. Such a system would create potable water, enable the conversion of carbon dioxide into oxygen, produce gases that could be used to generate electricity, and provide protein that could be used as food.

Dr. Mark Zappi, director of the Energy Institute and a professor of chemical engineering, is leading a team of faculty and student researchers who are developing a biorefinery system.

NASA selected UL Lafayette for the project, Zappi said, because University researchers have been studying processes for converting waste into byproducts and alternative energy for about two decades. So far, they have converted organic material such as alligator fat, rice hulls, algae and bagasse – remnants of stalks of sugar cane after its juice has been extracted – into biofuels and other “bio-based” products.

University researchers are aiming to carry that commitment to sustainable energy and chemicals into space.

“The really cool thing about the biorefinery system is that in addition to an almost complete recycle of life-support chemicals – water and oxygen – it will produce byproducts that would assist in sustaining life for long periods of time,” Zappi explained.



One key component of the project is examining the most efficient and effective ways to convert “black water” – human waste – and “gray water” – dirty dish and bath water – into drinking water or for reuse in kitchens.

The biorefinery system will include bioreactors that contain algae, microorganisms that convert carbon dioxide into oxygen.

“The algae inside the reactor is like any other plant. Carbon dioxide helps the algae grow, but oxygen is also released through photosynthesis. So the oxygen will be able to go back into space colony cabins,” Zappi explained.

Researchers are also devising methods for converting food waste into hydrogen and methane. The gases can generate power, and the organic acids from the digested food waste can be converted into lipids or proteins. Lipids – fats and oils – can be used to make lubricants for a variety of functions, including greasing machinery gears. Protein can be used to make edible “cakes.”

Treatment of human waste would provide fertilizer that could be used for cultivating crops. “So you would have not only all of the benefits associated with waste management, but also a means for providing food,” Zappi explained. Someday, this concept could be a model for cities on Earth, he added.

Bimi Shrestha, a doctoral student in chemical engineering, is a member of a team researching optimal ways to reduce organic pollutants and solids through anaerobic digestion, which also produces biogases such as methane. The process happens when organic material is broken down inside sealed bioreactors devoid of oxygen.

Shrestha and fellow researchers will conduct experiments with a bench-scale reactor they are building with materials such as plastic pipe, in addition to commercial bioreactors.

The scientists are examining wastewater from Lafayette Consolidated Government treatment plants and food waste provided by the University’s Dining Services. They are evaluating factors such as the amount of gas produced and chemical composition under different conditions, including the amount of water, temperature and acidity or alkalinity of water-based substances.

“We’re analyzing how much solids have been digested, as well as the amount of biogas being produced, using data accrued over a period of time,” Shrestha said.



DOUG DUGAS

Chemical engineering doctoral student Bimi Shrestha studies ways to convert food waste and wastewater into hydrogen and methane. The gases could be used to generate power on Mars.

Over the course of the project, faculty and student researchers will build a pilot-scale biorefinery system as part of what’s shaping up to be a modern-day space race. Russia, Japan and the European Space Agency, which has 22 member countries, are working on similar systems.

Who makes it to Mars first will depend, in large part, on who develops the most efficient, economical system, Zappi said.

The strength of the UL Lafayette project is that “while others are developing systems with components such as waste stream management or water management, none is as comprehensive as ours,” he said.

This NASA artist’s concept depicts astronauts and human habitats on Mars.



Researchers refine virtual reality for teachers

Eye-tracking technology is giving teachers virtual eyes in the backs of their heads. Measuring eye movement with tiny cameras embedded in virtual reality headsets enables educators to figure out which students are paying attention – and which ones aren’t – when immersed in virtual reality environments.

“Eye tracking allows teachers in virtual reality classrooms with a lot of students to pick up on wavering attention more quickly and to monitor every student,” said Dr. Christoph Borst, an associate professor in UL Lafayette’s School of Computing and Informatics.

Virtual reality – an interactive experience that happens within a simulated environment via computer-generated animation – is an emerging educational tool. Students wear headsets to view three-dimensional images on specialized computers with high-definition screens.

Borst said that while education-based VR will not replace the need for reading from a textbook or putting pen to paper, “it’s effective for teaching material that is more visual than abstract.”

Geography students can take a “field trip” to the Grand Canyon without getting anywhere near the landmark, for example. Biology students can study anatomy during a dissection performed by a virtual teacher in an artificial laboratory.

“Benefits over traditional teaching methods include, in many cases, increased student engagement and motivation, and better retention of subject matter,” Borst said.

But there’s always room for improvement.

Borst is principal investigator for “Enhancing Educational Virtual Reality with Headset-based Eye Tracking.” The three-year project is being funded with a \$515,813 grant from the National Science Foundation. Dr. Arun Kulshreshtha, an assistant professor in the School of Computing and Informatics, is co-principal investigator.

The eye-tracking project is being conducted at the University’s Center for Advanced Computer Studies, the research arm of the School of Computing and Informatics.

Researchers will examine eye-movement patterns among a cross section of high school and University students.

Borst said findings of the research project will “help educators determine what sorts of teaching methods work best for different students.” Interactive lessons could be “rewound” for students who missed a component or section, for instance.

Another benefit of VR? It lessens the need for teachers to interrupt an entire class to get the attention of one student.

Consider computer science doctoral student Andrew Yoshimura’s assignment as part of the eye-tracking research. He’s using software to create about 10 virtual “cues” – tiny arrows or spiraling cones of concentric circles, for example – that will pop up on a virtual screen to draw a student’s attention back to the subject at hand.

“We’re going to simulate distractions to determine how effective each cue is in bringing students’ attention back to what they’re supposed to be concentrating on,” Yoshimura said.



Jason Woodworth, a computer science doctoral student, wears a headset that enables him to take a virtual tour of the University’s Cleco Alternative Energy Center. The tour is led by computer science doctoral student Andrew Yoshimura, who appears in the virtual reality environment shown in the background.

Nicholas Lipari, an instructor in the School of Computing and Informatics, said the team is also “working on ways teachers could remove objects simply by pointing at them.”

Removing virtual objects from view, which could also be done with a few keystrokes or click of a mouse, is intended to enhance learning, not detract from it.

Borst cited a virtual oil derrick as an example. If a lesson is intended to teach students about a maze of pipes – and a student’s gaze often drifts to a forklift sitting on the platform – the forklift could be removed from the immersive environment.

Conversely, objects could be added for students who don’t have issues paying attention or who are able to absorb large amounts of information rapidly. For those students, “you could have all sorts of things going on at once,” Borst said.

Borst is confident the eye-tracking project will help advance educational virtual reality.

“It will develop techniques for using sensor data that gives teachers immediate insight into student activities and behavior patterns,” he said. “This will help teachers improve ways they lead virtual reality lessons, and that will only enhance the learning experience for students.”

Folk cure shows promise in modern medical fight

Traditional medicine may be just what the doctor ordered to combat a modern pandemic.

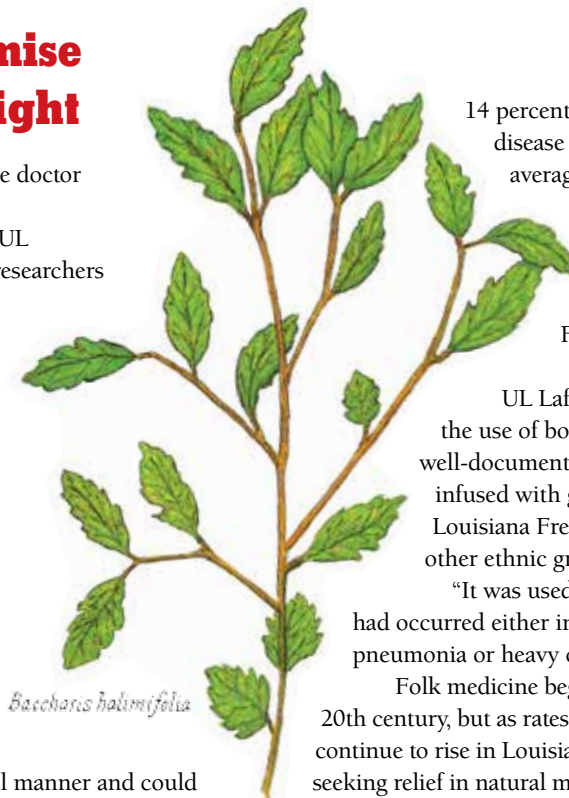
Dr. Scott Fuller, an assistant professor in UL Lafayette's School of Kinesiology, was among researchers who found that extracts from the groundsel bush's stems and leaves reduce inflammation in fat cells. The shrub was once used in folk remedies.

The conclusion holds promise in the battle against metabolic syndrome, a group of conditions that includes obesity, increased blood sugar and high blood pressure. These factors affect one in three Louisiana residents and heighten their risks for Type 2 diabetes, strokes and heart disease.

"Healthy fat cells are indispensable for healthy blood sugar maintenance and proper metabolism in general. This research shows that the groundsel bush can alter the function of fat cells in a beneficial manner and could support its use as a dietary supplement," Fuller said.

Researchers from Pennington Biomedical Research Center at LSU and Rutgers University in New Jersey also conducted the study.

The perennial, semi-evergreen groundsel bush is ubiquitous in Louisiana. So are metabolic syndrome and its associated ailments. A Louisiana Department of Health report issued in 2018 indicated that more than 36 percent of the state's residents were obese; nearly



Baccharis halimifolia

14 percent of adults were diabetic. Rates of heart disease and stroke exceeded the national average by almost 25 percent.

"Our health care system is simply buckling under the strain. Obesity and Type 2 diabetes are the public health crises for the 21st century," Fuller said.

Like Fuller, Dr. C. Ray Brassieur, a UL Lafayette anthropologist, has investigated the use of botanicals in folk medicine. He said a well-documented Creole remedy involved making tea infused with groundsel leaves, called *manglier* in Louisiana French. Native Americans, Acadians and other ethnic groups used the plant similarly.

"It was used a lot for cases where mucus congestion had occurred either in the lungs or bronchial tubes – flu, pneumonia or heavy colds," Brassieur explained. Folk medicine began to fall out of favor by the early 20th century, but as rates of diabetes, heart disease and obesity continue to rise in Louisiana and elsewhere, patients today are seeking relief in natural medicaments once considered "bunk," he said.

"Traditional people tended to have a very close relationship with nature" that enabled them to identify the curative power of plants such as the groundsel bush, Brassieur added.

"It wasn't an option. It was absolutely necessary. They had to heal themselves, so they had to notice nature. If you didn't, you would die."

Razor clams, ghost shrimp don't mess around after oil spills

Cleaning up after environmental disasters may be all in a day's work for stout razor clams and ghost shrimp.

In separate studies, UL Lafayette researchers simulated oil spills, and found sediments that contained the creatures held less oil than areas where they weren't present.

"Our research shows that evaluations of oil spill impacts need to consider how animals living in coastal areas may influence what happens to the oil, where it will be found and how fast it will disappear," said Dr. Paul Klerks, a biology professor and one of the projects' investigators.

"So much depends on a vibrant coastline, from the seafood and tourism industries to the fish, shrimp and oysters we buy in stores. Studies such as these can help people decide when it is safe to go back to beaches or eat seafood following an environmental crisis."

Razor clams and ghost shrimp are bioturbators; their burrowing reworks and moves sediment in the coastal areas where they live. Feeding and digging by these ecosystem engineers can push low levels of oil residue into the water column.

There, the ocean's movements work to dilute contaminants. The

water column also contains bacteria that "eat the oil and break it down," Klerks said. "It's food for them."

This teamwork by bioturbators and bacteria could help lessen spills' effects, he added. University researchers want to know how much.

In one study, they determined coastal sediments that held razor clams retained 25 percent less oil than areas where the mollusks weren't present. However, levels of toxins below the surface had not increased. While investigators detected some evidence of burial, it was not enough to conclude that the oil's fate rested below the sediment surface.

Where did it go? An ongoing study of ghost shrimp may hold the answer.

Like razor clams, ghost shrimp dig. The crustaceans' burrows can be as much as 10 feet deep, while razor clams' sanctuaries can be up to 30 inches below the surface.

The contrasting depths mean ghost shrimp move more sediment than razor clams do, increasing the chances that oily residue below the surface might be introduced into the water column where it can be diluted or eaten by bacteria. As a result, ghost shrimp "are likely to have even more of an impact than razor clams" on what happens to pollutants, Klerks said.



COURTESY OF DARREN FELDER

Ghost shrimp rearrange and aerate sediment.

Compassionate Care

Nursing students learn how to help improve patients' quality of life

Emily Benedict, a University of Louisiana at Lafayette nursing student, was at the bedside of her dying 103-year-old grandmother.

Just days before, Emily had completed a course that teaches how to care for patients who are nearing the end of their lives or living with chronic illnesses.

Based on what she had learned, Emily knew her grandmother didn't have long to live. She also sensed that her grandmother was worried about what would happen to her daughter – Emily's aunt – who had been her primary caregiver.

"... I promised to take care of her daughter as well as our



Mary Benedict, left, is shown with her granddaughter, Emily Benedict, in 2015.

entire family and that she would be okay," Emily recounted in an essay included in a recent newsletter published by the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium.

When Emily arrived at the hospital the next day to visit her grandmother, she found a member of a hospice team asking her aunt to consider withdrawing medicine that probably was keeping the elderly woman alive. Her aunt was visibly upset and "refused because she did not want my grandmother to pass," she said.

Emily again relied on what she had learned in the Palliative and End-of-Life Care course. She explained to her aunt that "the medication may have been prolonging the dying process and not necessarily providing comfort."

After their conversation, Emily's aunt decided that the medicine should be discontinued.

"My grandmother passed within 30 minutes of stopping the medication, peacefully and in no pain," Emily wrote.

UL Lafayette's College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions has been teaching its students about end-of-life care since the late 1990s. By 2004, it was one of the first nursing colleges in the nation to use course content developed by the End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium. ELNEC's

curriculum is the only one endorsed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

In recognition of the college's history of incorporating that content into its students' training, ELNEC recently designated UL Lafayette as a member of its Hall of Fame. The University's nursing program is one of 100 nursing programs nationwide – and the only one in Louisiana – to achieve that designation.

Beth Harris, a master instructor in UL Lafayette's College of Nursing, has taught its Palliative and End-of-Life Care course for 11 years. She is a disciple of ELNEC's method, in part, because the consortium requires nurse educators to use the latest research-based material.

"I don't use a text for the classroom because ELNEC gives you the most up-to-date information and has required readings," Harris said. The College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions' elective course is a hybrid that alternates traditional classes on campus and online sessions.

Harris is quick to point out that palliative care is not synonymous with hospice care for terminally ill patients. Palliative care is "for anyone with a life-threatening or chronic illness. You anticipate, prevent and treat suffering. It promotes quality of care, holistic care, treating the spiritual, the psychological, the social and the physiological needs of the patient. You treat the whole patient," she said.

So, nurses may introduce palliative care when a patient learns that he has a chronic, life-limiting condition or begins an intensive treatment regimen, such as chemotherapy.

"A palliative care nurse may come in and just talk to that patient when he's not in crisis," Harris said. That conversation may cover advance directives, such as living wills that express what kind of health care patients want if they are unable to communicate.

Hospice care is a type of palliative care. In the United States, hospice care is typically offered when two physicians believe a patient has six months or less to live if an illness runs its normal course. That six-month benchmark is based on coverage by Medicare, federal health insurance.

Harris noted that end-of-life care isn't restricted to a patient. "It's the patient and the family, a unit of care. The 'family' may not be a family member. It may be the caretaker or someone who is very close to the patient and the family."

Hospice care is a component of clinical training that UL Lafayette nursing students are required to complete in the first semester of their junior year.

When Harris and Dr. Melinda Oberleitner, dean of UL Lafayette's College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, attended nursing school and started their careers, end-of-life care courses weren't offered.

Nurses and physicians were taught to save lives, to extend lives and to help patients feel better, Oberleitner said. "You didn't talk about dying."

With advances in technology and the advent of procedures such as CPR, medical personnel were able to extend the lives of more patients. That ability came with some ethical considerations.

With CPR, for example, physicians and nurses could revive a person whose heart had stopped beating. So, medical personnel were legally required to try to resuscitate patients who no longer had heart rhythms.

Oberleitner, who is a pioneer and award-winning oncology nurse, said such efforts were not always merciful. "That was fine if it was a heart attack, but if patients were dying of terminal cancer, why were we bringing them back? What was the cost, in terms of quality of life, to the patient?" she asked.

A national debate about end-of-life care ensued. It was fueled by high-profile "right-to-die" cases that challenged who has the right to withdraw a patient's life support. That discourse led to the proliferation of advanced directives, legal documents that convey patients' wishes for medical care if they have irreversible conditions and are too ill to communicate. Medical professionals were no longer legally bound to try to resuscitate all patients whose hearts stopped beating.

Advancements in oncology prompted a shift toward chronic care and, in some cases, palliative care. A cancer diagnosis was not necessarily a death sentence anymore. As cancer patients began to live longer, treatment began to focus not on just combating the disease, but on improving quality of life.

Over the years, ELNEC's curriculum has expanded to include the introduction of palliative care at a much earlier stage in an illness.

Harris said this approach introduces palliative care upon diagnosis of life-limiting or life-threatening illnesses and active treatment. "A palliative care nurse may come in and talk to that patient when they're not in crisis. That nurse may ask, 'Have you ever thought about advance care planning, about having a living will?'"

Communication with patients who are grappling with long-term, non-curative illnesses or imminent end-of-life issues is key.

Oberleitner said the Palliative and End-of-Life Care course teaches nursing students how to have conversations with those patients.

"It's called a crucial conversation to have at the end of life or with a patient who is experiencing a life-threatening illness. That's something that you need to be educated about how to do. It's a skill," she said.

Harris noted that a large component of end-of-life and palliative care is simply listening. "A lot of it is saying nothing, doing nothing, but just being present."

That's a lesson that nursing student Abigail Gilbert took to heart. Like fellow nursing student Emily Benedict, she contributed an essay that appeared in the ELNEC newsletter.

Abigail described an encounter with a distraught family during her clinical rotation at a local hospital while she was enrolled in the Palliative and End-of-Life Care course.

She entered the room of a patient to take his morning vital signs. She was aware that he had experienced cardiopulmonary arrest the previous night.

Family members had gathered to be with him.



Beth Harris, a master instructor in the College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions, has been teaching a Palliative and End-of-Life Care course for 11 years.

"As soon as I walked in I could feel the tension. I felt unwanted at first and I could just feel the heartbreak within the room," Abigail wrote. Family members asked her to skip checking his vital signs so he could rest. She complied but instead of leaving, initiated a conversation with them.

