Public health student channels passions into action
MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the College of Human Environmental Sciences is to empower individuals with knowledge and skills to bring about positive change in our world.

Across multiple disciplines, we conduct advanced research, provide outreach, and prepare a new generation of professionals with a shared goal of improving lives of individuals, families, and communities.
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As another academic year begins, I reflect on the past year and the many accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. 2022-2023 was an exciting year for the College – a time marked by growth, achievement, new faces and continuing traditions. While we only have the span of these pages to show you a few of the highlights, I hope reading these stories brings you a sense of pride.

I have been privileged over the past year to watch our students as they learn, create, innovate, and lead. In this issue you will read about outstanding students like public health major Izzy Boyd, who is determined to improve the lives of those living with disabilities. And Jenna Goetz, an interior design student who is using cutting-edge technologies to bring the past to life.

I have watched our faculty as they expand their teaching and research in new directions. In the article, Making Art, Making Worlds, we feature the transformative research of human development professor, Dr. Jaye Thiel. You will also read about a newly developed course in consumer sciences that prepares students for fulfilling careers engaging with their communities.

The year has also been exciting for many of our alumni as they realize professional success in their respective fields. As you will see in the story on page 24, alumni Lindsay Langford and Jeremy Ford are improving lives in the growing field of sports nutrition.

I have also had the opportunity to oversee some incredible updates to our programs and physical spaces. We continue to see positive changes throughout our College. Changes like the addition of a brand-new building, Drummond Lyon Hall. Newly completed, this state-of-the-art facility welcomed its first students this fall.

We have added new courses and majors to our programs to better serve our students, and we are looking forward to adding a fabrication lab to our roster of resources. The “Fab Lab” will render our interior design program even more competitive and is made possible thanks to your generosity during the recent Bama Blitz campaign.

Finally, within this issue you will be introduced to our newest faculty members, catch up with some award-winning alumni and read several short stories showcasing just a few of the great things happening here in CHES.

Yes, there have been many wonderful changes over the last year, but one thing remains constant here at the College of Human Environmental Sciences – our commitment to improving the lives of individuals, families and those in our communities.

Roll Tide!

Stuart Usdan, Ph.D.
Dean
In April, the first-ever AI Fashion Week debuted in New York City offering a novel platform for participants, including CHES’s own senior instructor of apparel design, Brian Taylor. Selected from over 400 global submissions, his collection was among the 132 showcased in the virtual event. He presented a 21-look menswear collection, designed entirely in the virtual realm.

In addition to the clothing, he created the runway environment, model selection, accessories, front row, and backstage atmosphere, as well as the street scene outside the fashion show. This groundbreaking event reimagined the future of fashion and showcased the endless possibilities of AI in the industry.
A DREAM COME TRUE

Dr. Carla Blakey, assistant professor of hospitality management, volunteered at the World Games in Birmingham, Alabama, last summer. Held every four years, the World Games are an international multi-sport event featuring sports not contested in the Olympics. As a team attaché for several international sumo teams, Blakey went to their trainings and practices, kept them on schedule, attended their competitions, helped them find local gyms, and much more. She says, “Unless they were sleeping, I was with them.” Eva-Maria Raudsepp, the lone Estonian wrestler was, at 17, both the youngest and the smallest of the sumo athletes. Sadly, Raudsepp’s coach and family were unable to make the trip. And so, with an unfamiliar coach and her family a continent away, she was essentially alone. But not for long. Blakey immediately stepped in and took Raudsepp under her wing. “We became very close during her time here,” Blakey says, adding, “While she didn't place [in the competition], she was tough and easily the sold-out crowd's favorite.”

After the Games ended, Raudsepp’s schedule left her on her own on her last day in Birmingham, and though Blakey’s volunteer shift was over, she could not leave Raudsepp alone. Blakey thought she might want to visit a local landmark or go shopping. But no; what Raudsepp really wanted was to see a giraffe. Having never been to a zoo, Raudsepp’s life-long dream was to see her favorite animal in person. “As you can imagine,” Blakey says, “my heart melted.” Unfortunately, the zoo was closed, but Blakey began emailing and calling anyone who might be able to help, including the mayor of Birmingham, Randall Woodfin. Moved by her story, Woodfin called Chris Pfefferkorn, the president and CEO of the zoo, and arranged a private tour for them. There, through tears of happiness, Raudsepp got to visit Willow, one of the zoo's giraffes, up close.

The South's reputation for warmth and hospitality remains un tarnished, at least in the eyes of one Estonian athlete. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of Blakey, Mayor Woodfin and representatives of the Birmingham Zoo, a young, homesick athlete's life-long dream came true.
MIXING IT UP

In CHES, we understand the importance of providing opportunities for students to network with professionals in their respective fields. In order to meet this need, we host several industry mixers each year. Participating students meet with representatives from both local and national companies, spanning fields such as hospitality management, fashion retailing, and beyond. These mixers give students the space to discover career options in their field, seek internship opportunities and look for post-graduation jobs. Students and industry representatives alike appreciate the smaller, casual format we provide as it encourages more in-depth quality interactions. “I thought it was a great way to network and meet real professionals in the industry,” says hospitality management major, Taylor Wilkins. “I’m really glad that we had this opportunity and I hope we have more like this in the future.”

MAKING IT PERSONAL

At CHES we take pride in connecting with our students individually. With our smaller class sizes, faculty know their students by name. Advisors spend time building relationships with their advisees and are fully invested in helping them succeed. This desire to provide a personal college experience extends to our scholarship recipients as well. At our annual Benefactor’s Dinner, we bring together students and donors to share a meal and appreciate each other on a deeper level.

Benefactors hear first-hand about the direct effect of their philanthropy, and students get to know the person behind the financial support. After an evening filled with good food, storytelling, and relationship-building, we often hear students say they are inspired to become scholarship donors themselves one day. And that is a legacy we are proud to see continue.
TECHNOLOGY MEETS DESIGN

Dr. Ellen McKinney and Brian Taylor took a group of UA students to the NASA Johnson Space Center, Gilruth Center in Houston to participate in the 2023 Wearables Workshop & University Challenge. This event presented a unique opportunity to collaborate across disciplines with a common interest in Wearable Technology. Bringing together innovators, from space suit engineers to handbag designers and everyone in between, the goal was to engage industry, government, and academic researchers to identify and solve the greatest challenges in Wearable Technology today.

Apparel design students, Emilia Oblites, Elaine Weirich and CJ Wolfe, along with mechanical engineering student, Nathan Eads presented their design for a multi-purpose Smart Sustainable Bag that can be used as a duffel bag, a diaper bag or a backpack. Built to last a lifetime, it features an integrated light and battery pack as well as an insulated area for keeping bottles at a safe temperature. Experiential learning opportunities like this help prepare our students to think outside the box to solve problems and improve lives.
Getting outside the classroom or the office can have many benefits. Student learning is enhanced with experiences and professional interactions out in the world. Faculty and staff gain fresh insights by networking with and learning from others in their field. Below are just a few of the off-campus opportunities we took advantage of last year.

Faculty and staff from the department of human development and family studies, Child Development Resources and RISE Center attended the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama’s (PARCA) annual forum in Birmingham where the topic was "Who Cares About Childcare?"

They heard from guest speakers and explored ways to address the challenge of providing safe, reliable, and affordable childcare.

Nearly forty hospitality and sport management students traveled to Talladega Superspeedway where they met with various department heads, toured the property, and learned about opportunities for students and graduates to get involved in the racing industry.
Nine CHES fashion retail students traveled to New York City for the National Retail Federation Foundation Student Program, where they networked with industry professionals, experienced the latest innovations in retail and heard from some of the biggest thought-leaders in the field.

Representatives from companies such as Nordstrom, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy’s, Vogue, and even Steve Madden himself were on hand to share their expertise.

Thirty-nine public health students and five faculty members traveled to Birmingham to attend the Alabama Public Health Networking Event.

There they heard from state and county health officers about their agencies, public health priorities, and the skills these professionals think are necessary for the next generation of public health professionals.

A group of our interior design students traveled to Birmingham to attend the IIDA Student Career Day which featured several of our alums. Lori Bailey, ’02, moderated the roundtable discussion and Catherine Pittman, ’21, was one of the young professionals on the panel.