"I could tell they were just hurting and looking for a sense of the situation so I did what I knew how to do. I listened! I was present with them and just talked with them. I let them cry and I let them talk. I was able to develop a trusting relationship with them and the patient, who had just received the worst prognosis. They were unsure if he would make another week or even another night under his condition. By the end of the morning, the family asked if I would pray with them for him."

Abigail said that being able to provide comfort in that situation was a highlight of her student nursing experiences so far.

"I would have never been able to have this opportunity if I had not learned during the course how to care for and be with a dying patient."

Bigger and Better

Bittle Hall makeover gives police department room to grow

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Police Department is back home in Bittle Hall after a two-year, \$1.475 million renovation and expansion project.

A total of 2,575 square feet was added to the building's 5,405 square feet. Before the expansion, the department was shoehorned into about a third of the area it now occupies.

Bittle Hall opened in 1939. ULPD moved into it more than 50 years ago. For decades, police shared the building with the campus post office. In 2015, the post office relocated to the Student Union, enabling Bittle Hall to be completely dedicated to ULPD.

Tim Hanks, ULPD interim chief, said upgrades to Bittle Hall were necessary to accommodate the current staff, and provide room for the department to evolve.

The refurbished police station now has 13 offices, a dispatch room, squad room, and conference room. There's a classroom outfitted with large TV monitors.

An extra feature: a "soft" interview room to be used for reporting sexual assaults or domestic violence. The small, cozy space is a soothing environment furnished by Project Beloved: The Molly Jane Mission. Tracy Matheson of Fort Worth founded the nonprofit in memory of her daughter.

UL Lafayette is the first university in the nation to partner with Project Beloved to give sexual assault or domestic violence victims a special area where they can talk with investigators.

ULPD operates around the clock, every day of the year, monitoring a campus of over 19,000 students and about 2,100 faculty and staff members.

Officers conduct criminal investigations and patrols, manage traffic, and are trained in forensics, emergency preparedness and defense tactics.

ULPD also establishes protocols for response to a range of potential scenarios, including natural disasters.

Bittle Hall improvements are part of the University's Master



A large monitor enables Sgt. Lance Frederick and other officers to scan simultaneous live video feeds from across campus.



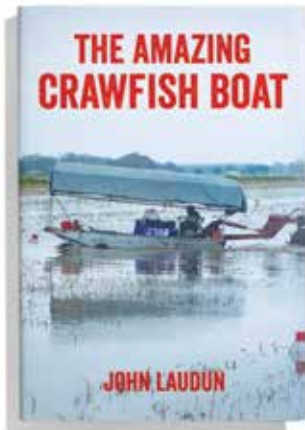
University Police shared Bittle Hall with the campus post office until 2015.

Plan, which will guide campus growth for the next 10 years.

"The department now has the infrastructure and space it needs to continue to serve our growing campus," Hanks said.

"We have the ability to do so many more things than before, and that can only help us continue to keep campus a safe place," Hanks said.

From the Bookshelf



The Amazing Crawfish Boat

John Laudun
University Press of Mississippi

Making a living on Louisiana's prairies and in its marshes is difficult, but generations of residents have demonstrated adaptability and ingenuity to defy challenges the landscapes and waterways pose. Laudun, an associate professor of English at UL Lafayette, suggests the crawfish boat exemplifies this innovative spirit.

The craft enabled the region's farmers to flood rice fields that otherwise would be unused between planting seasons so they could raise crawfish. The marriage of agriculture and aquaculture created an industry that produces 125 million pounds of crawfish in any given year.

An amphibious boat – envisioned, designed and built by farmers themselves – ensured the industry's success. A wheel mounted on the flat-bottomed boat's back propels the craft. It permits the vessel to turn quickly or to stop instantly to check traps, unlike boats driven by paddles or propellers. Agility is critical to navigating a crawfish field without disturbing its bounty.

Laudun uses archival materials, oral histories and ethnographic accounts to trace the boat's development, but *The Amazing Crawfish Boat* isn't solely a work of history and folklore. The voices of craftsmen who build the boats and farmers who use them run throughout the book, giving the narrative "a sense of real life" on the Louisiana prairies today, one reviewer noted.



Tempest: Hurricane Naming and American Culture

Liz Skilton
LSU Press

When the U.S. Weather Bureau began naming hurricanes and other tropical storms in 1953, officials decided to use only female names. The system drew criticism, but remained in place for a quarter century. In 1978, the government introduced new guidelines and began alternating between male and female storm names in a pattern that continues.

The hurricanes *Tempest* features are well-known to Louisiana and Gulf South residents – Betsy, Camille, Andrew, Katrina and Harvey, among others. Skilton, an assistant professor of history at UL Lafayette, finds the gendered names often inspired imagery in media reports, official studies and other sources that affected how the public perceived and remembered the weather events. For example, masculine-named storms often were portrayed as stronger, while feminine-named systems might be described as "unladylike."

In addition to relating the evolution and implications of storm naming, the book delves into other aspects of hurricane history. Skilton describes attempts to use science to control hurricanes during the Cold War, and places opposition to female-only storm names within the wider context of the 1960s and 1970s women's rights movement.

Tempest also describes how the introduction of 24-hour televised news and the advent of social media platforms increased interest in, and understanding of, hurricanes and other disasters.



Anthologie de la littérature louisianaise d'expression française de 1682 à nos jours

Mathé Allain, Barry Jean Ancelet, Tamara Linder and May Rush Gwin Waggoner, editors
University of Louisiana at Lafayette Press

The anthology surveys nearly four centuries of French-language literature in Louisiana. It compiles poems, short stories, songs and plays, and includes transcriptions of Cajun and Creole oral traditions.

As the book's introduction notes, there is no singular French literary heritage in Louisiana; rather, the literature encompasses distinct geographical and cultural elements.

One includes written works produced largely in New Orleans by French and African Creoles in the 18th and 19th centuries and influenced by contemporary literature produced in France. Acadian exiles and their descendants who lived in rural southwestern Louisiana created a separate literary heritage starting in the 1700s and continuing well into the late 1900s. These works were rooted in oral tradition and passed from one generation to the next.

The anthology preserves and examines both spheres by reproducing them in French. Readers will find excerpts from antebellum New Orleans writers such as Armand Lanusse, a free person of color, as well as 20th-century ballads by Cajun musicians such as the late D.L. Menard, a Grammy-nominated guitarist. Works from the Acadian Renaissance, and later songs and poems inspired by this period of renewed cultural pride, also are included.

Allain, Ancelet and Waggoner are retired UL Lafayette professors who taught in the Department of Modern Languages. Linder is an associate professor of French and Francophone studies at the University.

Film with UL Lafayette ties wows 'em at Tribeca

From acting roles and screenwriting to script consultation and internships, University of Louisiana at Lafayette alumni, faculty and students helped make *Lost Bayou* a hit at the Tribeca Film Festival.

The feature film premiered at the independent festival in New York, one of the most prestigious film festivals in the world.

Lost Bayou tells the story of a woman struggling with addiction who returns to Louisiana to reconnect with her estranged father, a Cajun faith healer who lives on a houseboat in the Atchafalaya Basin. She discovers he's hiding a disturbing secret.

Two screenings of the film were originally planned for the festival. After they sold out quickly, Tribeca organizers scheduled two more.

Two alumni are featured prominently. Hunter Burke, who earned a bachelor's degree in performing arts in 2007, co-wrote *Lost Bayou* and is a supporting actor. Teri Wyble, the film's lead actress, earned a bachelor's degree in performing arts in 2008.

Conni Castille, a senior instructor at UL Lafayette and director of the University's Moving Image Arts program, was a consultant during filming.

She helped three of her students – Levi Porter, BreAnna Smith and Ryan Watts – get a front row seat to the shooting of *Lost Bayou*.

Porter and Smith were in the final semester of their senior year; they graduated in May 2019 with bachelor's degrees in moving image arts. Watts was also a senior during filming. She earned a moving image arts degree in Spring 2018.

Each of the three worked as production assistants several times a week.

Smith photographed and catalogued "continuity shots." The sequenced photos are referenced continually during



Lost Bayou had sold-out screenings at one of the world's top film festivals.

shooting to ensure that actors' clothing, and set backgrounds and details are consistent from take to take.

For Watts, duties such as holding a boom pole topped with a microphone gave him an up-close look at unfolding scenes. His proximity to the inner workings of movie production emboldened him.

He envisions becoming a director of photography for movies or TV shows. "That kind of work, honestly, is intimidating. But after being on a movie set I was like, 'OK, maybe I can do that,'" he said.

One of Porter's duties was ensuring quiet on the set during takes. When cameras stopped rolling, he took every chance he could to pick the brain of Natalie Kingston, '04, the cinematographer for *Lost Bayou*.

Porter aspires to be a director of photography for feature films, in charge of considerations such as how shots are framed, lighting and camera angles.

Online degree offers grads a range of career options

A new online bachelor's degree – business administration in management – will prepare graduates for a variety of careers.

It will provide a foundation for managerial positions in fields such as marketing, human resources, communications, project management, and insurance and risk management.

Classes will begin with the Fall 2019 semester. Courses include accounting, economics, finance, management and marketing.

Students must complete 120-122 credit hours on either a part-time or full-time basis. They follow the same curriculum as students enrolled in the traditional program.

Online students can interact with faculty members via telephone, email, discussion forums, and audio and video conferences.

"It provides a convenient way for people who live outside the region or who are juggling jobs or family obligations to obtain the same quality education as students who earn their degrees on campus," said Dr. Claire Arabie, director of UL Lafayette's Office of Distance Learning.

First-time, returning or transfer students are eligible to enroll, provided they meet University admissions requirements. Students who have already accrued college credits may be able to apply them toward earning the online degree.

All students – including those from other states and countries – who participate in the online program will pay in-state tuition rates and can apply for financial aid and scholarships.

Electric vehicle chargers latest in University's green efforts

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette's new electric vehicle charging station in the Cajun Field parking lot is a slender apparatus about 6 feet high. It stands much taller in terms of its impact on sustainability.

It's the first public electric vehicle charging station in the city of Lafayette and the state's first EV charging station powered primarily by solar energy. It's the first of several such stations planned at UL Lafayette as part of the University's Sustainability Strategic Plan. The comprehensive, three-year plan outlines campus environmental practices and goals through 2021.

A key objective of the plan is "to reduce greenhouse emissions that harm the atmosphere, such as carbon dioxide, by 15 percent over the next three years," said Gretchen LaCombe Vanicor, director of the University's Office of Sustainability.

The charging station sits close to the corner of Bertrand Drive and Cajundome Boulevard, near the University's Photovoltaic Applied Research and Testing Lab in University Research Park. That's by design. The lab's 4,500 solar panels

generate 1.1 megawatts, or 20 percent of the electricity transmitted to southern portions of campus, including Cajun Field, each year.

Reducing the amount of electricity drawn from the grid, which is produced with fuels such as coal and natural gas, also reduces greenhouse gas emissions, said Dr. Terrence Chambers, a professor of mechanical engineering who leads the PART Lab.

"Because the electricity to power the station will come partly from the University's solar energy facility, the result will be even fewer emissions," he explained.

An electric vehicle with a full charge can travel between 70 and 300 miles, depending on make, model and battery size. Power can be transferred from public charging stations or at home. At home, a special cord inserted into EVs or hybrid electric vehicles is also plugged into a standard household outlet. Charging an electric



Batteries of two electric vehicles can be charged simultaneously at the new charging station in the Cajun Field parking lot.

vehicle at home can take all night, Chambers said.

Beyond quicker charging times, public stations provide convenience for drivers too far from home to recharge, and also give people a place to refuel during long trips. Chambers said most electric vehicles that utilize the University station will be able to completely recharge in just a few hours. Public stations are also often used by people "who simply want to top off" their vehicle batteries.

Drivers will power up from one of two electric cables that plug into ports on the exterior of vehicles, similar to the hoses used to put gasoline in standard automobiles. They will do so on a first-come, first-served basis. Users will establish an account by downloading an app, and pay 99 cents per hour for EV parking and charging.

Installation of a partially solar-powered EV charging station was made possible by a \$4 million investment in the PART Lab by Louisiana Generating LLC. The new EV charging station will enable researchers to study how EV charging and solar energy affect the grid.

The University has submitted a proposal to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality that would fund six additional charging stations on campus. Based on industry and government projections, Chambers anticipates 750 electric vehicles will be driven on Lafayette streets in the next five years, provided there are public stations where owners can recharge.

"Electric vehicles suffer from a chicken and egg syndrome. Consumers are reluctant to buy electric vehicles until charging structures have been built. But, until you build the infrastructure, you may not have enough EV customers to justify building it," he explained.

Chambers said the Sustainability Strategic Plan calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in other ways, including promoting bicycling, walking, and ride-sharing among employees and students.

DOUG DUCSINACHEL REPORT

Helping Hand

On-campus pantry serves up food security

BY BAILEY CHENEVERT

Deante Skidmore grabbed a box of penne and a can of tomato sauce from the shelves of Campus Cupboard. He'd usually make both "from scratch," he said, but time and money are often tight for the UL Lafayette junior.

Skidmore is pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology and works full time at Cypress Lake Dining Hall on campus. During the summer, he works two jobs to pay his monthly expenses and to save for tuition. He puts in almost 60 hours a week in classes and at work, spending rare time at home studying or sleeping.

Every two weeks, Skidmore budgets enough money for food to last him until his next paycheck. He still occasionally runs short. He said being able to make ends meet with food and toiletries from the Cupboard "means a lot."

"There are a lot of college students like me who have to support themselves completely, and it's expensive. There's definitely a need for places like Campus Cupboard," he said.

Located in UL Lafayette's Intensive English Building at 413 Brook Ave., Campus Cupboard simulates a grocery store, but without a checkout line. Student volunteers give patrons plastic bags at the entrance to hold selections of nonperishable items, such as rice, beans, canned fruit and tuna, and protein bars, and ingredients to cook with, such as flour, sugar and vegetable oil.

The Cupboard also offers deodorant, soap, toothbrushes and other toiletries, and has a two-door refrigerator for fresh produce and bread. It's all kept in two storage rooms lined with chrome-plated steel shelves.

Students often experience food insecurity because of circumstances they can't control. They may have unexpected expenses, exhausted monthly meal plan allotments, or had to spend money on school supplies that once had been allocated

to buy food. According to a 2016 report by the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, more than half of food-insecure students have to choose between buying food or purchasing textbooks.

Many students can't rely on financial support from parents, either. Some may be parents themselves. The same report labeled 71 percent of U.S. college students as "nontraditional." That means that in addition to pursuing degrees, they are raising families or working full time. The report also defines international students as nontraditional.

Yan Ma moved to the U.S. from Beijing to pursue a graduate degree in communicative disorders and speech pathology. He's also raising a 6-year-old daughter who lives with him.

"Because I have a family, I'm always trying to save money," he said.

Ma turned to the Cupboard for help, and estimates saving about 20 percent on his typical grocery bill as a result. While individuals are limited to 17 items, students such as Ma who are supporting families can take up to 40.

He said relieving even a bit of financial stress in meeting his family's basic needs enables him to "concentrate and enjoy my studies again."

Dr. Rose Honegger is the University's assistant director of Global Engagement. She served on the committee that began planning the Cupboard in 2017. For international and domestic students alike, access to food is an issue of success and retention, she said.

"I have seen students in my office who have had to choose between paying rent or buying grocery items. It's difficult to concentrate on an essay when you're hungry," Honegger said. She noted that hungry students are more likely to skip classes, or fall behind in or drop courses than their peers.

When Campus Cupboard opened in November 2018,



'I have seen students in my office who have had to choose between paying rent or buying grocery items. It's difficult to concentrate on an essay when you're hungry.'

– Rose Honegger



it joined more than 600 other food pantries at universities in the United States that offer temporary assistance to students. Like many of those institutions, UL Lafayette has had to confront a cultural stigma associated with asking for help. The Cupboard's volunteers counter students' hesitation by making the pantry an inviting space.

Many food assistance programs require patrons to prove their financial shortcomings, but the Cupboard allows students to state their own need. After filling out a form the first time they use the pantry, students are welcome to come back as often as they need. Volunteers also put up posters and leave leaflets across campus informing students, faculty and staff that the Cupboard is available to them.

Trey Delcambre is a psychology graduate student who serves as Campus Cupboard's coordinator. He called the stigma of food insecurity in the United States "weird."

"In America, we have an achievement-based culture, so if you can't provide for yourself, people believe it's your fault, but there are a lot of systemic issues that come up that make it hard to eat nutritionally," Delcambre said.

Hunger on college campuses is part of a larger food security challenge the United States faces, said Dr. Pearson Cross, associate dean of the University's College of Liberal Arts. He spearheaded the Cupboard planning committee.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates one in six households in Louisiana experiences food insecurity at some point during a year. Nationally, one in eight Americans struggles with hunger. Yet it often remains difficult for people, no matter their age, to ask for assistance, Cross said. "We feel that those who need help should get help. Students who come in have wrestled with that issue already and are happy to have this resource."

The Cupboard relies on support from individuals, churches and



Trey Delcambre, coordinator of Campus Cupboard, refills shelves with nonperishable food.

community organizations, including Second Harvest and United Way of Acadiana. It's also powered by students and volunteers who are dedicated to helping students eat nutritionally and affordably.

Affordability is something computer science doctoral student Debanjali Banerjee thinks about often. Like Skidmore, Banerjee budgets for the month, but often can't stretch the dollars to meet her needs.

She works as a graduate assistant, and her salary is divided among rent, health insurance and groceries. She said she uses the Cupboard when the end of her paycheck approaches and her pantry is emptying.

"Sometimes my budget runs out, and I just need something extra at the end of the month, and Campus Cupboard has those necessary things. It's really a great resource."

- 48 percent of students reported monthly food insecurity.
- 56 percent of first-generation students were food insecure.
- 64 percent of food-insecure students reported experiencing housing insecurity.
- 54 percent of respondents reported having to choose between buying food or textbooks.
- 53 percent of food-insecure students reported missing classes as a result of hunger.
- 25 percent reported dropping a class as a result of hunger.