Sammi Woronoff, ’22, and My Luu, ’22, were instrumental in planning the event.
RESTORING HOPE

An interior design student uses VR to recreate a historic home
Have you ever been drawn to the crown molding or door casings in a room? Ever wondered why they look the way they do? For one CHES interior design student the answer is yes. Jenna Goetz, a senior from Maryland, was fascinated with interior design from a very young age. She spent hours drawing little houses using her grandfather’s set of green drafting stencils. Her favorite book as a child was one with flaps she could lift to see a bird’s-eye view of the rooms inside a house.

She came to UA believing an architectural engineering major would turn those childhood interests into a career. Thankfully, her first engineering professor told the class, “If you’re here to draw floorplans, you’re in the wrong major.” Goetz wasted no time dropping the class. Soon after, while attending a majors fair on campus, she found herself at the CHES interior design recruitment table where a student’s portfolio, filled with beautiful designs and floorplans, was on display. One look, and Goetz realized, “This is what I want to do!”

Like many people, Goetz mistakenly thought interior design was synonymous with interior decorating. After her encounter at the majors fair, she realized that interior design combines elements of engineering with the human experience in the built environment. “Interior designers solve problems for people where architectural engineers solve problems for buildings,” she says. Her instructor, Ian Crawford, adds, “Design bridges the gap between technical skills and people skills, which is right where Jenna is.”

The more she learned, Goetz found herself drawn to the interior architecture, moldings and the finer details of design. She wanted to understand what elements make a room ‘work’ and why. Her interest in moldings, paneling and historical interiors prompted Crawford to have her view those elements through the lens of someone who truly articulated those elements. This was her introduction to Thomas Hope.

While his is not a household name, Hope’s influence can be seen everywhere. Born in 1769, he is best known as a premier Regency designer, author, and collector on a grand scale of fine art and antiquities. He remodeled his London home on Duchess Street with themed rooms inspired by and built around the objects he collected during his extensive world travels.
Unfortunately, the historical importance of Hope’s work was not recognized at the time, and his London home was demolished a mere 20 years after his death, leaving behind only drawings and written snippets describing the interior. Like many spaces lost before and since, these types of records are often all that remain. Crawford sees virtual reality as a way to document existing spaces or recreate lost ones and says, “When treasures are lost through natural disasters, fire or war, VR and 3-D scanning of buildings allows an overlap of the material culture and technology.”

Goetz saw first-hand the difficulty of archiving historic structures, having spent the fall semester overseeing the meticulous measuring of the Old Tavern in downtown Tuscaloosa for a class. She also learned where mistakes in the process would most likely occur. Armed with that experience and with Crawford’s support, Goetz took on an independent study to recreate two of the themed rooms from Hope’s Duchess Street home in virtual reality. Working “in reverse” from the Old Tavern project, Goetz used the existing documentation to ‘build’ the walls, floors, windows, furniture, moldings and all the furnishings of the home’s Egyptian Room and the Aurora Room.

With her critical thinking skills and attention to detail, Goetz overcame multiple challenges along the way. For instance, Hope had two homes in the London area, and he often added pieces or rearranged existing ones while others were moved between the homes. Conflicting records in the archives made determining an object’s actual location in the space difficult, and she knew from the Old Tavern project that measurements could be off. All of this made tracking down ‘what went where’ and determining precise dimensions of the layout that much harder; however, her extensive historical detective work paid off. Goetz and Crawford now believe the floorplan is accurately recreated to within four inches.
And yet, Crawford understands if new information comes to light, another researcher may find something he and Goetz got wrong. “We think of history as static,” Crawford says, “but it really is not. Every time we can add another dimension of technology or software or digital resource, we can piece together more information to get a more complete picture.”

Both Goetz and Crawford see VR as a tool to not only document and recreate historic places for future reference but also a way for more people to view and enjoy these spaces and the objects within them from afar.

Goetz feels fortunate to have found the interior design program here at CHES. She is also thankful for the support of the faculty and the technology that was available to her. Having learned so much of the history, psychology, and technical details of interior design, she often feels frustrated when people think she simply “picks out colors.” Of her time in the program Goetz says, “I have such a deeper understanding [now] of how people work in a space and even how they work in their own minds and with other people.” Knowing how this program has prepared her for the future she says, “This major has been the most helpful thing…. it has been such an [incredible] experience for me that I couldn’t have seen myself anywhere else.”

"I have such a deeper understanding [now] of how people work in a space and even how they work in their own minds and with other people."

- Jenna Goetz
Developing financial capability requires more than financial literacy. Gaining knowledge is important, but according to consumer sciences assistant professor, Dr. Madelaine L’Esperance, to build financial capability one must have the opportunity to act on financial decisions. Unfortunately, low- to moderate-income households often do not have access to the safe, reliable, and affordable financial products and services needed to navigate their financial lives.

Recognizing this gap, L’Esperance created a community-based learning course that would prepare students to help clients in vulnerable households overcome financial and economic challenges. When she arrived at UA in 2019, she began reaching out to various community organizations to identify projects that students in the course could tackle. However, just as she was finalizing course plans in the spring of 2020, the pandemic hit, forcing her to postpone the launch of the course. L’Esperance continued to work toward her goal in the meantime and saw her vision come to fruition as the first group of CSM 333 Financial Capability students completed the course in December of 2022.

The objective of the course, according to L’Esperance, is to prepare students to work with families with limited economic resources and to make students aware of the constraints faced by these families. The course covers, among many topics, the ever-changing landscape of policy and programs aimed at improving conditions for this population to pursue financial well-being.
NEW COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING COURSE TEACHES FINANCIAL CAPABILITY
“Dr. L’Esperance really cared about what we had to say; she wanted to have genuine conversations. She didn’t just read from a PowerPoint slide; she wanted us to engage.”

-MK Sipes
L’Esperance identified two community partners, HomeFirst and Community Service Programs of West Alabama, whose missions aligned well with her course objectives, and built projects into the curriculum to benefit these organizations. Both community partners were excited to work with the students to develop tools and resources to better serve their clients. L’Esperance says, “I tried to weave design-thinking into the course.” She wanted the students to begin the projects early creating prototypes and updating them as they learned more each week. “I wanted them to be engaged with their idea and to keep improving the idea over time.”

Dr. Nicole Prewitt, UA’s Director of Programs and Partnerships for Community Engagement, describes HomeFirst as a “…financial wellness initiative [that] works with individuals and families who are on the path to homeownership.” She adds, “We want to ensure that the individuals and families we serve are financially capable should they choose to become homeowners.”

Over the course of the semester, students assigned to HomeFirst developed the Housing and Financial Capability Survey, an assessment tool to help the agency gauge the effectiveness of the initiative. The survey can be used to measure a participant’s knowledge on their initial consultation with HomeFirst and then again once they have completed the program.

Mr. James Renshaw, a 2022 CHES alumnus and program coordinator for Programs and Partnerships for Community Engagement, says “working with [CSM 333 on the assessment tool] was a great opportunity to connect our community with what the students were learning in their class.”

Community Service Programs of West Alabama is an area agency whose mission is to provide resources and services which resolve immediate needs and lead to long-term self-sufficiency for low-income and vulnerable populations.

Students assigned to Community Service Programs of West Alabama created an educational pamphlet that helps individuals and families understand the savings products that are available for what is known as ‘micro-savings.’ These products can help people in tight financial situations set aside smaller amounts at a time to help build their nest egg.

CHES senior MK Sipes was part of the new course’s first cohort of students. She highly recommends the course, saying, “Dr. L’Esperance really cared about what we had to say; she wanted to have genuine conversation(s). She didn’t just read from a PowerPoint slide; she wanted us to engage.”

Sipes says the course gave students the opportunity to apply what they learned in the classroom to a real-life situation in an actual organization which made her feel like what she was learning was both valuable and immediately useful.

Working with our community partners extends the reach of the University beyond the boundaries of campus. For the students, it provides an opening to think about real world issues and their effect on local people. L’Esperance believes the class — with its innovative mix of lecture, in-class activities and community projects — prepares students for careers in many different fields working with diverse populations, and she plans to continue her work of preparing students for their future professions and encouraging engagement with their communities.
MAKING ART, MAKING WORLDS

Professor imagines new possibilities working with young children
A class of preschoolers sits around low tables in small chairs with crayons in hand. Art time begins as the teacher passes out identical coloring pages with the outline of a dog playing with a ball. The children are instructed to color in the pictures and “to try your best to stay in the lines.” Sound familiar?