Source: *The National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness*



DOLUG DUGAS

Cheerleaders rank No. 8 in nation

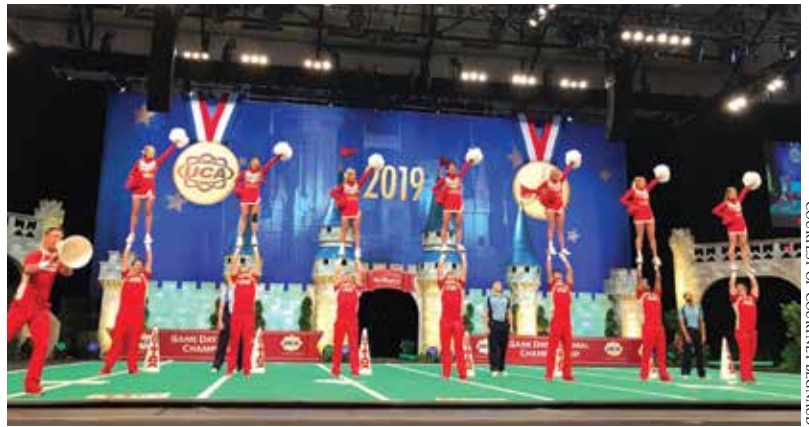
Here's something to crow about: Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Cheerleading is No. 8 in the nation.

The team finished in the top 10 at the Universal Cheerleaders Association's National Championship in Orlando earlier this year. It competed among other NCAA Division 1A schools, including the University of Kentucky, Ohio State University and the University of Alabama. Those teams finished first, second and third, respectively. Division 1A is the highest level of collegiate competition.

This year was the first time the Ragin' Cajuns team progressed beyond the semifinal round at the UCA Nationals.

What made this year different?

Coach Courtney Begnaud said team members "had a fire in them that I've never seen before."



COURTESY OF COURTNEY BEGNAUD

The 16 cheerleaders who competed had perfected routines with smooth transitions and complex stunts during months of training, said Begnaud.

Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns cheerleaders perform at home and away football games, home men's and women's basketball games, home volleyball games, and many other University events.

Call of the wild lures grad student

Over three summers, doctoral student Paige Byerly took a 40-minute, one-way commute to work every few weeks – by boat.

Her office was a thin strip of marshy land in the Gulf of Mexico called Whiskey Island. Marsh wrens, clapper rails, seaside sparrows and other birds that nest on the tiny barrier island were her colleagues.

A National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, Byerly was conducting field work to gather data about bird species on the small barrier island in Terrebonne Bay, near Houma, Louisiana.

Her efforts are outlined in a recent cover story she cowrote for *American Scientist* magazine.

Little data exists about noncommercial inhabitants of the island and its surrounding waters. Byerly set out to change that.

Like the rest of barrier islands strung along the Louisiana coast, Whiskey Island is dying a slow death. It's the victim of storms, subsidence, oil and gas pipeline dredging, and oil spills.

With its coastline, habitat essential to wildlife that lives and breeds on or near the island is vanishing, too. But without any "before" data, determining exactly how much is impossible.

"These studies represent an important shift in how this ecosystem will be studied and protected in the future," Byerly explained. It represents an effort to assess current conditions and provide valuable data needed for future comparisons.

In 2010, offshore sediment was used to build up the bay side of Whiskey Island.

During her trips there, Byerly visited 25 points, listening



LINDA CONVIK/VIRGINIA SCHULTZ

Paige Byerly conducts avian point count sampling at a reference marsh site on Raccoon Island, Isles Dernieres Barrier Island Wildlife Refuge, Louisiana.

for bird calls and logging sightings. She also left sound equipment on the island to record bird calls.

"We didn't count birds, necessarily; we were looking at occupancy. The reason we have so many points is to see if birds are there or not and start to make a pattern over time," she explained.

"We found that the restored site performed really well. It had a high bird diversity."

Byerly is the lead author of "Renewed Hope for Coastal Marshes in Louisiana" in the March-April 2019 issue of *American Scientist*.

The article is co-authored by Bethann Garramon Merkle and Megan Hepner, researchers at the University of Wyoming and the University of California, San Diego, respectively.

To read the article in *American Scientist*, visit bit.ly/paige_byerly 

Skilled writer steps into La Louisiane student editor spot

As *La Louisiane's* newest student editor, Bailey Chenevert is adding valuable experience to an already impressive résumé.

A senior psychology major with a minor in journalism, she spent six years working in television news and magazine publications in Lafayette and her native Baton Rouge.

From August 2017 until January 2019, Chenevert was a production assistant and floor director at television station KADN in Lafayette. There, she learned the technical aspects of producing television news. She worked late nights and early mornings operating cameras and the teleprompter, and posting content to the station's website.

Her interest in reporting began at Baton Rouge Magnet High School, where she took broadcasting and newswriting classes.

She produced multimedia news stories for "Bulldog News,"



DOUG DUGAS

the high school's daily morning broadcast. She also anchored the program.

Chenevert spent four years as a staff member of *Potpourri*, Baton Rouge Magnet's annual literary magazine. She was the magazine's editor-in-chief during her junior and senior years. In that role, she edited submissions, designed layouts, consulted with printers, and managed a team of writers and editors.

Chenevert said she chose to major in psychology at UL Lafayette to gain "a deeper understanding of people." The insight enhances her storytelling, she said, which is beneficial as she pursues a career in journalism.

"There are rich, interesting stories waiting to be told throughout campus. The best part of my job as student editor is getting to dive deeply into these stories and explore them fully."

As student editor, Chenevert's duties include writing and editing articles, conducting interviews, proofreading, and assisting University photographers during photo shoots. She is a liaison between *La Louisiane* and the University's student body.

For this issue, she has written about Campus Cupboard, a food pantry for students, and reported on the Student-Athlete Academic Center in Edith Garland Dupré Library.

"Bailey is a good listener, asks good questions and is constantly honing her writing skills. She makes thoughtful observations and is a quick study," said Kathleen Thames, *La Louisiane* editor.

"She represents the student body well."

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THE SURVIVOR

After defeating childhood leukemia, she returned to St. Jude - but not as a patient

By James Savage

“Mom, do I have cancer?”

Marissa Boudreaux asked the question no parent wants to hear, much less confirm.

Marissa’s question roused Tanya from her unspoken anxiety. The thousand thoughts that had raced through her mind suddenly gave way to absolute clarity.

“Right then, I decided I would never lie to her,” Tanya recounted. “Whatever she asked me, I would tell her the truth.

“I said, ‘Yes, you do,’ and Marissa said, ‘Oh, OK.’ She never believed she wouldn’t beat it. She never believed it was something she wouldn’t overcome.”

By early evening, the Boudreauxs were bound for St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis.

Tanya and David Boudreaux had said little during the half-hour drive from Our Lady of the Lake Regional Medical Center in Baton Rouge to the family’s home in nearby Prairieville. The diagnosis that their 8-year-old daughter had leukemia staggered the couple into silence.

Marissa went back to St. Jude this spring.

Fourteen years after her leukemia diagnosis and 11 years after defeating the disease, she returned – as an intern – to the hospital that helped save her life. She was pursuing a bachelor's degree in health information management at UL Lafayette. It requires an internship; she had secured a spot in St. Jude's Health Information Management Department, which maintains medical records for the 7,500 pediatric patients with cancer, blood disorders and other life-threatening diseases the hospital sees annually.

"I felt like an imposter for a couple of days," said Marissa, now 22. She thought, "I'm not supposed to be in here. I'm supposed to be in a patient room."

The internship required her to complete three projects. She did nine during the three-week stint. Those ranged from updating the department's organizational chart to analyzing budgets. She wrote proposals on staffing needs, and presented her recommendations to senior leadership.

As a patient, Marissa's initial stay at St. Jude lasted three months. Over the next three years, she traveled periodically to Memphis for checkups while also receiving care at the St. Jude affiliate clinic at Our Lady of the Lake hospital in Baton Rouge.

The internship was the only time Marissa had been to St. Jude without Tanya, but she didn't let the workday end without calling her mom. "She was on top of the world," Tanya said. "It was magical talking to her."

David Boudreaux wheeled the family's Winnebago past the security gates and into the Memphis hospital's circular driveway. It was after midnight on Sept. 29, 2005. Just hours before, doctors had confirmed the family's worst fears. Marissa had leukemia.

During her weeklong stay at Our Lady of the Lake, Hurricane Rita came ashore near the Texas-Louisiana border. Though its landfall was 200 miles west, the Category 3 storm inundated the state capital with 9 inches of rain and winds in excess of 100 mph. Marissa remembers the hospital's flickering lights adding a dreamlike dimension to an already surreal situation.

Under usual conditions, Marissa could have begun cancer treatments at the clinic in Baton Rouge. The storm changed that, and the hospital arranged for the family to go to St. Jude's flagship in Memphis. Area airports had grounded flights, so the Boudreauxs drove their motorhome. Marissa, sedated with pain medication, slept for much of the six-hour drive while her parents and 12-year-old brother Dillan rode in dazed silence.

Time was critical. Marissa had acute lymphoblastic leukemia. ALL is the most-common form of pediatric cancer. Most patients survive, but it spreads quickly if left untreated.

For Marissa, the disease had a head start, although doctors detected it early. She hadn't told anyone when abdominal pains began the previous month. She also had bruises on her legs, chest and back, but those were common for such an active child. "I did everything – karate, gymnastics, dancing, cheerleading," she said. "I was a bunch of energy."

In the months preceding her diagnosis, Marissa's brother had a heart procedure. Her dad had a melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, surgically removed from his back. Hurricane Katrina



ANN-MARGARET HEDGES/ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S RESEARCH HOSPITAL

Ann-Margaret Hedges photographed Dr. Ching-Hon Pui and Marissa Boudreaux during Marissa's internship. She took the photo on the preceding page soon after Marissa's arrival at St. Jude as a patient in 2005.

hit in August 2005; though the Boudreauxs were not affected by storm damage, family in New Orleans were and had evacuated to Prairieville. "I knew I was sick," Marissa said. "I didn't tell anyone because too much had gone on. It was a bad year."

One afternoon in mid-September, the usually effervescent, energetic little girl arrived home from school and just lay down. "It was not like her," Tanya said.

Marissa had a low-grade fever and began to vomit. She finally told her mom about the abdominal pain; by then, it had begun to move, "like a snake. You felt it go through your body," Marissa said.

They went to the emergency room at a hospital in nearby Gonzales. Blood tests showed anomalies. Doctors there recommended taking her to the St. Jude affiliate clinic at Our Lady of the Lake. Within a week, the family was pulling up to the front door of the Memphis hospital.

"There was a team of people waiting outside," Tanya said. "At the time, I didn't realize it, but I look back on it now and think, 'That's amazing. That just doesn't happen.'"

Leukemia had barged into their lives so quickly. The sight of the medical staff, assembled and ready to treat her daughter, gave Tanya a semblance of calm for the first time in weeks.

She opened the RV's window. A nurse peeked inside, and asked, "Mr. and Mrs. Boudreaux, is Marissa in there?"



David, Marissa, Tanya and Dillan Boudreaux gather following Marissa's graduation this past spring from UL Lafayette.

Roman Catholics consider St. Jude Thaddeus the patron saint of hopeless causes. When the namesake, nondenominational hospital opened in 1962, children in the U.S. diagnosed with cancer faced dire prognoses. Only 20 percent survived; just 4 percent with ALL lived.

Hospital founder Danny Thomas offered hope to the hopeless. The television pioneer and 1950s sitcom star envisioned a place that would provide care, travel, food and housing – at no cost – to pediatric cancer patients and their families.

Today, the overall childhood cancer survival rate is 80 percent; 94 percent of patients with ALL live. Though improved, neither statistic satisfies Dr. Ching-Hon Pui, chair of St. Jude's Department of Oncology. Pui oversaw Marissa's care. "Losing even a single patient is unacceptable. We have to work until we can cure 100 percent."

That work involves continuous clinical trials. Most patients are research subjects, Pui said. "We learn from patients so we can help future patients. Each generation helps the next."

Marissa joined St. Jude's lineage of treatment and discovery soon after she arrived there.

Acute lymphoblastic leukemia affects blood and bone marrow. Children develop ALL when their bodies produce too many immature white blood cells. The rapid growth of leukemia cells leaves little room for healthy white and red blood cells and platelets. That impedes the body's ability to fight infections, exchange oxygen in respiration, and stop bleeding.

To confirm the suspicions of emergency room doctors in Gonzales that Marissa had leukemia, physicians in Baton Rouge performed a bone marrow aspiration, inserting a thin, hollow needle into her hip bone to remove the soft tissue inside.

Later tests showed she had B-ALL, a type of leukemia that affects B lymphocytes, a white blood cell found in bone marrow. B cells make antibodies that combat bacteria and germs.

What doctors didn't know was that Marissa had a yet-undefined leukemia subtype called Philadelphia chromosome-like, or Ph-like, ALL. A Philadelphia chromosome is a genetic abnormality caused when pieces of two chromosomes swap places. This creates a gene that enables leukemia cells to grow uncontrollably.

Marissa participated in a clinical trial that helped researchers discover the Ph-like ALL subtype. She was among 344 B-ALL patients Pui and colleagues monitored to see how drug therapies affected the number of leukemia cells remaining in bone marrow after treatment. This measurement enabled doctors to adjust the intensity of future treatments.

Researchers now know that about 15 percent of pediatric ALL patients have the Ph-like subtype. Before it was identified, worldwide survival rates hovered near 62 percent. In the St. Jude trial in which Marissa participated, Ph-like

ALL survival rates jumped to more than 92 percent.

Doctors used conclusions gleaned from Marissa and the other patients' cases to develop individualized approaches to treating B-ALL. Now, every patient isn't treated with the same intensity, Pui said.

"Marissa is very important. If she had not gone through the protocol, we would never have figured out how to properly treat Ph-like ALL. She contributed to our research, just as previous patients contributed so Marissa could get good treatment. We gain information from each of our patients. We are learning every day."

Shortly after her internship ended earlier this year, Marissa returned to St. Jude for an annual checkup.

While waiting in an outpatient clinic, she sat near a mother and daughter. The girl was about 4 years old. The woman appeared panicked and uncertain. It was a look familiar to Marissa. Tanya and David once had it. "It's like a deer in the headlights. They were just told their child has cancer. It's a stare that says, 'What do I do?'"

Marissa and the woman talked a while. The little girl was diagnosed the previous week. Marissa outlined her own experiences and assured the mother that treatment today is less painful and less invasive than what she received. For example, doctors no longer give injections that pierce leg muscles and nearly touch the bone, or prescribe high-dose steroids such as the one that inflamed Marissa's pancreas.

"It's a lot easier now," Marissa said while recalling the story. "There was no reason for her to panic when I could tell her it's going to be OK. I didn't want to tell her that her child was going to live, because I had friends who didn't. But I wanted her to at least have hope."

Marissa takes Spencer Boyer's photo – and his memory – everywhere.

In May, as she walked across the stage in the Cajundome

Convention Center to receive a bachelor's degree in health information management, an image of Boyer was on an iPhone tucked in her pocket.

Spencer was a native of Abita Springs, La., about 70 miles northeast of Marissa's hometown of Prairieville. He was diagnosed three weeks earlier than Marissa, in September 2005. His ALL affected T lymphocytes, white blood cells that help fight infections, while her leukemia affected B cells.

The pair met at St. Jude and bonded "like Velcro," Marissa said. Spencer was 12, the same age as Dillan, Marissa's brother who remained at home in Louisiana during her stays in Memphis. Spencer was slightly ahead of Marissa in treatment, so she peppered him with questions. His explanations alleviated her jitters.

"The beginning is the rough part," Marissa said. "It's when you feel terrible, and you look terrible, and your eyebrows and hair are falling out, and you don't know *what is going on.*"

Spencer's cancer was more aggressive and further along than Marissa's. Poor reactions to chemo and other drugs left him listless and downtrodden for longer periods than other patients. That was unacceptable to Marissa. "I was that kid who wanted everybody to feel better. I wanted to be his medicine."

Using the base of her IV pole as a skateboard, Marissa would roll past Spencer as he sat in a wheelchair, and "he would perk up and we'd go have some fun," she said. "He would forget about what was going on for a little while. And he did that for me, too."

Joan Boyer, Spencer's mother, recalled her son comforting Marissa in the "medicine room," the dreaded area in the hospital where patients received injections, chemo and other drugs. "Spencer would always try to be near Marissa to try to help distract her" from the pain and nausea that resulted.

When Spencer was bedridden, she invaded his room armed with Nerf guns. The resulting battle "made such a ruckus that I thought the nurses would put them out," Joan Boyer said.

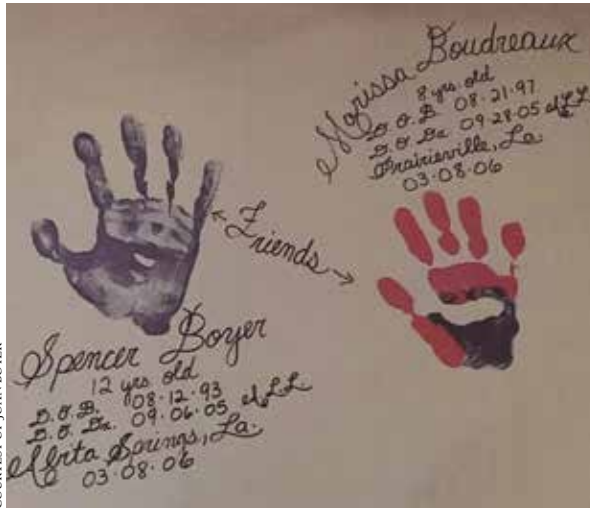
Spencer relapsed in 2007 and underwent an unsuccessful bone marrow transplant. He died on June 12, two months shy of his 14th birthday.

The Boyers installed a tile memorializing Spencer in a St. Jude corridor. It's at the base of a mural of the hospital's namesake and reads: "To my St. Jude family. Thank you. I love you, Spencer Boyer."

Every day during her internship, Marissa walked past the tile.



Marissa Boudreaux and Spencer Boyer prepare to put their handprints on the wall of Ronald McDonald House, where both stayed while receiving cancer treatments at St. Jude.



Without fail, she touched it and told her friend hello.

Tanya Boudreaux remembers only one time when Marissa's confidence waned during her battle with leukemia. She had pancreatitis, an inflammation of the pancreas caused by a high-dose steroid she received as treatment. The excruciating condition confined her to the St. Jude affiliate clinic in Baton Rouge for weeks.

"She was in the bed," Tanya recalled. "She was crying because it was hurting, and she kept asking, 'Why? Why is God letting me feel this pain?' I told her, 'Baby, I don't know. I don't know today. But maybe one day, we'll know why.'"

Marissa now knows why.

"I've helped so many children. They found newer, better, faster, painless cures because of what I did, and what countless other children like Spencer did and sacrificed for. I would never change it. I would never take it back. Ever. Who would I be otherwise?"

Although more than a decade separates Marissa from leukemia, aftereffects remain. Some are sensory, others more serious.