Ordinary artmaking scenes like this are played out every day in the spaces where young people learn and play. Because adults often approach children’s opportunities for creativity in regimented ways with predictable outcomes in mind, art time often becomes just another box to tick off in a growing list of objectives to meet. But what would happen if we re-imagined the way we approach children’s artmaking and the spaces set aside for it? To answer that question, assistant professor of human development and family studies, Dr. Jaye Johnson Thiel, has spent years studying young children as they engage in creative activities, and exploring the role of physical spaces on children’s interpretation of the world.

When it comes to how children have traditionally been taught, Thiel says, “Most people believe that learning is restricted to designated spaces of teaching such as schools.” However, she notes that teaching and learning happens “around us everywhere and every day, in grocery stores, churches, street corners, open fields, and dense woodlands.” Why then, she asks, “would we think that art is not lurking in these same spaces?”

One space that has been central to Thiel’s research on the subject was an informal learning center in a working-class community of color known as the Playhouse. Thiel co-led the center for six years, and from the beginning saw the space as one of shared ownership where children and adults were “collaborators in art-making practice.” Wishing to avoid imposing her own agenda on the physical space, she wondered, “What becomes possible when children are seen as co-curators of space rather than passive users of predetermined utilities?” This question opened a world of possibilities and new ways of seeing.
Thiel and her collaborators, therefore, asked the children and families in the neighborhood what they wanted to see happen to the space of the Playhouse. With this input in mind, they collectively set out “to create room for different kinds of movement, including floor areas for lying down or making things, areas that can be seen from different vantage points — rather than blocked off by chunky furniture, and an abundance of materials to create with and imagine new worlds.”

The tall bookcases which lined the walls of the Playhouse were one of the first things to come down. They were to eventually become raised garden beds outside the Playhouse and were set outside to await their repurposing. In the meantime, however, the children who visited the center found a myriad of other uses for them that had nothing to do with books or gardens. Thiel marveled at the number of ways the children reimagined their possibilities. From bicycle ramps, houses and jails to game tables and hideouts — the bookcases, now free of their predetermined purpose, were limited only by the children’s creativity and ingenuity. And so, too, can artmaking, when untethered from ideas of conformity and rigid expectations, produce astonishing results.

Thiel sees art as exploration, an opportunity to problem-solve, make sense of and change the world. She brings these concepts to her college students and challenges them to think about children’s play and artmaking in innovative ways. She rebels against seeing children as deficient in some way, preferring instead to view them “... as the competent, creative, and curious humans they are.” For her, placemaking is not just about making physical spaces but reimagining the ways children are seen and heard.

Stephanie Waters took Thiel’s Childhood and Play class while working on her master’s degree in human development and family studies. Waters came into the program with an established career related to early childhood, but she says the class gave her a new perspective. “[I have] a new language, new vocabulary, to talk about the things that have innately felt so important to me in working with children and families.”
As the director of the Alabama Infant Toddler Specialist Network, Waters says her “goal is to elevate the quality of infant and toddler care across the state of Alabama and to elevate the childcare profession as a whole.” Waters works with highly skilled specialists who mentor and train preschool teachers around the state. Together their aim is to implement evidence-based practices in areas of child development and learning. As specialists in the network report back to Waters about issues teachers are facing, she now feels better equipped to help them thanks to Thiel’s class. She is also excited to share concepts learned in the class, such as “children’s play and exploration and the liberation of just being able to explore whatever is in their environment ... without setting boundaries on what we think they should be doing or what they should be playing with,” says Waters.

Waters hopes what she has learned in the course trickles down through her staff to the teachers, ultimately resulting in classrooms where teachers “acknowledge that children are not just little adults,” she says. “They are people in their own right ... who should be afforded the same respect and opportunities as other humans.” Following the lead of young children as they play and make art can feel counter to the ways adults have traditionally directed these activities. But if we let it, children’s play and artmaking can guide us to reimagine what learning can look like. Thiel notes, “...the work of the children at the Playhouse reminds us that the materials a child is given access to and how they use and think about [those] materials plays an important role in the learning environment.” Like Thiel, we can find that when children are given the opportunity to freely express themselves through art and play “what is produced is nothing short of extraordinary.”