She can't tolerate the smell of Purell, though other hand sanitizers are OK. Alcohol wipes, used to sterilize skin before an injection, make her cringe more than the shot does. She can't swim in saltwater because it reminds her of the saline used to clean her Mediport, the access point once located on her chest where she received chemo.

She has stones in both kidneys and her gall bladder. She has low bone density. Most leukemia patients have secondary cancers later in life; hers arrived at 17, when doctors discovered and removed precancerous cells on her cervix.

The most-apparent reminder of Marissa's cancer journey is the length of her hair. When she began chemotherapy, and her hair began to fall out, the 8-year-old refused to allow herself to be photographed. To hide her baldness, she amassed an extensive collection of hats and a blonde wig marketed by the TV show *Hannah Montana*.

"That's the age you are building your identity, how you see yourself and how you want to be seen. It's not conducive to that process to be bald," Marissa explained.

Today, her hair is 32 inches long, and is never any shorter than her hip. It's both "a safety blanket and a trophy," she said.

"It's a safety blanket because being bald made me feel naked and exposed. It made me feel ugly. It's a trophy because I'm still here. I lost it and it grew back. When people ask why my hair is so long, I tell them, 'Because I'm a survivor' and leave it at that."





ROCKETMAN

By Kathleen Thames

Fifty years ago, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were the first humans to walk on the moon. It was a triumph the United States of America accomplished in less than 10 years, the fruit of an unrivaled amalgam of brainpower, spunk, ingenuity and political will. J. Harvey LeBlanc, '62, helped make it happen.

The USA was losing the Cold War space race in 1961. Badly.

The Soviet Union had already successfully launched the first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1; the first dog, Laika; and the first primate, a chimpanzee named Ham, into orbit.

It had also put the first human in outer space. On April 12, 1961, cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin circled the globe for 108 minutes before parachuting safely to Earth.

Six weeks later, President John F. Kennedy addressed a Joint Session of Congress, where he announced an incredible objective: to send a man to the moon and back before the end of the decade.

His motivation was political. The backdrop of this bold endeavor was the Cold War, shorthand for mutual distrust and enmity that had developed between the United States and the Soviet Union – a former ally – after World War II. The Soviets' rapid advancement in space exploration fueled fear in some Americans that their rival might stake the moon – and outer space – for itself, while the United States remained earthbound.

Kennedy asked Congress to redirect billions of federal

funds to win the space race. It was not just a contest to see which country would reach the moon first. It was conceivably a battle to control outer space for world dominance.

On Sept. 12, 1962, Kennedy spoke to about 40,000 people gathered at the Rice University football field in Houston.

He described space exploration as “one of the greatest adventures of all time” and acknowledged that the United States was behind in manned flight.

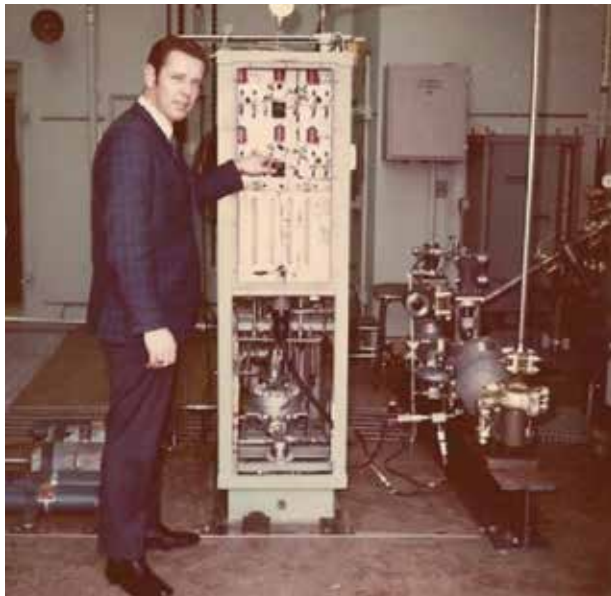
“We set sail on this new sea because there is new knowledge to be gained, and new rights to be won, and they must be won and used for the progress of all people. For space science, like nuclear science and all technology, has no conscience of its own. Whether it will become a force for good or ill depends on man, and only if the United States occupies a position of preeminence can we help decide whether this new ocean will be a sea of peace or a new terrifying theater of war.”

J. Harvey LeBlanc was a senior at the University of Southwestern Louisiana who was about to graduate with a degree in mechanical engineering when he listened to what would become known as Kennedy's “moon speech.”



NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION

Design engineers work on the Saturn V rocket in a North American Aviation facility in Downey, California, in the early 1960s.



NORTH AMERICAN AVIATION

J. Harvey LeBlanc supervised testing of hardware for the S-II stage of the Saturn V rocket in the mid-1960s. Extensive testing was conducted throughout the rocket's development.

LeBlanc was hooked, drawn to the adventure and challenges a ramped-up space race seemed to offer.

He got plenty of both.

As a self-described “groundling,” he was one of hundreds of thousands of men and women devoted to placing a man on the moon in an extremely short amount of time.

His career began when he was hired by the company responsible for developing the second stage of the Saturn V rocket and Apollo spacecraft. Seven years later, he stood near the Florida launch pad where the rocket he helped create catapulted Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin heavenward to their destiny as the first humans to step onto the lunar surface.

As if that weren't enough to secure a place in history, LeBlanc was among thousands of scientists and engineers who later built the space shuttle. That reusable spacecraft would ultimately ferry equipment and material for an international space station created not for the purpose of war, but for peace.

In a cover story about the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission, published in the June 2019 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine, author Charles Fishman puts Kennedy's quest in perspective.

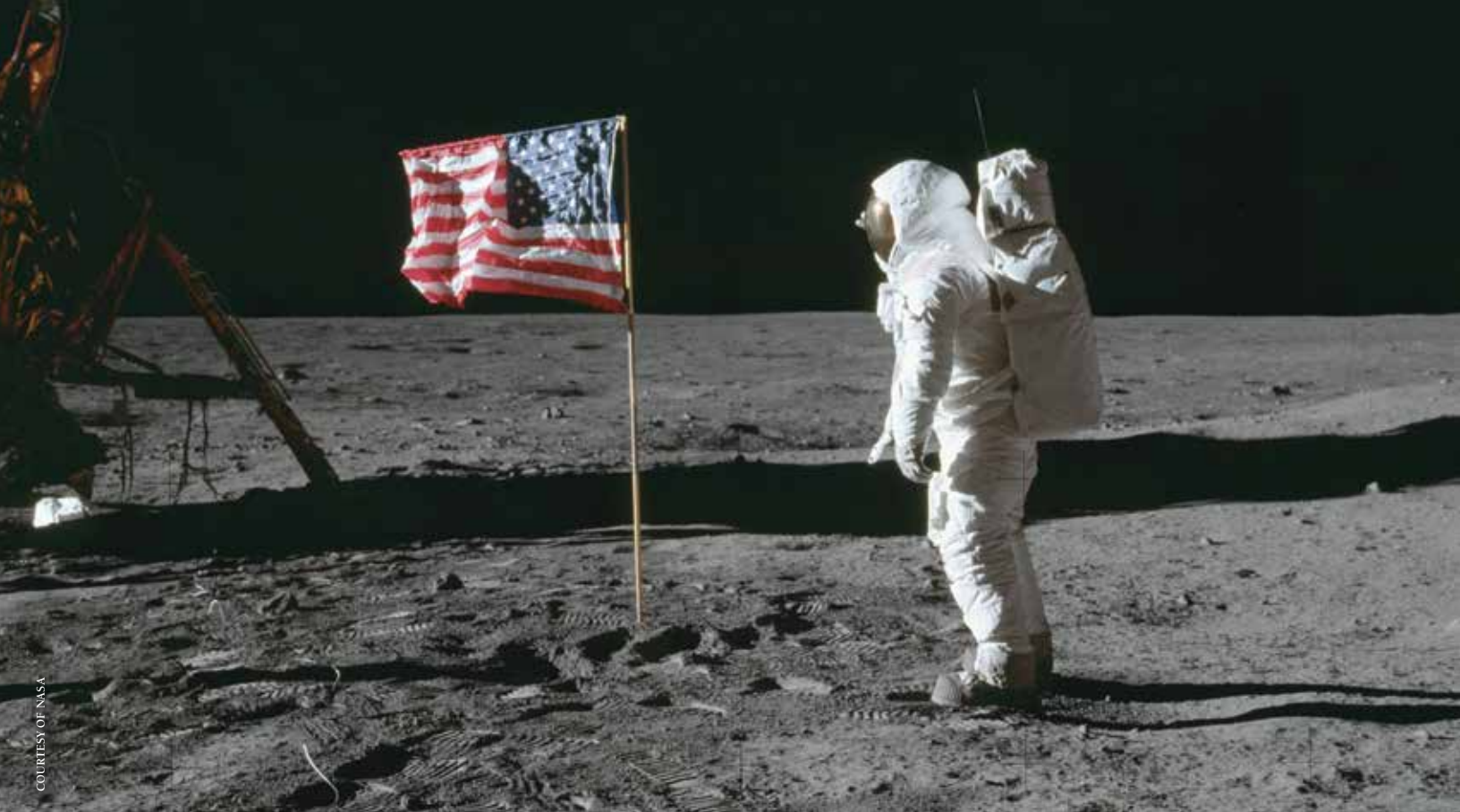
“When President John F. Kennedy declared in 1961 that the United States would go to the Moon, he was committing the nation to do something we simply couldn't do. We didn't have the tools or equipment — the rockets or the launch pads, the spacesuits or the computers or the micro-gravity food. And it isn't just that we didn't have what we would need; we didn't even know what we would need. We didn't have a list; no one in the world had a list. Indeed, our unpreparedness for the task goes a level deeper: We didn't even know how to fly to the Moon. We didn't know what course to fly to get there from here,” he wrote.

“... On May 25, 1961, when Kennedy asked Congress to send Americans to the Moon before the 1960s were over, NASA had no rockets to launch astronauts to the Moon, no computer portable enough to guide a spaceship to the Moon, no spacesuits to wear on the way, no spaceship to land astronauts on the surface (let alone a Moon car to let them drive around and explore), no network of tracking stations to talk to the astronauts en route,” Fishman continued.

None of that mattered to LeBlanc.

Soon after graduating from USL, he was hired by North American Aviation as a design engineer for the second stage of the Saturn V rocket. He drove to the West Coast, where he began working in the company's Downey, California, facility. It was a large, metal building where airplanes had been built in the 1920s. It lacked air conditioning, so its windows were left open. Birds would fly inside from time to time.

LeBlanc recalls those early days with the kind of bravado that enabled the United States to accomplish a scientific and



COURTESY OF NASA

Apollo 11 astronaut Buzz Aldrin stands by the American flag on the Sea of Tranquility on July 21, 1969.

engineering feat that, in retrospect, should not have been possible.

“We all had a drafting machine, a fluorescent light, a wooden stool, a 10-inch slide rule and pocket protector with about ten pencils!”

“We did our analysis with the slide rules and the drawings were made on paper utilizing the drafting machines. We were full of enthusiasm and ready to design the Saturn V rocket and Apollo capsule. We didn’t need no stinking computer!” he stated in an account of his work that was written at the request of his family.

In that narrative, entitled “Memoirs of an Old Rocketeer,” LeBlanc notes that he had an advantage over many fresh-out-of-college graduates.

“I had worked my way through college by designing pneumatic systems in the Louisiana oil fields, so I had some experience in that area,” he said.

“At about 25 years old I was given the responsibility for the design of the propulsion servicing systems for the second stage (called the S-II) of the three-stage Saturn V rocket! These systems included 47 launch-critical functions to assure safe launch of the rocket. In my mind, failure was not an option.”

The process of developing a rocket begins with a concept. That concept is translated into the creation of systems, which begin with schematics, or diagrams. Hardware is then designed and manufactured,

based on those schematics. Individual pieces of hardware are tested separately and, after everything is put together, systems are repeatedly tested.

By 1965, one of LeBlanc’s roles was to provide technical support when North American Aviation test-fired the stage propulsion system at its facilities in California and Mississippi.

Testing could be extremely hazardous work.

“At the Mississippi Test Facility, we were involved in development testing of very hazardous liquid hydrogen (LH2) fuel systems when there was limited experience in this field. LH2 is stored at minus 423 degrees in ground storage tanks and is transferred from there to the vehicle fuel tanks for testing,” LeBlanc recalled.

“As the cold LH2 flows in lines and components they shrink and joints tend to leak. When a leak occurs, the LH2 changes from a liquid to a gas. The problem with a hydrogen gas leak is that it is invisible and highly flammable. The static electricity created by your shoes walking on the floor is enough to ignite the leak.

“Before the invention of reliable leak and fire detectors, we were required to walk around LH2 lines holding a broom in front of ourselves. If the broom caught fire you knew there was a leak and fire there and quit walking! This was our only fire detection system.”

Decades later, after sophisticated leak and fire detectors had been invented to reveal the presence of hydrogen and subsequent invisible flames, inspectors still carried always-reliable brooms as a fail-safe.



DOUG DUGAS

A room in J. Harvey LeBlanc's home is filled with memorabilia from a career spent working on Apollo and space shuttle missions.

The Saturn V was impressive by any measure. Its size “dwarfed all other previous rockets which had successfully flown at the time. It remains the tallest, heaviest and most powerful rocket ever brought to operational status, and holds the record for the heaviest payload launched,” LeBlanc observed in his memoir.

The rocket had three stages. When ignited, the first stage provided the power needed to lift it to an altitude of about 42 miles before dropping away. Stage 2 – referred to as S-II – then took over. It had five J-2 rocket engines and was fueled by 260,000 gallons of liquid hydrogen and 80,000 gallons of liquid oxygen. The second stage propelled the rocket through the upper atmosphere before it was discarded. The third stage sent the Apollo spacecraft into Earth's orbit.

The rocket and Apollo spacecraft weighed 5.6 million pounds. It had a lift-off thrust of 7.5 million pounds. Thrust, produced by engines, is the force that propels a rocket and enables it to escape the gravitational pull of Earth.

“The first time I walked up to this huge rocket on the launch pad, I looked up and told myself “There is no way this big thing is going to fly,” LeBlanc recounted.

And, the Saturn V was loud.

“Except for the hydrogen bomb, the Saturn V is the loudest man-made object ever built. The noise and vibration created during launch registers on earthquake sensors across America,” he wrote.

The Saturn V was a workhorse used by NASA for 12 Apollo missions between 1967 and 1973.

President Kennedy was assassinated in November 1963. But the mission to the moon stayed on course under the deadline he had set, thanks in large part to his vice president and successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, whose political clout saw it through.

On July 16, 1969, all of LeBlanc's work culminated in the launch of Apollo 11 from Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

By then, LeBlanc was as a member of a team responsible for ensuring that all systems were ready for all Apollo takeoffs. The team had the knowledge, experience and authority to abort a mission if necessary.

For safety reasons, he was three and a half miles from the launchpad when he watched Apollo 11 lift off, the closest anyone was allowed.

“Even from three and a half miles away, to see, hear and feel the vibrations of those huge engines made the hair stand up on my neck and really made me proud to be an American. We had fulfilled President Kennedy's goal!”

Placement of astronauts on the moon signaled the end of the Cold War space race.

“Back then we had a saying: ‘They said they were going to the moon and asked me to help. They gave us each a grain of sand to move and with that we built a road to the moon.’ How true this was, since everyone had their own specialty or job to do, no matter how big or small,” LeBlanc said.

It's possible there is still evidence of his contribution to the Apollo space program on the lunar surface.

“In 1972, the NASA astronauts decided to show their appreciation to the North American Rockwell employees that had designed and built the Apollo spacecrafts and Saturn S-II rockets that had carried them safely to the moon. They microfilmed our signatures and carried them to the moon in Apollo 16, on April 16, 1972,” he wrote in his memoir.

He playfully added: “If you look at the moon carefully on a clear night, see if you can see my name up there!”

'WE MADE HISTORY'

Through his work on the Saturn V rocket that launched Apollo spacecraft, J. Harvey LeBlanc, '62, found all the challenges and adventures he sought by joining the nation's space program as a design engineer right after graduation.

His subsequent contributions to the space shuttle rivaled that experience, offering the satisfaction of solving problems and developing a spacecraft that had never existed. Along the way, danger and tragedy intermingled with engineering innovation.

LeBlanc's focus shifted to the space shuttle after the launch of Apollo 17, the sixth and final manned lunar landing, in 1972. He primarily concentrated on the orbiter, the part of the space shuttle that looks like a huge airplane.

Unlike Apollo spacecraft, the space shuttle was intended to remain in a 250-mile orbit around the Earth. It needed to return intact, so that it could make multiple trips to outer space and back.

In addition to the orbiter, the shuttle consisted of two solid rocket boosters that resembled giant Roman candles and an enormous external fuel tank.

"We were required to design systems to load and unload very toxic fuels, such as hydrazine, in and out of the shuttle orbiter," LeBlanc stated in "Memoirs of an Old Rocketeer," an account of his career written for his family.

Once the orbiter landed, it had to sit for hours while it cooled. Astronauts remained inside until it was safe to exit. While the orbiter was cooling, engineers examined it to make sure there were no hazards, such as fuel leaks.

LeBlanc and other design engineers were trained to perform such dangerous tasks while wearing Self-Contained Atmospheric Protection Ensemble suits, which resembled the bulky spacesuits worn by astronauts.

"These suits are required when working around hydrazine because it is so toxic that if you can smell it, you have inhaled enough to kill you!" LeBlanc said.

As with Apollo missions, extensive testing of equipment and systems was conducted at various stages of space shuttle development. Sometimes, there were failures.



J. Harvey LeBlanc stands in front of Columbia, the first space shuttle, at Kennedy Space Center in 1981.

COURTESY OF J. HARVEY LEBLANC



At Edwards Air Force Base in California, J. Harvey LeBlanc and others were trained to handle toxic fuels safely for the space shuttle while wearing protective suits.

COURTESY OF J. HARVEY LEBLANC



COURTESY OF NASA

Test-firing of the S-II stage of the Saturn V rocket was conducted at a facility in Mississippi.



ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL

J. Harvey LeBlanc, center, and engineers monitor data in a mission support room in Downey, California, prior to a space shuttle launch.

One occurred during test-firing of the main propulsion system engines in Mississippi. When an attempt was made to start the engines, they exploded. “Had this explosion occurred on an actual space shuttle during launch, it would have destroyed the shuttle and probably killed the crew,” LeBlanc said.

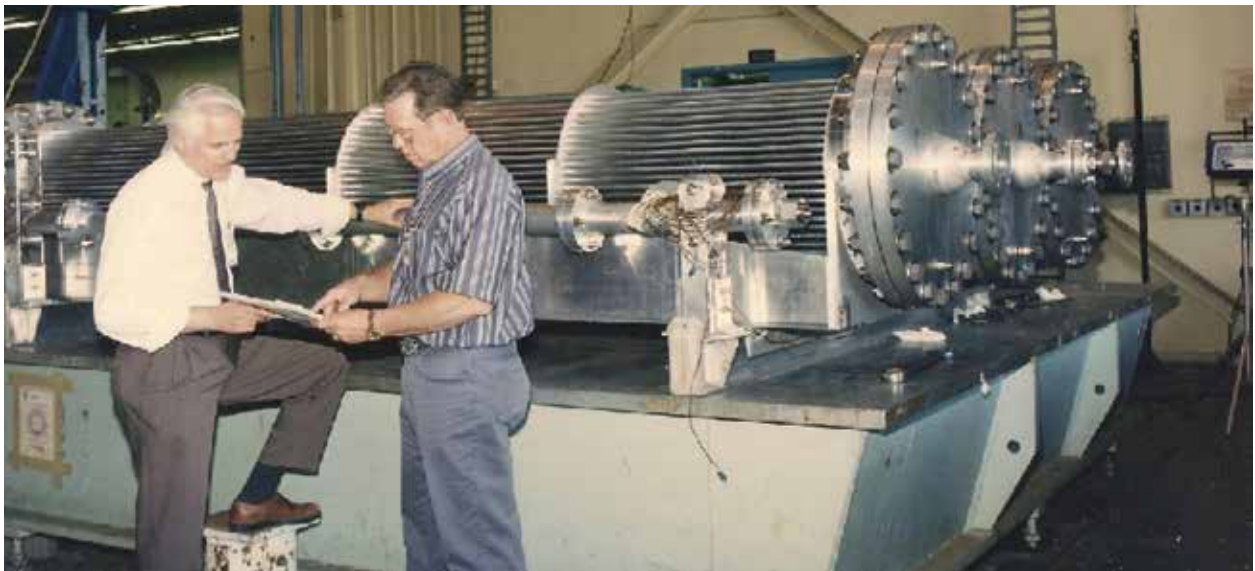
The space shuttle fleet was grounded and he was assigned to help troubleshoot the cause of the explosion and find a solution that would prevent future failures. The culprit turned out to be the way the engines were started.

The engine supplier determined that the fix would require changes to the start sequence, followed by extensive testing. The projected cost was a little over \$9 million.

Soon after, LeBlanc was setting off fireworks on the Fourth of July with his son when he thought of an alternative. “I needed a device to shoot sparks which would burn the hydrogen at the exit of the engine nozzle during start. This would keep the hydrogen from forming a large cloud and therefore prevent the explosion from occurring,” he explained.

A phone call to a pyrotechnic supplier, whose fireworks were used at Disneyland, confirmed that he could buy what he needed – “a device that would shoot sparks about 30 feet at a temperature of 1,200 degrees.”

The price tag: \$9.85 each. Ultimately, the equivalent that met NASA specifications would cost about \$1,200



ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL

Engineer Tibor Lak, left, and J. Harvey LeBlanc check the design and construction of a heat exchanger used to help make liquid oxygen, a propellant, heavier per gallon. Denser oxygen can be carried in smaller, lighter tanks.



ROCKWELL INTERNATIONAL

Team engineers view testing of liquid hydrogen behind bulletproof glass in an explosion-proof control room.

each, but LeBlanc's solution saved millions of dollars.

He was on hand for the first space shuttle launch – of the Columbia – at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida on April 12, 1981. Because of his familiarity with the design, construction and testing of the orbiter, NASA had asked him to serve as a member of the Launch Support Team in the Launch Control Center. As an adviser, he would help troubleshoot any problems that might arise.

Since the countdown went smoothly, he recalled, "I was given permission to go outside a few minutes before launch to take photos of the liftoff. It was totally unimaginable to see the magnitude of the engine exhaust flames and subsequent vapor cloud, hear the noise from the screaming engines, and actually feel the rumble of the ground as the vehicle slowly accelerated skyward. I don't think I have ever been prouder to be an American and part of such a historic event."

Five years later, he witnessed one of the most chilling tragedies in the United States' space program.

On Jan. 28, 1986, he was in Downey, California, when the Challenger space shuttle was scheduled for liftoff. It was the first time he had not been part of the launch team at Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Instead, he was in a Mission Support Room in Rockwell International's plant.

In his memoir, he recounts what happened that morning.

"The countdown and early part of the launch went well. We were receiving good data from KSC and the performance of our engines appeared normal until 73 seconds into the flight when our computer screens froze up. I assumed that we had experienced a data link failure until I looked up at the public TV and saw the vehicle breaking up. I had such a sick feeling in my stomach that I thought that I would throw up!"

An explosion killed all seven astronauts aboard, including



COURTESY OF NASA

The Space Shuttle Endeavour is poised for takeoff at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Christa McAuliffe, a 37-year-old high school teacher.

Despite the horror of watching that deadly accident, LeBlanc had to focus on his job.

"Orders were given to lock the doors of the Mission Support Room and we were told that we could make one call to our homes to tell our families not to expect us until they saw us."

He and colleagues spent the next 36 hours reviewing every bit of available data to determine whether the company's systems had caused the failure. After an exhaustive examination, they were confident their propulsion systems were not at fault.

Accident investigators later pinpointed a failure in O-rings that sealed sections of the solid rocket boosters.

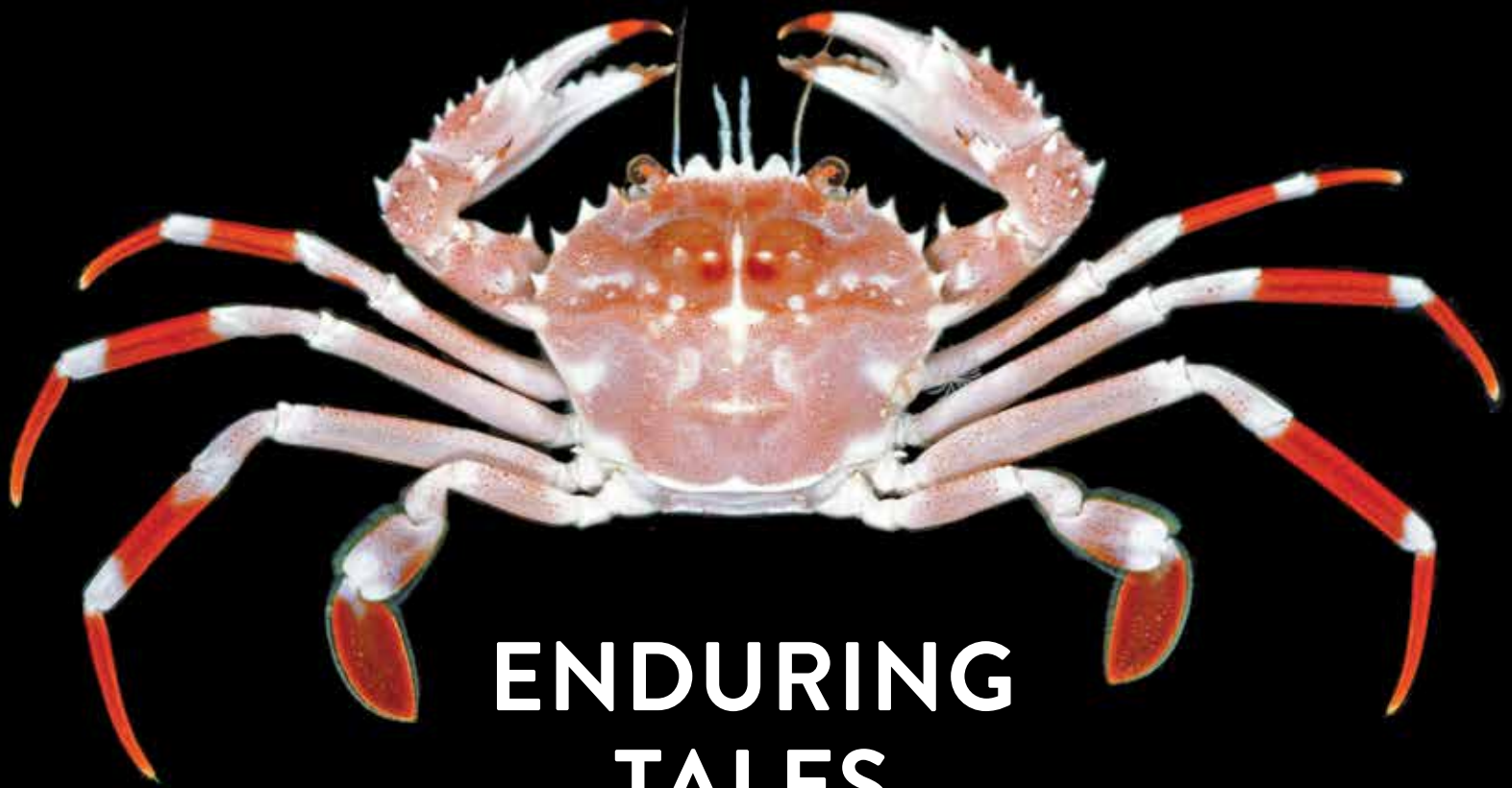
In the 1990s, LeBlanc became Boeing's propulsion design engineering director for the space shuttle and Delta IV rocket programs. In that role, he was responsible for "everything between the tires and the tip of the tail of the space vehicle, except electronics and computers."

He retired in 1999 and moved back to south Louisiana.

Sometimes, he proudly wears a commemorative crew shirt with the names of the five shuttles: Atlantis, Challenger, Columbia, Discovery and Endeavor.

The message embroidered on it sums up his contributions to all of them:

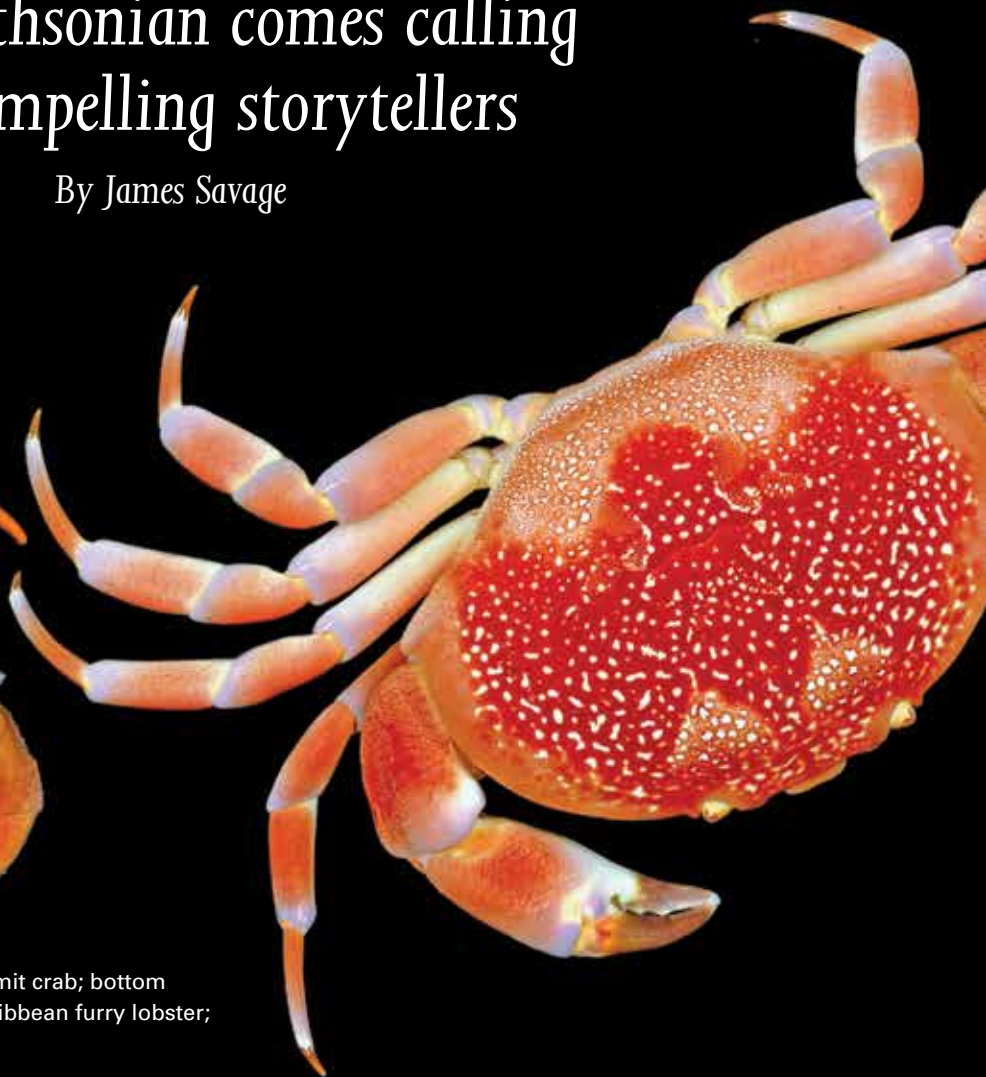
"We Made History."



ENDURING TALES

*The Smithsonian comes calling
for compelling storytellers*

By James Savage



Top, bathyal swimming crab; bottom left, deepsea hermit crab; bottom right, batwing coral crab. Opposite page: top right, Caribbean furry lobster; bottom, cryptic spider crab.

Dr. Darryl Felder walked into his Billeaud Hall lab and saw barren shelves. Actors in his life's story were missing. Preserved crabs, shrimp, lobsters and other decapod crustaceans once filled the gray metal units. Many of the jars that contained them were gone, leaving gaps among the remaining vessels. Technicians will return to retrieve those too, but at that moment, Felder surveyed the emptying space with growing melancholy.

The professor emeritus of biology later described the sad scene to a graduate student, who reassured him with a pat on the back. Remember, he told Felder, the specimens were "going to a better place."

That better place is the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History.



Preserved crustaceans aren't chatty, but they're excellent storytellers. It's in their genes.

When the Smithsonian acquired the UL Lafayette Zoological Crustacean Collection that Felder, his colleagues and students had built over four decades, it received 18,000 jars that contained 100,000 specimens of 2,000 species from the Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and throughout the Gulf of Mexico.

It's big. That much you can see. But the collection's value lies in what you can't.

It's likely the largest archive of gene sequence-quality marine decapod specimens from the Americas. Decapods, 10-footed crustaceans, include lobsters, crabs, crawfish, prawns and shrimp.





Their DNA provides an historical snapshot of animal life and diversity. Microscopic samples researchers extract from the specimens enable them to find kinship between seemingly disparate creatures from different parts of the sea and spot new species, as well.

Felder compared genetic sampling to drawing blood from a human patient.

“I am collecting a small sample periodically to deduce many things about the marine system in which these animals live.

“Just as one sample rarely tells you about the rest of a human’s life, you must keep going back and sampling periodically. It’s a way to measure the health of the marine systems we study.”

Genetic samples taken from sea creatures can permit scientists to determine why a marine population declined or disappeared. Those clues also can lead to predictions about other marine animals’ futures.

Color also reflects genetic information, but time – combined



Dr. Darryl Felder sorts freshly harvested marine animals aboard the *R/V Pelican*.

with preservatives – dulls a specimen’s natural vibrancy. Felder photographed animals while they lived, and the 50,000 images that accompany the collection record aesthetic details specimens alone wouldn’t provide.

Comparisons between animals preserved decades ago and those harvested recently enable scientists to elicit geopolitical and economic stories, too. In 2011, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, the agency that oversees food safety, designated the collection as a genetic tissue repository to examine crabs, shrimp and lobsters being marketed in the United States.

The specimens were used to detect illegal importing, false labeling and human rights abuses, Felder explained. “If someone mislabeled a tub of crabmeat as blue crab from the Gulf of Mexico, we can take it and start plucking samples out of it and run genetics. We can compare it to other blue crabs that we have and can tell you it’s actually from off the coast of Thailand, where it was harvested perhaps under poor labor conditions.”

Left, reticulated hermit crab; top right, tricolor hermit crab; bottom right, Atlantic seabob.



Felder pointed to a jar with a preserved shrimp inside. Though dead, it still has life, he said.

“The collection is not static. It tells stories. The stories are about climate change. They are about invasive species moving into our part of the world. They are about the decline of species that may have been common 20 years ago that we rarely see anymore. They are about biodiversity in this part of the world.”

The collection also documents disaster and recovery.

Dr. Suzanne Fredericq is a professor of biology and a phycologist, an expert in algae such as seaweed. She was among a number of researchers whose collaborations with Felder helped build the archive.

In 1997, Fredericq and Felder secured a federal grant to assess crab and shrimp populations in the northwestern Gulf. The idea



DOUG DUGAS

Specimen jars surround Dr. Darryl Felder in his Billeaud Hall laboratory before crews from the Smithsonian began packing the collection.

was to create a comparative baseline should an environmental disaster occur. They collected specimens near salt domes where offshore oil and gas production were prevalent.

Fast forward to 2011. The Deepwater Horizon explosion the previous year resulted in nearly 4.9 million barrels of crude oil spewing into the Gulf. Felder and Fredericq returned to the same sites to complete the work they had begun 14 years earlier.

Dredges that had once yielded a bounty of seaweed, crabs and lobsters emerged from the water

almost empty. Crustaceans that did reach the surface had lesions, missing appendages and contaminated gills. They are now among the collection’s holdings.

Yet the aftermath of the spill also demonstrated the Gulf’s resiliency, Fredericq said. When she returned to campus, she had placed a few nodules, round lumps of sea minerals, she had collected into a tank of seawater. Algae usually covered their

Top, blue land crab; bottom, mud shrimp; top right, baron mud lobster; bottom right, wood-dwelling hermit crab.

surfaces, but these were bare. Soon, algae sprouted.

“Everything looked dead, but there was still life in there,” she said. Little fish and crabs emerged from the nodules’ protective crevasses, too. Subsequent trips to the Gulf showed similar signs of recovery.

“It was a treasure trove every time we’d go. We’d always find something new. New species. New relationships. The Gulf is absolutely extraordinary,” Fredericq said.

The Smithsonian wanted those stories – all of them.

Its museums and research facilities have about 11.3 million crustacean specimens from around the world. Acquiring the UL Lafayette archive doubles holdings from the Gulf of Mexico and supplements the stories current possessions tell, said Dr. Rafael Lemaitre. He is curator of crustacea in the National Museum of Natural History’s Department of Invertebrate Zoology.