“I HAVE A NEW LANGUAGE, NEW VOCABULARY, TO TALK ABOUT THE THINGS THAT HAVE INNATELY FELT SO IMPORTANT TO ME IN WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.”

-STEPHANIE WATERS
体育营养专业人士现在是运动项目中的重要组成部分

无论在场地、球场、跑道还是水上，运动员都在寻找提高表现的方法。很少有人不同意食物是为身体提供动力的燃料。然而，就在不久以前，大学体育项目禁止为运动员提供餐饮。这一努力是为了在预算差异极大的学校中保持公平的竞争环境，这意味着学生运动员自己照顾自己的食物。学生通常在大学里很少或没有经验自己管理饮食，甚至更少经验自己购物或烹饪。加上有限的食品选项，其中一些是健康的，而另一些则不是，以及大学生活的压力，很容易看到即使不是运动员也可能难以满足自己的营养需求。

此外，许多学生运动员每周需要花费20个小时进行训练，大大增加了他们需要正确食物的需求。然而，直到2014年，NCAA规则规定学校只能在一天中为学生运动员提供水果、坚果和面包。

正如Amy Bragg，UA Athletics的运动表现营养总监所指出的，问题在于“没有看到食物作为设备。”她继续说，“他们认为鞋子、袜子和头盔是必要的设备，但食物却不是。”2010年，Bragg被任命为新成立的大学和职业体育营养师协会（CPSDA）副董事长，她领导了推广“食物第一”喂食运动员的“食物第一”哲学的努力。在2012年担任CPSDA主席时，她继续倡导在全国各地的运动项目中增加营养师，并减少对运动员的饮食限制。Bragg努力让营养师被视为团队中与运动队训练师和力量教练并肩作战的必不可少的团队成员。尽管这些变化需要数年的时间，但许多人将饮食限制的解除归功于Shabazz Napier。他在带领康涅狄格大学篮球队进入NCAA总冠军赛后，说“我饿到睡觉...”之后，NCAA终于在2014年投票允许所有一级学校的所有运动员解除饮食限制。

无论是对饮食的限制还是对食物的需求，营养师在运动项目中的角色都发生了变化。尽管这些变化需要数年的时间，但许多人将饮食限制的解除归功于Shabazz Napier。他在带领康涅狄格大学篮球队进入NCAA总冠军赛后，说“我饿到睡觉...”之后，NCAA终于在2014年投票允许所有一级学校的所有运动员解除饮食限制。
“D1 UNIVERSITIES NOW HIRE AT LEAST ONE IF NOT A TEAM OF SPORTS DIETITIANS TO HELP THEIR COLLEGIATE ATHLETES GAIN AN EDGE.”

-LINDSAY LANGFORD
“I TELL PEOPLE THAT SPORTS NUTRITION IS A COMBINATION OF YOUR CLINICAL, FOOD SERVICE, AND COMMUNITY NUTRITION COURSES. I USE EACH OF THESE ASPECTS EVERY DAY WHEN I DO MY JOB. ALABAMA DOES A GREAT JOB OF PREPARING YOU TO FLOURISH IN EACH OF THESE AREAS.”

-JEREMY FORD
Because of this change, UA Athletics now has several nutrition specialists on staff and dining facilities devoted specifically to athletes. Providing the correct food at the right time helps student athletes train, compete, recover, heal, and learn. These updates also provide an opportunity for our food and nutrition majors to gain experience in the sports nutrition field as undergraduate students. Graduates with experience working in athletics will be at an advantage as more students seek careers in the field of sports nutrition.

Our food and nutrition program has been educating future nutrition professionals for over 75 years, helping students to practice in a wide variety of nutrition fields. Learning from our world-class faculty, students in our ACEND (The Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics) accredited programs have opportunities to work with our renowned athletic teams. The department also offers an accelerated Coordinated Program in Dietetics, which allows students to gain supervised practice experience while also completing the master’s degree required to sit for the Registered Dietitian exam. As a student, alumna and CHES Jack Davis award winner Lindsay Langford was intrigued by the thought of using food as both fuel and medicine.

Now a Sports Dietitian for Ascension St. Vincent Sports Performance in Indianapolis, Langford also serves as the Team Dietitian for the US Soccer Women’s National Team where she customizes hydration and recovery plans, supplement protocols and game day nutrition plans. She says the role of nutrition in sports has grown exponentially and notes that most “D1 universities now hire at least one if not a team of sports dietitians to help their collegiate athletes gain an edge.”