“It’s very satisfying that everything is going to be in one place. This collection is remarkable because it contains virtually all known decapod crustacean species from the Gulf.”

Lemaitre has been an adjunct zoology professor at the University since 1994. He and Felder traveled together on research expeditions to collect some specimens that will now call the Smithsonian home.

Some nations, including Nicaragua, Venezuela and Cuba, have restricted access to areas where researchers worked years ago, so specimens they collected in those locations and others can’t be retrieved again.

“It is an invaluable, irreplaceable collection,” Lemaitre said.

The archive’s new home is a research facility outside Washington, D.C., in suburban Maryland. Moving it there is a task that takes time.

Technicians from the Smithsonian arrived at Billeaud Hall on UL Lafayette’s campus last fall to begin packing, the first of several anticipated trips to complete the job. The team removed jars from the shelves, swaddled each in Bubble Wrap, and placed the vessels into a series of 55-gallon drums.

Simon Pecnik was on the six-person crew. The

lab was a space he knew well, and some of the specimens were old friends.

Pecnik earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology from UL Lafayette. As a student, he worked as a curatorial technician in Felder’s lab. He deciphered handwritten tags that accompanied the crustaceans, and retyped that information – which included coordinates where the samples were collected, the scientific family and species, and their common names – onto rectangular labels affixed to each jar.

The curatorial work Pecnik performed as a student eased his job once the first shipment from the University arrived at the Smithsonian, where he’s worked as a museum technician since 2018.

There, he integrated the collection into the museum’s overall holdings, a job that involved, among other tasks, replacing jars and refreshing preservatives inside. The specimens are conserved in 95 percent ethanol, which dehydrates specimens’ tissues but maintains DNA. Ethanol has to be changed periodically because evaporation erodes its potency.

Pecnik accompanied Felder on a dozen research expeditions as a student. As he catalogued the initial shipment, he recognized several specimens.

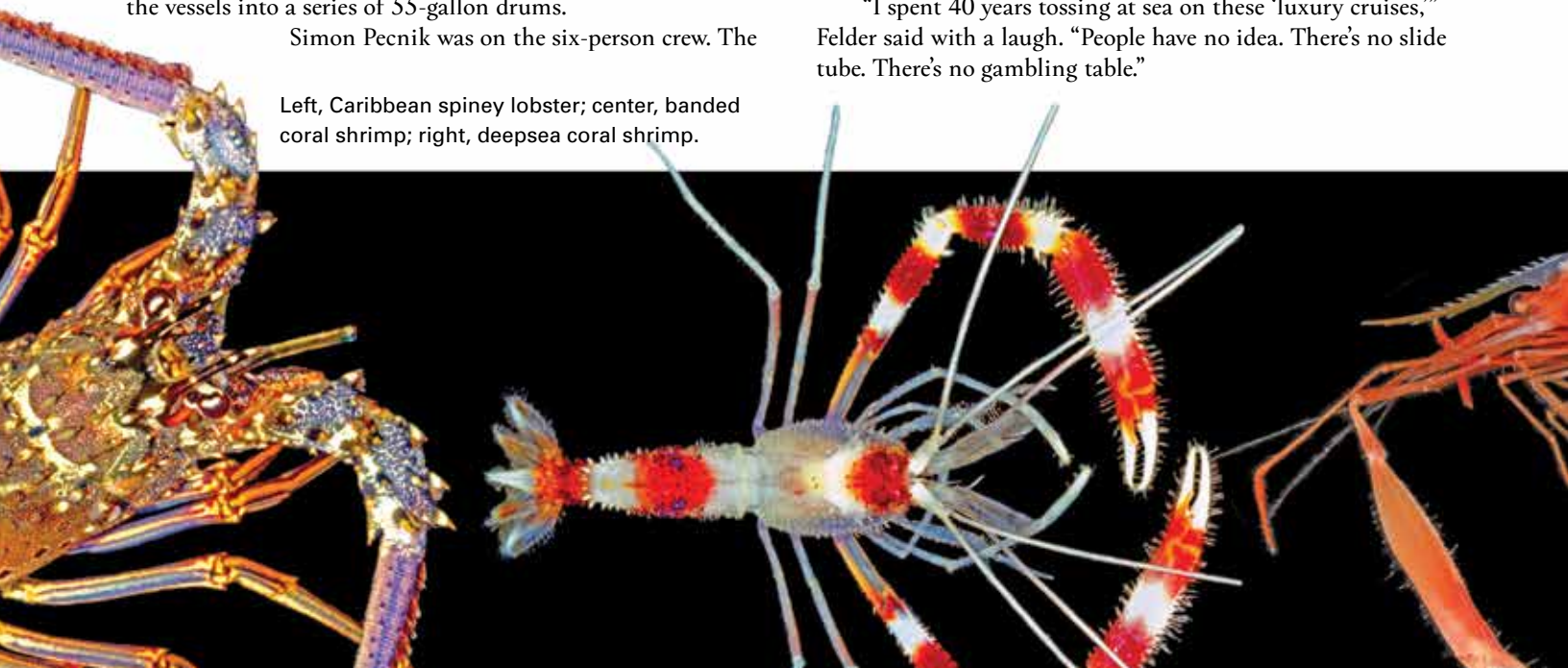
“Not two hours ago, I shelved a mud shrimp I caught with Darryl and his wife, Jenny, on an island off the coast of Belize shortly before we enjoyed a lobster dinner at sunset. I’ve had several of those ‘I remember catching you’ moments working with the collection. It makes me smile every time.”

The image of an idyllic seaside dinner in an exotic paradise muddies reality. While the collection tells many stories, it’s also a memoir of hard work under conditions that were often postcard imperfect.

Building the archive was demanding, smelly, dirty and occasionally painful, but the waterborne tales lured Felder and colleagues back to the sea nearly 50 times over four decades. That doesn’t count research at coastal sites where a ship wasn’t needed.

“I spent 40 years tossing at sea on these ‘luxury cruises,’” Felder said with a laugh. “People have no idea. There’s no slide tube. There’s no gambling table.”

Left, Caribbean spiny lobster; center, banded coral shrimp; right, deepsea coral shrimp.



Instead, waves battered the boat and its passengers. Dredges unloaded mud and clay onto the deck. Sponges and other sea life stung fingers and pinched hands. A stench filled the air. Water and muck covered everything and everyone. Exhaustion reigned.

Expeditions operated 24 hours a day for the 10 days to two weeks the voyages continued; crews worked 12-hour shifts. Once a vessel reached the location researchers wanted to explore, the crew dropped a dredge into the water. The boat cruised about eight to 10 minutes at a time, towing the metal box behind it.

But a successful research expedition relied on more than equipment alone, said Dr. Emilio Garcia. He is a retired professor of modern languages at UL Lafayette and a malacologist, an expert in mollusks. Garcia went on 15 voyages with Felder over the years.

“It’s patience and luck. You are dredging, and you may miss a thousand things by an inch,” he said.

But sometimes, you snag a memory. For Garcia and Felder, it was an abalone. The marine snail usually is found along the California coast, though a sole species lives in the Gulf of Mexico. Garcia and other malacologists consider the creature the Gulf’s Holy Grail.

It was 3 a.m. on the *R/V Pelican*, the research flagship of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, or LUMCON. The crew was sorting the dredge’s most-recent bounty of sludge and sea life under the glare of spotlights. “I see this little shell moving across the deck,” Felder recounted. “I was like ‘Holy ...’” He placed his hand over the creature and summoned Garcia. Felder then lifted his hand.



DOUG DUGAS

Smithsonian technician Simon Pecnik inspects a crustacean specimen. He is a UL Lafayette graduate who helped pack the archive for shipment.

Their hoots pierced the darkness. “I hugged and kissed him,” Garcia recalled. “It was such a high!” Garcia later added the abalone to his mollusk collection; its tissues since have been gene-sequenced, and its photograph has appeared in several books.

For Felder, finding the abalone “was an incredible moment” – for himself and for science. “I thought I would never see one in my entire life.”

He continued: “Someone else might look at that abalone and say,

‘OK,’ but what excites scientists is often in the eye of the beholder. Curiosity makes us do what we do. The questions just keep your mind constantly occupied.”



One question dogged Felder before and after his retirement in 2014. What would become of the collection and the stories it had yet to reveal?

When Felder joined the biology faculty in 1975, the University had a small assortment of decapod crustaceans. By the end of his teaching career, it had grown to a size he never imagined. In retirement, he continued to curate and add to the archive, but, “I knew I couldn’t do that forever,” he conceded.

Enter the Smithsonian, where Felder holds an appointment as a research scientist. It was among a host of federal, state and corporate entities whose grants – \$8 million in all – funded expeditions over the years.

Transferring the collection into the Smithsonian’s care made sense and ensured permanence, he said. “It was exactly the right thing to do. There will be things left to work on in the collection long after I’m gone. That’s why it belongs there.”



Top, hammerclaw snapping shrimp; bottom, rosy lobsterette; right, scissor-foot shrimp.

Prepping for Success

Academic center gives student-athletes a competitive edge

REPORTING BY BAILEY CHENEVERT

An illuminated Ragin' Cajuns logo greets patrons of the new Student-Athlete Academic Center. But don't be deceived – the facility is about focus, not flash.

Inside the 5,431-square-foot center, a student-athlete can study at one of 48 computers, work with a tutor in one of nine tutoring rooms, or meet with full-time academic counselors in private offices. There are study areas for groups and individuals, too.

A 25-desk classroom is used for a required first-year seminar, “Emerging Issues in Athletics,” and for regular meetings that update student-athletes about NCAA academic regulations.

Located on the third floor of Edith Garland Dupré Library, the center offers more than academic mentoring and career counseling. For Summer Ellyson, it provided stability after tragedy.

Ellyson, a pitcher for Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Softball, ranked among the top 10 in the nation in every major pitching category for the 2018-19 season. Named the 2019 Sun Belt Conference Pitcher of the Year, she was a major reason why softball finished in the top 20 last season.

Unflappable on the mound, Ellyson and other team members reeled earlier this year following the death of Geri Ann Glasco. The popular assistant softball coach was killed in a car accident on Jan. 24, 2019.

“I lost interest in school,” as a result, Ellyson said. “For a couple of weeks, I felt like I was getting so far behind. Then I came in here, where I could sit down, put in my headphones, and do what I needed to do to get back on track.”

She said the privacy of the new center and accessibility of counselors helped her refocus on academics.

The previous Student-Athlete Academic Center didn't provide the same amount of privacy. It was on the mezzanine in Agnes Edwards Hall, a student residence hall. The facility was not completely restricted to student-athletes, and academic



The new Student-Athlete Academic Center, on the third floor of Edith Garland Dupré Library, replaces an area that student-athletes used in Agnes Edwards Hall.



Student-athletes in a UNIV 100 course listen to guest speaker Jason Thornton in the center's classroom.

mentoring and tutoring sessions were held in a single room. So, student-athletes were often distracted.

Christy Alford is assistant director of athletics for Student-Athlete Academic Services. She said the privacy the new center provides is important because student-athletes are required to



The 5,431-square-foot center's entrance features an illuminated Ragin' Cajuns logo.

study there for a certain number of hours each week; how many hours depends on grades and requirements for online classes.

She said the center increases their productivity. "It's their hub. They want to do better. They want to study harder."

Historically, UL Lafayette's student-athletes have been a hardworking bunch.

Over half of its 395 student-athletes earned a 3.0 or higher GPA for the Fall 2018 semester. All student-athletes achieved a combined Fall 2018 semester GPA of 2.9 and an overall GPA of 2.98

Over the last five years, student-athletes at the University have consistently graduated at rates higher than most of their peers at the Sun Belt Conference's 12 institutions and the state's 11 Division I schools.

Also, UL Lafayette's student-athletes consistently have higher graduation rates than the general student body.

The center will strengthen those numbers, Alford said. UL Lafayette is one of three universities in the Sun Belt Conference to employ a full-time learning specialist.

Ashlee Jennings has held that position for two years. She works with student-athletes who have learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, or who need extra academic attention. She meets one-on-one with them to help with organization, time management and learning strategies.

Jennings also oversees the academic mentor program. Academic mentors are typically students with a minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA who help student-athletes achieve academic goals.

Shelby Desrochers was an academic mentor for five years. After graduating in Fall 2018 with a master's degree in business administration, she was hired part-time to coordinate the center's math lab and tutoring program. She is also a mentor and tutor.

Desrochers said the facility makes her job easier. Student-athletes are more focused because advisers and mentors can meet with them in private, and monitor them during study

hours. Extended hours accommodate student-athletes' schedules, which include team practices and meetings.

Ferrod Gardner, a senior linebacker majoring in graphic design, often takes advantage of the extra hours. He devotes 20 to 30 hours a week to football, including morning weightlifting, afternoon meetings and evening practices.

"Trying to manage your time with practices and meetings and schoolwork — it has taken a toll on me in some ways. You have to fight through

it, though, and put in the work," Gardner said.

He continued: "I think we're showing that we can do the work, that we're not dumb jocks. The new center sets a high standard for us and what we have to do."



Kendall Bess, left, and Ty'reona Doucet complete assignments in the center's computer lab. Both are members of the Ragin' Cajuns women's basketball team.

Are esports legit? Student gamers say 'Yes'

BY CHARLIE BIER

Ian Madray, a doctoral student in electrical engineering, was a varsity wrestler at Lafayette High School. Whether he's a collegiate student-athlete is open to debate.

Madray is president of the Ragin' Cajun Esports Team. Electronic sports, or esports, are multiplayer video game contests. They're considered sporting events by some, sedentary video game competitions by others.

Who's right? It seems not even sports "experts" can make up their minds.

Consider John Skipper, former president of ESPN. When asked about esports in 2014, Skipper said: "It's not a sport – it's a competition. Chess is a competition. Checkers is a competition. Mostly, I'm interested in doing real sports."

In 2015, however, the media conglomerate – with Skipper still at the helm – devoted an entire issue of its magazine to esports. ESPN now covers tournaments on its TV channels, and has a section devoted entirely to competitive gaming coverage on its website.

ESPN isn't alone. The International Olympic Committee has considered adding esports to its games.

Teams and leagues are sprouting up across college and university campuses at lightning speed. There are now about 130 varsity teams in the United States, according to the National Association of Collegiate Esports, a nonprofit governing body formed in 2016 with seven schools as members.

Esports' standing on college campuses, however, is ill-defined as it is in the world of sport.

At some institutions, esports are classified as club sports or campus organizations. Other schools fold esports into academic curriculums and research areas such as engineering, or computing and informatics.

"Esports is in a weird spot. What I would like to see is an identity for esports established at our University," Madray stated.

He's doing his part to make that happen.

During the Spring 2018 semester, Madray became president of the University's newly formed esports team. The team was created when several existing clubs on campus merged.

The consolidated club now has about 60 members. They play about eight styles of games, with objectives such as driving rocket-powered autos into large balls during soccer-like contests.

In most cases, between two and six players can compete in individual competitions. Which team members play at which tournaments can depend on several factors, including whose schedule is clear or who's most skilled at a given game.

Club members compete at contests that the club organizes at campus venues such as the UL Lafayette Student Union Ballroom, the LITE Center and F.G. Mouton Hall, depending on space availability. Team members also hit the road, and have

fared well at tournaments in Arlington, Texas; Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; and Atlanta.

Grassroots efforts by the Ragin' Cajun Esports Team's nine-member executive board include public relations, fundraising, outreach and organizing tournaments. The club is almost completely self-funded.

"Our goal is to attract esports businesses to come to this state and make Louisiana a viable place for the growth of esports. The potential of



Ian Madray, president of the 60-member Ragin' Cajun Esports Team, concentrates on fine-tuning his skills.

DOUG DUGAS

esports is limitless," Madray said.

Revenue generated by esports is estimated to be \$1.1 billion worldwide in 2019, an increase of 27 percent since last year, according to Newzoo, a gaming industry analytics firm. In 2015, esports revenue was about \$250 million. Advertising, merchandise sales, sponsorships and media rights are just some of the ways esports generate revenue.

Dr. Ramesh Kolluru, the University's vice president for Research, Innovation and Economic Development, is assisting with the formation of an advisory panel to consider the future of the University's esports club. The panel will include representatives from a range of departments and offices, including athletics, academics and research.

"It will evaluate how a potential team would be structured – whether it be a varsity team, a recreational sport or a student organization. Or, it could possibly be a blended model," Kolluru explained.

The panel will explore designating one place on campus for esports competitions, player recruitment, potential funding, and how to possibly integrate esports into academics and research.

It will also evaluate ways to attract esports-related businesses to Acadiana.

"If it's a billion-dollar industry, we're going to do all that we can to research the viability of esports, and ways that having a team could benefit the University, the community and the state," Kolluru said.

Longtime coach reaches pinnacle of her career

Yvette Girouard has returned to Lamson Park.

The coach credited with creating the most-successful sports program in University of Louisiana at Lafayette history now has its softball field named in her honor: Yvette Girouard Field at Lamson Park.

The recognition is “the absolute ultimate,” Girouard told *The Acadiana Advocate* newspaper after the name was revealed in March.

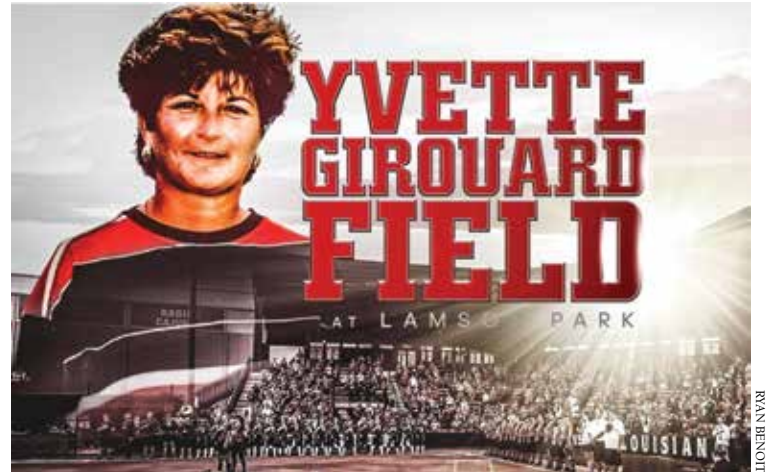
“I never dreamed this would happen. This has always been home for me. This was a labor of love the entire time I was here. I loved our program and what it stood for. I still love it to this day.”

Girouard founded the program in 1981. Then-University President Dr. Ray P. Authement offered her the inaugural head coaching spot, but fiscal straits kept him from offering much else. No operating budget meant no uniforms, no student-athlete scholarships and no park.

From those inauspicious beginnings, Girouard accumulated a 759-250 record during her tenure as Ragin’ Cajuns softball coach. From 1982 until her departure from the program in 2000, she had 19 consecutive winning seasons. Her overall coaching record, which includes a decade as head coach of LSU’s softball team, is 1,285-421.

By 1993, she had led the team then known as the Lady Cajuns to a third-place finish in the Women’s College World Series. That year, she earned her second National Coach of the Year title from the National Fastpitch Coaches Association. The first was in 1990.

The Ragin’ Cajuns also advanced to the world series in 1995 and 1996 under her watch, and earned 10 NCAA Tournament



RYAN BENNETT

appearances from 1990 to 1997 and from 1999 to 2000.

Girouard remains the Ragin’ Cajuns all-time winningest head coach, noted Dr. Bryan Maggard, UL Lafayette director of athletics. “As the architect of Ragin’ Cajuns softball, Yvette Girouard built one of the all-time great softball programs.”

Like Maggard, current softball head coach Gerry Glasco said his predecessor’s reputation isn’t confined to Louisiana. “She is arguably one of the most successful coaches in the history of our sport.”

Girouard was a 2005 inductee into the NFCA Hall of Fame. She joined the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame in 2015, and was a member of the Louisiana Athletics Hall of Fame’s 2018 class.

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GeauxU Delivers

App puts news, events and benefits only a tap away

Want to put UL Lafayette at your fingertips? There's an app for that.

GeauxU connects graduates, students and supporters to the University via smartphone and tablet. Users can view news stories; interact with official social media feeds; take a virtual campus tour; easily update their contact information; and reserve tickets for alumni events.

The app is a clearinghouse for information and more, said Troy Hebert, president of the UL Lafayette Alumni Association.

"GeauxU is about engaging graduates and connecting them to their alma mater.

It has features that give users the opportunity to become regular participants in University life, whether they live on campus, across the country or in another part of the world."

For example, in the app's Wallet section, users have access to their membership cards for the Alumni Association, the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum, the Ragin' Cajuns Athletic Foundation, and Edith Garland Dupré Library. The section also keeps track of donations to these entities and to the Alumni Loyalty Fund, and offers links to support the University financially.

Digital cards streamline attendance at University-sponsored events, and make it easier to take advantage of benefits such as the RedDot discount program. Through that program, business partners give University students, faculty, and alumni a discount for products and services.

Users can also connect with alumni clubs by location and with chapters that align with their professions or interests, said Lauren Shiver, associate vice president for Advancement Operations.

"GeauxU is designed to build a mobile community. Its features replicate the sense of belonging to the University family that graduates had when they were students here."

Shiver continued: "One of the fun aspects of the app is its Traditions section. We have over 40 activities listed, such as attending a performance at Angelle Hall, tailgating at Cajun Field, or wearing red on Fridays. There is something for everyone."

Some activities ask users to upload photos or write a few sentences to share their experiences. As users work through the list, they'll unlock four achievement levels and win prizes.

The app is a component of ongoing efforts by the University to find new ways to deepen affinity for – and engagement with – UL Lafayette, said Jennifer LeMeunier, the Alumni Association's executive director.

GeauxU "is a significant tool for reaching our goal of using digital and mobile platforms to enhance our traditional programs and services," she said. Those include creating and supporting clubs and chapters across the country and managing events such as the Spring Gala fundraiser.

The app also provides information about booking the Alumni Center for

weddings, meetings, reunions, lectures and other events, LeMeunier added.

"We're providing opportunities for alumni and members of the community to get involved with the University. That may be through programs we offer; through the chance to volunteer; by attending University events; or by downloading and using the GeauxU app."

GeauxU is available from the App Store and on GooglePlay.



Look for this icon when downloading the GeauxU app.

alumni

1949

JAMES WARREN DAVID is a retired



U.S. Navy veteran and business owner. He joined the Navy a few days before his 18th

birthday and served in the Solomon Islands in the Pacific Theater during World War II. He was an assistant to the coxswain, an officer in charge of a vessel's navigation and steering, on Higgins boats, a Louisiana-designed craft used for amphibious landings. His 23-year naval career also included service during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. Following World War II, he enrolled at SLI, and earned a bachelor's degree in horticulture. He retired from the Navy as a second lieutenant, then taught high school horticulture classes in Pensacola. He returned to Louisiana and, with his brother, opened David True Value Hardware in Lafayette. David was married to Rose Larriviere David for nearly 63 years before her death in 2007. Their four children are: **DEBORAH FREY, '81**, **KIMBERLY SCRUGGS, '83**, **GLEN DAVID, '85**, and Cynthia Broussard.

1956

BILL R. HUNT has self-published three books. He began writing in 1991, following his retirement from health care administration. He earned a bachelor's degree in accounting from SLI. He and his wife, the late **GRACE DUPUIS HUNT,**

'60, have four children. Hunt lives in Athens, Alabama.

1958

JAMES ALFRED "ALF" PIKE is constable of the Second Judicial District Court in Claiborne Parish, Louisiana. Pike holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from SLI, where he worked as a line supervisor and cashier in O.K. Allen Dining Hall. He is married to Peggy Robinson Pike. The couple have four sons, and live in Homer, Louisiana.

1962

NED P. ARMENTOR is a retired vice president with Cigna International, an insurance company. He oversaw its southwest region, and ranked among the company's top producers of new business for several years. Armentor earned a bachelor's degree in history from USL. He is married to Mary Cheryl O'Neil. The couple have two sons and live in Plano, Texas.

1969

BILL DUPLECHAIN was an educator for more than 40 years. He taught language arts and physical education at several Louisiana schools, and was principal of Port Barre High School. Duplechain earned a bachelor's degree in education in 1969, a master's degree in education in 1974 and master's plus 30 in 1989. The Louisiana High School Athletic Association presented Duplechain with two awards for outstanding leadership and service. He lives in Port Barre with his wife of 50 years,

Verna Reed Duplechain. The couple have three children, including the late **JASON DUPLECHAIN, '90**. **MARY FONTENOT, '07**, is among their nine grandchildren.

1970

DR. CHARLETA GUILLORY received the 2019 President's Cup Award at the American Academy of Pediatrics' Committee of Federal Government Affairs Conference. A pediatrician, Guillory is director of the Texas Children's Hospital Neonatal-Perinatal Public Health Program. She's also an associate professor of pediatrics in the section of neonatology at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. In 2018, Guillory received the Texas Pediatric Society Sidney R. Kaliski Award of Merit for promoting public health and newborn care. She is a recipient of a 2019 Women of Excellence Award at Baylor College of Medicine. She received a bachelor of science degree in pre-medicine from USL, a master's degree in public health from the University of Texas at Austin and a doctor of medicine degree from LSU School of Medicine in New Orleans.

1976

DENNIS G. AUZENNE is the retired director of perioperative services at Texas Orthopedic Hospital in Houston. Perioperative refers to the period from which patients enter a hospital for surgery until they are discharged. Auzenne oversaw services to about 9,500 surgical patients a year. He also traveled many

times to Morocco, India and Vietnam to assist in surgeries to correct cleft lips and cleft palates among residents. Auzenne holds a bachelor's degree in nursing from USL. While at the University, he was a member of the marching band and the bowling team. He is married to Randee Regan. The couple live in Pearland, Texas.

1980

PATIN BREAUX is a retired U.S. Postal Service carrier. He also worked as the Lafayette Police Department's fleet manager. Breaux earned a bachelor's degree in general studies from USL, where he ran track and cross country. He is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He is married to Mary Mayard Breaux, and lives in Lafayette. The couple's three children all graduated from the University: **ANDREW MACHEN, '99**, **ZACHARY BREAUX, '04**, and **EMMA BREAUX GUILLORY, '09**.

1981

DR. JOSEPH N. ABRAHAM'S *Kings, Conquerors, Psychopaths: From Alexander to Hitler to the Corporation* earned dual honors in the 2019 Next Generation Indie Book Awards. The book, which traces the rise and frequency of demagoguery throughout history, won the top prize in the current events/social change category; it was also an historical nonfiction finalist. UL Lafayette Press published *Kings, Conquerors, Psychopaths* in 2018. The book was the only selection from a university press to win in one category while also a finalist in another. The Indie Book Awards is the largest international book award program

for independent publishing. Abraham holds a bachelor's degree in zoology from USL and a doctor of medicine degree from Tulane University.

1985

Feeding America, the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States, named **CLAIRE BABINEAUX-FONTENOT** its CEO in September 2018. She is based in Feeding America's Chicago office.

Babineaux-Fontenot previously held leadership positions at retailer Walmart, law firm



Adams and Reese, and accounting firm PwC, formerly PricewaterhouseCoopers. She also was assistant secretary in the Office of Legal Affairs, a division of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety, and an administrative law judge for the state Department of Civil Service. Babineaux-Fontenot received a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, a law degree from Southern University Law Center in Baton Rouge, and a master of laws degree in taxation from Southern Methodist University Dedman School of Law in Dallas.

DR. JAFFUS HARDRICK is president of Florida Memorial University. He previously served as interim president of the Miami Gardens, Florida, university. Hardrick has more than 20 years of experience in higher education, including 10 years at Florida International University. He served for 12 years as assistant provost for Academic



Affairs and vice president of Human Resources at Baylor University. He received a

bachelor's degree in sociology from USL, a master's degree in education in counseling from Prairie View A&M University in Texas, and a doctorate in educational administration from Baylor University. He is married to **JANET CHARLES HARDRICK, '85**, who received a bachelor's degree in business administration.

SABRINA LATIOLAIS HOLME is a certified public accountant with Keiter, Stephens, Hurst, Gary and Shreves, a CPA firm in Glen Allen, Virginia. She focuses on tax compliance. Holme holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from USL, and a master's degree in taxation from Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. *Virginia Business Magazine* has listed Holme among the state's top 100 CPAs.

BRENNAN O'NEILL is the Hawaii Pacific branch manager for Frontier Precision Inc. The multi-state retailer offers geospatial tools for surveyors and engineers. O'Neill holds a bachelor's degree in geology from USL, as does his wife, **KATHERINE LAUGHLIN O'NEILL, '85**. Katherine O'Neill also earned a master's degree in environmental management in 1995 from the University of Denver. The couple live in Honolulu with their son.

1988

LISA ARCENEAUX DRUZHBIK, a certified public accountant, is the aftermarket controller for National Oilwell Varco in Houston. Druzhbik earned a bachelor's degree in finance from USL and a master's degree in finance in 1998 from the University of Houston-Clear Lake. She is the daughter of Josie and **PATRICK ARCENEAUX, '65**. Patrick Arceneaux ran track and cross country at USL from 1961 to 1964. He coached the track team from 1979 to 1984, and again from 2008 to 2012. Druzhbik lives in Tomball, Texas, with her husband and sons.

CAMILLE JAMES HARMAN recently acted alongside Academy Award winner Christian Bale in *Vice*. She portrayed Mary Matalin, a political consultant and counselor to former Vice President Dick Cheney, the film's subject. *Vice* was nominated for six Golden Globe Awards and nine Critic's Choice Awards. Harman has also acted in the World War II drama *Silent Cries*, an episode of *Unsolved Mysteries*, several commercials and a music video featuring British pop star Simon Climie. She earned a bachelor's degree in general studies at USL and a master's degree in drama and communications in 1991 from the University of New Orleans. Harman lives in West Hills, California, with her husband and son.

1997

Illustrator **KODY CHAMBERLAIN** created custom artwork for E! Entertainment Network's *Live from the Red Carpet* show that preceded the 2019 Academy Awards. The comic book-inspired artwork the broadcast featured is a style Chamberlain has practiced for more than 20 years. His comic book career began in 2004, when his artwork was published in an issue of *Digital Webbing Presents*. He has since created comics and graphic novels for Marvel and DC Comics, among other publishers. Chamberlain earned a bachelor's degree in graphic design, and lives in Lafayette with his wife and son.

2001

CHERYL FATZER-SHACKELFORD recently joined television station KHOU in Houston as an investigative reporter. Her broadcasting career in Lafayette began at KLFY, where she worked for three years before moving to WAFB in Baton Rouge. During 12 years at WAFB, her reporting earned a regional Emmy Award. She holds a bachelor's degree in mass

communication from Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond and a master's degree in mass communication from UL Lafayette.

2002

DR. JONAS FONTENOT, chief operating officer and chief of physics at Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center in Baton Rouge, is



the first medical physicist to receive the American Society for Radiation Oncology's

Health Policy Fellowship designation. He is one of two participants chosen nationwide for the yearlong program. Fontenot received a bachelor's degree in physics from UL Lafayette, and earned a master's degree and Ph.D., both in medical physics, from the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center. He has received over \$1 million in research funding from industry and government sources.

2006

The Association for the Study of Higher Education recently named **DR. JASON P. GUILBEAU** its executive director. ASHE is based at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and has 2,200 members. A first-generation college student, Guilbeau is a member of several higher education professional organizations. He received a bachelor's degree in political science from UL Lafayette; a master's degree in student affairs administration from Texas A&M University; and a doctoral degree in higher education from Florida State University.

2008

DAVIELLE JACKSON self-published *Ready, Set, Go!: The Green Print*, a

guide to help entrepreneurs jump-start their businesses. She founded Femi Secrets, a feminine care



company, at age 25; within a year, she had partnered with retailers

Target and Walmart. She since has been featured on the cover of the *Atlanta Business Journal*. Jackson placed third in 43North, a start-up business competition sponsored by the New York State government. Her prize included \$500,000 and a year of free rent in the Innovation Center business incubator in Buffalo, New York. Jackson is the founder of “I am #1,” a nonprofit that encourages success among young women. She holds a bachelor’s degree in biology from UL Lafayette.

2009

Eight of **DUSTIN ROUSSEAU’S** paintings have been included in national retailer Restoration Hardware’s Spring 2019 collection in collaboration with actress Portia de Rossi’s General Public art curation company. The firm uses 3-D printing to recreate artwork. The reproductions, called synographs, capture the original paintings’ textures. Rousseau earned a bachelor’s degree in architectural studies and a master’s degree in architecture in 2011. He is an associate at DNA Workshop, a Baton Rouge architectural firm.

In Memoriam

Oilfield innovator **DONALD E MOSING, ‘50**, retired president and chairman emeritus of Frank’s International, died May 31, 2019. He was 90. Mosing earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering from SLI, where he lettered in football and in track and field. During his 67-year

career in the oil industry, Mosing patented 54 inventions for oil-field pipe handling mechanisms.

He received *World Oil Magazine’s*



Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011.

The University honored Mosing in 2016 with an honorary doctorate in systems engineering. He received the Outstanding Alumni Award, the highest honor UL Lafayette bestows upon graduates, in 2017. Mosing supported the creation of the Donald & Janice Mosing Student-Athlete Performance Center; the Frank & Jessie Mosing Football Office; the Frank & Jessie Mosing Endowed Engineering Student Career Development Program; the Donald & Janice Mosing BORSF Endowed Chair in Mechanical Engineering; and the Frank’s Computer-Aided Design Laboratory. An additional gift helped construct the Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns golf team’s Indoor Teaching Facility at Oakbourne Country Club in Lafayette. He is survived by his children, **MELANIE MOSING, ‘89**, Donald “Keith” Mosing, Gregory Mosing, William “Brad” Mosing; seven grandchildren, including **LINDSEY HEBERT, ‘04**, and five great-grandchildren. His wife, Darie Janice Mosing, preceded him in death.

DR. DAVID R. ANDREW, ‘58, first dean of the University’s College of Biological, Mathematical and



Physical Sciences, died Feb. 9, 2019. He was 83.

The college was a precursor of today’s Ray P. Authement College of Sciences. Andrew served as dean from

1975 until 1985. He was instrumental in the University acquiring the Gulf South Research Institute, now the New Iberia Research Center. Andrew earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and physics. He completed a master’s degree at Iowa State University and a Ph.D. at the University of Pittsburgh; both graduate degrees were in mathematics. Survivors include his wife of 60 years, **CATHERINE VIGÉ ANDREW, ‘70**; three children, Lisa A. Ellerman, **CRAIG ANDREW, ‘80**, and **DAVE ANDREW, ‘86**; two sisters; six grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. The family requests memorial donations be made to the Dr. David R. Andrew Endowed Scholarship in Mathematics administered by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

DR. REX JOHN LEBLANC, ‘58, a retired psychology professor, died Aug. 3, 2018. He was 86. LeBlanc served in the U.S. Navy from 1951 to 1955, during and after the Korean War. He played football at SLI while pursuing a bachelor’s degree in personnel administration. LeBlanc holds a doctorate in experimental-industrial psychology from Baylor University, where he trained primates for NASA to test the effects of space travel on motor coordination. He joined the USL faculty in 1961, and later collaborated on projects at the New Iberia Research Center. Survivors include his wife, **SONJA MALLET LEBLANC, ‘64, ‘72**.

THETIS A. CUSIMANO, ‘68, a longtime Lafayette Parish educator and activist, died Jan. 20, 2019. She was 72. Cusimano worked for 30 years in special education – as a member of the Lafayette Parish school system’s pupil appraisal team, a classroom teacher, and principal of LeRosen Special Education Center. Following her retirement in 2004, Cusimano served two years

as president of the League of Women Voters of Louisiana and helped



revitalize its Lafayette chapter. Cusimano earned a bachelor’s degree in English language arts from USL and a master’s degree in behavioral disorders from the University of Wisconsin. Survivors include husband Richard Cusimano, a retired professor of history and former dean of the College of Liberal Arts; six children, including **RICHARD CUSIMANO JR., ‘92**; and three granddaughters.

DR. GLEN JEANSONNE, ‘68, a Pulitzer Prize-nominated historian, died Aug. 25, 2018. He was 71. Jeansonne was professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee from 1978 until his retirement in 2015. He held three degrees in history: a bachelor’s from USL and a master’s and Ph.D. from Florida State University. Jeansonne wrote 14 books, some of which explored 20th-century Louisiana political figures, including Plaquemines Parish political boss Leander Perez and U.S. Sen. Huey P. Long. His biography of Gerald L.K. Smith, a notorious anti-Semite and one-time Long ally, was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in 1988.

GARRETT O’CONNOR, ‘85, a member of the Louisiana Ragin’ Cajuns Athletics Hall of Fame, died Feb. 4, 2019. He was 56. He was a pitcher for the Ragin’ Cajuns baseball team from 1982 to 1986. He logged 22 wins during his tenure, including nine during the 1984 season, when he had a 1.79 ERA and pitched 78 strikeouts. After earning a bachelor’s degree in business administration, he

ALUMNI INFORMATION FORM

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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SPOUSE'S USL OR UL LAFAYETTE GRADUATION DATE

AND MAJOR, IF A FORMER UL LAFAYETTE STUDENT

CHILDREN

(IF ANY ARE UL LAFAYETTE STUDENTS OR USL GRADUATES, PLEASE INDICATE)

CURRENT DATE

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was drafted by the San Francisco Giants and the Minnesota Twins, and played one season with a minor-league team affiliated with the New York Yankees. He was the longtime general manager of Chris' Poboys in Lafayette. Survivors include his wife, Sheri Robicheaux O'Connor; his mother, **BETTY FORET BILLEAUD, '59**; five children, including **BENJAMIN O'CONNOR, '13**; and one granddaughter.

DAVID P. COMEAUX, '86, senior director of planned giving in the University's Office of Development, died Feb. 16, 2019. He was 54. Comeaux joined the UL Lafayette



staff in 1996 after working for four years at the University of Florida as assistant director of development.

He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from USL and a master's degree in higher education administration from Vanderbilt University in Nashville. He and his wife, **CINDY UHALL COMEAUX, '90**, established the Dave and Cindy Comeaux Scholarship through the UL Lafayette Foundation to support management students in the B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration. In addition to his wife, Comeaux's survivors include a son, **AUSTIN DAVID COMEAUX, '18**.

DR. THOMAS H. FERRELL, a retired professor of political science, died Dec. 13, 2018. He was 76. Ferrell was a graduate of the University of Louisiana at Monroe. He earned both a master's degree and Ph.D. in political science from LSU in Baton Rouge, and joined the USL faculty in 1971. He later served as head of the Department of Political Science. His wife, Dr. Judith Ann Haydel, a former political science professor and research librarian at the University, preceded him in death.

DR. JANET E. FRANTZ, a professor

and former head of the University's Department of Political Science, died May 27, 2018. She was 73. Frantz was a graduate of Kansas State Teachers College in Emporia. She held a Ph.D. in political science from Ohio State University. Frantz joined the USL faculty in 1984 and retired in 2008. Survivors include her husband, Dr. Carl D. Frantz, former director of UL Lafayette's Office of Research and Sponsored Programs; two daughters; and five grandchildren.

GERI ANN GLASCO, volunteer assistant coach for the Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns softball team, died Jan. 24, 2019. She was 24. A pitcher, Glasco completed



her college career with a 47-15 record on the mound and a 3.01 ERA. She had a career batting average of .341

and totaled 51 home runs and 181 RBIs in 235 games. She played softball for the University of Georgia for two years, then transferred to the University of Oregon for her last two years. She competed in the Women's College World Series with Oregon in 2015. After graduation, she played



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L A F A Y E T T E

1898-1921

Southwestern Louisiana
Industrial Institute

1921-1960

Southwestern Louisiana
Institute

1960-1999

University of Southwestern
Louisiana

1999-PRESENT

University of Louisiana
at Lafayette

one season with the Akron Racers in the National Pro Fastpitch league before becoming a coach. She was an assistant coach at Mt. Hood Community College in Oregon during the 2018 season, then joined the Ragin' Cajuns softball staff. Survivors include her parents, Vickie and Gerry Glasco, and two sisters. Gerry Glasco is head coach of Ragin' Cajuns softball.

CHARLES LENOX, longtime University publications adviser, died Sept. 11, 2018. He was 80. Lenox's service to the University began while an editor of *The Daily Advertiser* newspaper. From 1978 to 2004, he was a part-time adviser to *The Vermilion* student newspaper and *L'Acadien* yearbook. After retiring from *The Advertiser*, he joined the University's Department of Communications as a full-time lecturer, teaching introductory news writing and editing courses. Lenox, who held a bachelor's degree in journalism from LSU, also was

director of student publications. He retired from the University in May 2018. Survivors include his wife, Chilah Nichols Lenox, and five sons.

TONY ROBICHAUX, one of the most successful coaches in the history of Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Athletics, died July 3, 2019.



He was 57. His 25-year career as head baseball coach included a

third-place College World Series finish in 2000, the only time the team has appeared in the championship. Robichaux became head coach in 1995 after a decade as assistant coach and head coach at McNeese State University. His overall career record of 1,149-736-2 ranked him eighth among NCAA Division I head coaches;

he had more than 900 wins at UL Lafayette, the most of any coach in the baseball program's history. He guided the Ragin' Cajuns to 12 NCAA Regional appearances and four NCAA Super Regionals. Robichaux's teams also secured seven Sun Belt Conference regular season championships and four Sun Belt Conference Tournament titles. Robichaux was a four-time recipient of both the American Baseball Coaches Association South Central Region Coach of the Year Award and the Sun Belt Coach of the Year Award. He received the All-Louisiana Coach of the Year Award six times. A native of Crowley, Louisiana, Robichaux earned a bachelor's degree in health and physical education from McNeese in 1986. Survivors include his wife, the former Colleen Dailey; his father, Ray Robichaux; three children, Ashley Moody, **JUSTIN ROBICHAUX '11**, and Austin Robichaux; and eight grandchildren.

LINDEN "LYNN" WILLIAMS, director of equipment operations for Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Athletics, died March 20, 2019. He was 56. His career at UL Lafayette began in 1985. For 34 years, he oversaw equipment needs for men's sports, maintained storage facilities, and was an advocate for student-athletes and student workers in the Athletics Department. He was a native of Lafayette and a graduate of Northside High School.

LEONARD JAMES WILTZ, who worked for Louisiana Ragin' Cajuns Athletics for more than 40 years, died March 14, 2019. He was 59. Wiltz joined the Athletics Department staff in 1977 after graduating from Lafayette High School. He retired as maintenance foreman in 2012. Wiltz returned later that year and continued to work part-time until his death. Survivors include his wife, **BULINDA BROWN WILTZ, '81**.

Poet's road to Ottawa ran through UL Lafayette

GEORGETTE LEBLANC, '02, '07 – now in her second year as Canada's parliamentary poet laureate – vividly recalls her first encounter with Dr. Barry Jean Ancelet's *Cajun and Creole Music Makers*.

It was the summer of 1999. She recently had completed an undergraduate degree from l'Université Sainte-Anne, in her native Pointe-de-l'Église, Nova Scotia. LeBlanc had returned to her alma mater's library to conduct research. That's where she discovered the book.

In addition to photographer Elemore Morgan Jr.'s camerawork, what captivated LeBlanc about it was how Ancelet, a UL Lafayette folklorist, presented interviews with a catalogue of south Louisiana's musical icons. Two parallel columns of text – English on the left, French on the right – documented the musicians' words exactly as they spoke them, recording the vernacular's varieties and occasional idiosyncrasies.

"This book was full of love. It wasn't judgmental at all. It was just telling it like it is, letting the musicians speak. It was so beautiful," she said.

Ancelet was teaching that summer at l'Université Sainte-Anne. LeBlanc arranged to meet him. She hadn't considered pursuing a master's degree until then, but within a year, she was enrolled in UL Lafayette's Francophone studies graduate program.

LeBlanc completed a master's, then a Ph.D. Her dissertation, a narrative poem, became her first book, *Alma*. Like her subsequent publications, it was written in "Acadjoune,"

an Acadian French derivation distinctive to southwestern Nova Scotia.

LeBlanc's fidelity to her regional language was key to her appointment as parliamentary poet laureate in 2018. The position requires LeBlanc to hold poetry readings, compose verse for special occasions and advise the Library of Parliament. She travels occasionally to Ottawa, the capital, from her home in Pointe-de-l'Église.

She visited UL Lafayette last year. It was the first time she had returned to campus since her graduation. Studying at the University helped reconnect her to Nova Scotia, she said.

"There is a certain distance thing that is helpful, but at the same time, I felt very much at home," in Lafayette. "I ended up finding my voice. It had been there the whole time."



Alum Georgette LeBlanc is in her second year as Canada's parliamentary poet laureate.

JOHN KEALEY / LIBRARY OF PARLIAMENT

Financial Wizards

Students take stock – and make money – using cutting-edge technology

The stock ticker slides across the façade of the Maraist Financial Services Lab, its red and green arrows announcing the ups and downs of the trading day. Inside the lab, there's a companion ticker. Company logos, followed by stock prices and up-to-the-second changes in their values, are displayed on a continuous loop.

Business students are seated at computers below. They're in F.G. Mouton Hall, but their minds are on Wall Street. If the ticker doesn't ensure that, Dr. Praveen Das does.

The assistant professor of finance reminds them that, as financial consultants, information about what's happening in the market is their greatest commodity. It enables them to anticipate financial swings

or identify opportunities for diversification. Such knowledge empowers them to make money for clients.

"You have to think ahead to the things that are going to affect their profits or their returns on investment," Das counsels. "Ask yourself, how will it impact their money?"

For the juniors and seniors enrolled each fall and spring semester in Finance 480, the question isn't theoretical. It's real. So is the money. So are the clients.

In the course, students become managers of an investment portfolio for the UL Lafayette Foundation. Between 2015 and 2016, the Foundation, which invests and manages private gifts to the University, set aside \$200,000 for students in the B.I. Moody III College of Business Administration to buy and sell securities.

The portfolio's value has grown by nearly \$100,000. It contains 31 stocks of companies with familiar names such as Amazon, Procter & Gamble, Walmart and Lockheed Martin.

In Finance 480, Das advises the advisers, and guides them as they review existing holdings, appraise potential additions and evaluate economic sectors. Students then write reports that outline revenue and earnings data, and growth estimates. The dossiers are similar to what a Wall Street analyst might provide a client.

"Don't just put your opinion," Das tells them. "A generalized statement is not meaningful, but if you back it up with data, it will be."

The best data in the business is a few clicks away.



The Maraist Financial Services Lab, located in F.G. Mouton Hall, faces the University's Quadrangle.

DOUG DUGAS

A \$2.5 million gift from alumnus Michael P. Maraist and his family supported construction of the financial services lab. The lab opened in 2018. A dozen computers equipped with Bloomberg Terminal – a software system used by banks, corporations and government agencies around the world – are the lab's centerpiece. The service provides real-time stock prices, market news and trading information that enable users to build and analyze portfolios and compare investment strategies.

Dr. Cary Heath is head of the Department of Economics and Finance in the Moody College of Business. He called the Bloomberg software and the information it provides “the gold standard.”

“It's absolutely the best single source of financial and economic data that exists anywhere. It's amazing what it can do.”

Das said students use the software “extensively” in creating reports that are the basis for end-of-the-semester presentations to the Foundation's Board of Trustees. That's when the students recommend whether to buy new stocks, or to trade, sell or hold existing securities in the portfolio they manage.

Last fall, for example, then-finance senior Michael Guillot mined the Bloomberg service for data that led him to recommend that the board maintain holdings in General Dynamics. The defense and aerospace company had surpassed six of the previous eight earnings estimates, and Guillot anticipated that increased defense spending in the United States and worldwide would strengthen the company further.

“I find that, as a fairly priced company, it is better to hold and seek the possible benefits of recent budget increases in defense rather than get rid of it now,” said Guillot, who graduated in December 2018.

The Foundation's investment committee reviews the recommendations. Thomas L. Kreamer, a Lafayette financial adviser and 1980 University graduate, is the committee's chair. He said the Foundation has heeded “every piece of advice students have given us – buy, sell or hold” since the class began in 2015. “They've done a great job.”

They've made money, too, despite market volatility. The fund's value at the end of the third quarter of 2018 was \$294,124. Fears of an economic slowdown and uncertainty in global trade marked the year's final quarter, however. Those anxieties caused financial indexes to post their worst quarterly declines in nearly a decade. As

a result, by year's end, the account stood at \$254,306; it has since rebounded to \$286,715 in 2019's opening quarter.

Inevitable market fluxes are why the Foundation instituted safeguards when it created the program, Kreamer said.

Rather than spread holdings over multiple market indexes, the portfolio contains stocks only in the S&P 500, which is divided among 11 industrial sectors, including energy, health care, information technology, utilities and communications services. The portfolio includes securities in each, but restrictions keep student managers from overinvesting in any one category. Finally, no individual stock purchase can exceed 2 percent of the fund's overall value.

Heath said that while the University has made money from student managers' investments, they – and anyone who uses the Maraist Lab – have earned something as valuable: an edge.

“It's really an advantage for our students to have worked with Bloomberg Terminal. It isn't just the data. It's learning how to manage it, how to clean it up, how to present it in ways that people understand.”

He continued: “Information, and having it quickly and accurately, is what it's all about in the financial world.”

“There will be a time when students who don't have access to a facility like the Maraist Lab are really going to be at a disadvantage. I think that time is now.”



RACHEL RAVATI



RACHEL RAVATI

Dr. Praveen Das, standing, works with student Adrienne Jolivet in the Maraist Financial Services Lab. They are flanked by Steven Artigue, left, and Jacob LeMeunier.

Peak Performance

Extraordinary educators' work puts them in limelight

Six faculty members earned 2019 Eminent Faculty Awards presented by the UL Lafayette Foundation.

The annual awards are the highest recognition the University confers on faculty.

"They recognize outstanding teaching, innovative research, and community engagement through service learning. This year's recipients embody the long tradition of excellence these awards have come to represent," said John Blohm, vice president for University Advancement and the Foundation's CEO.

Dr. Daniel Gang and Dr. Jeffrey George are the Distinguished Professor Award honorees. Established in 1965, the award recognizes educators for their research, teaching effectiveness, and contributions to their professions and to campus life.

Gang is professor of civil engineering. George is associate professor of guitar studies.

The Dr. Ray P. Authement Excellence in Teaching Award,

named for the University's fifth president, recognizes faculty commitment to teaching and innovation. It was established in 1965.

This year's recipients are Dr. Deedra Harrington, assistant professor of nursing; Brian Kelly, professor of visual arts; and Kari Smith, associate professor of architecture.

The Leadership in Service Award recipient is Jeffrey Lush, associate professor of graphic design. The award, first presented in 2016, acknowledges a faculty member who combines service learning with classroom instruction to forge skills and knowledge that students can apply to community leadership opportunities.

The Foundation selects honorees based on a faculty committee's recommendations. Each recipient receives a \$5,000 stipend.

Nearly 200 faculty members have received the awards since the mid-1960s.



Dr. Daniel Gang, a professor in the Department of Civil Engineering, is also director of the Center for Environmental Engineering and Protection.

He helped establish a program that combines research, community service, teaching and technology application in environmental engineering. It helps industry and

community partners explore ways to reduce the amount of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, released into the atmosphere.

The program generates research by faculty and students from many disciplines, including biology, chemistry, chemical engineering, civil engineering, education, geosciences, petroleum engineering and mechanical engineering.

Gang has been principal or co-principal investigator for over \$9 million in grants.

He holds the Phillip J. Burguières/BORSF Professorship in Engineering; SLEMCO/BORSF Endowed Professorship in Engineering II; and SLEMCO/LEQSF Regents Professorship in Engineering.



Kari Smith is a professor and interim director of the School of Architecture and Design.

She is co-director of the Coastal Community Resilience Studio. The studio fosters transdisciplinary collaboration among researchers, faculty and students to address the complexities of restoration and preservation along the Louisiana coast.

It unites faculty and students from the School of Architecture and Design, the School of Geosciences, and the Sociology, Anthropology and Child and Family Studies departments.

Centers such as the University's Institute for Coastal Ecology and Engineering and the UL Lafayette/NASA Lafayette Regional Application Center contribute research.

"In her student-led research and teaching, she continuously opens up conversations to engage as many voices and expertise as possible," wrote Gordon Brooks, dean of the College of the Arts, in a letter nominating Smith for the Excellence in Teaching Award. Brooks said this dialogue allows students "to see the widest possible impact of design on society."



Dr. Deedra Harrington

is an assistant professor and coordinator of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program for the College of Nursing and Allied Health Professions.

An advanced nurse practitioner, she designed courses for the college's new Graduate Certificate in Cardiovascular Nursing Program and is its primary faculty member.

Harrington also teaches students enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program.

She maintains a clinical practice and is "extremely knowledgeable regarding current medical and nursing practice and integrates this expertise into her teaching repertoire," Dr. Melinda Oberleitner, dean of the college, wrote in a letter supporting Harrington's award nomination.

Harrington holds the Adrian Vega Endowed Professorship (in Nursing) (BORSF).



Brian Kelly leads the printmaking program in the Department of Visual Arts.

A professor of visual arts, he is coordinator of Marais Press. He holds the Coca-Cola/BORSF Endowed Professorship in Art & Architecture.

Marais Press combines environmentally friendly, non-toxic printmaking techniques with traditional methods. It has attracted over 200 local

and national guest printmakers.

"Through this space, he has connected professional printmakers and artists from around the country and the world with his students, giving them professional, collaborative artmaking experiences they wouldn't otherwise have," said Gordon Brooks, dean of the College of the Arts.

Kelly's prints have been featured in nearly 500 national and international exhibitions.



Jeffrey Lush is an associate professor of graphic design and co-coordinator for the graphic design concentration in the Department of Visual Arts.

In collaboration with the Acadiana Center for the Arts, he has led undergraduate students who have volunteered for marketing projects with non-profit organizations, such as Cité

des Arts and the Creole Heritage Folklife Center.

His students have also created outdoor signage, newsletters and other graphic materials for the Paul and Lulu Hilliard University Art Museum on campus.

Lush's research includes historical studies in modernist design practices during the Industrial Revolution, a period of technological, economic and cultural change that took place worldwide in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He also has examined the effects of mass media.



Dr. Jeffrey George is an associate professor of guitar studies in the School of Music and Performing Arts.

He is a prolific scholar whose research has earned international recognition.

George maintains an active performing career in addition to his teaching; he has performed in rock, country, bluegrass, reggae and blues bands, and gives solo

classical guitar concerts.

UL Lafayette alums taught by George have distinguished themselves in a variety of ways. One of his former students has toured with Grammy Award-winning musician Terrence Simien, for example. Another developed a classical guitar program for visually-impaired musicians.

He holds the Lionel Billeaud/Genevieve Gidiere/BORSF Professorship in Music, and joined the School of Music and Performing Arts faculty in 2001.



COURTESY OF DR. DARRYL FELDER

Getting a leg up on scientific research is a dirty job – but somebody’s gotta do it. In this photo taken in the early 1990s, biology professor Dr. Darryl Felder goes heels over head to snag mud shrimp specimens along the mucky Mississippi Gulf Coast. Felder went to great lengths – and incredible depths – to build a decapod crustacean collection the Smithsonian Institution recently acquired from UL Lafayette. Read more about the archive, and the enduring tales it holds, beginning on page 28.

Something's Brewing

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