Alumni who choose to focus on sports nutrition work with both collegiate and professional teams and within the military as well. Langford even worked with an Indy car driver — a sport with very specific hydration and nutritional needs. “I quickly learned there are so many facets in which I could interlay nutrition to increase the driver’s overall safety, performance, recovery and focus.” Students in the nutrition degree program gain the experience and knowledge necessary to succeed in the field of sports nutrition. CHES alumnus Jeremy Ford, assistant director of Olympic Sports Nutrition at the University of South Carolina, says, “I tell people that sports nutrition is a combination of your clinical, food service, and community nutrition courses. I use each of these aspects every day when I do my job. Alabama does a great job of preparing you to flourish in each of these areas.” As this emerging field continues to grow, we will be here preparing graduates to become registered dietitians/nutritionists able to improve the lives and performances of elite athletes across the nation.
DRIVEN TO EXCEL

Public health student channels passions into action
Growing up alongside someone with intellectual and developmental disabilities, Izzy Boyd saw first-hand the health disparities and issues of access faced by many in her home community in Mississippi. Witnessing her brother and his peers with disabilities experience disparities in healthcare and education, she says, “That [experience], in tandem with the lack of community infrastructure to support those with lifelong disabilities and their caregivers is what drives me to improve health outcomes for all.” Seeing these health challenges negatively impact people’s lives helped steer her decision to pursue a degree in public health.

Boyd was drawn to UA because of our prominent public health program as well as the University Fellows Experience. As part of UFE, Boyd designed a social and emotional learning program with a public health focus for students at an Alabama Black Belt high school. She also worked with the Harvard Mississippi Delta Project to address the need for telehealth and psychiatric intervention services in special education classrooms during the pandemic and presented her work at a Harvard Law School Research Conference.

Channeling her passion for advocacy, Boyd served as the Student Government Association vice president for diversity, equity, and inclusion, where she revamped the DEI certification program for students. Seeing the high demand for events and recognizing the logistical difficulty of trying to accommodate over a thousand students at a time, she realized the quality of the program was suffering.

So, Boyd and her team pivoted. “What we did,” she says, “is we completely turned [the program] on its head.” The certification program, now called the DEI Passport, connects students with UA departments and student organizations that are already working to advance DEI issues. Students select the events that interest them, attend sessions to learn more and get their passport stamped afterward.

Because Boyd understands that diversity has many faces, she also worked on initiatives that support veterans, military students, and non-traditional students as well as food insecure and low resource students. Boyd created new programs at UA to help fund the student food pantry and raised over $7000 for a veterans’ scholarship fund. Her cabinet also revitalized the Black Student Leadership Council and led a mentoring program for over 150 first generation students, matching them with alumni mentors in their intended career field.
In addition, Boyd fostered a partnership between CrossingPoints, a University program for students with intellectual disabilities, and the Alabama Panhellenic Association. Women in the CrossingPoints program can now join a sorority and, for the first time, an Alpha Gamma Delta member with Down syndrome is thriving alongside her sisters.

A Rhodes Scholar finalist, Boyd’s academic work is as impressive as her service and extracurricular accomplishments. Health science professor, Dr. Michael Stellefson says, “Izzy is among the top 1% of undergraduate students I have worked with in my [approximately] 15 years as a faculty member.”

“**Izzy is incredibly passionate and committed to using her time and energy to make a difference in the lives of people living with health issues.**”

–Dr. Michael Stellefson

Boyd worked as a research intern with Stellefson studying people with COPD who are disproportionately impacted by health disparities. In addition, she assisted him in writing external grant proposals and research manuscripts. Stellefson was so impressed with her work as an unpaid research intern that he hired her as a part-time research assistant.

Despite the fact she could only devote a few hours a week to the work due to her other commitments, Stellefson says, “...she was an integral contributor to my research team.” Stellefson noticed Boyd’s keen intellect and desire to fight health disparities on their first meeting. “Through her academic writing,” he says, “I could see her passion and aptitude for designing interventions that better the health and economic outcomes of people with disabilities.”
He believes she can apply public health research methods and models effectively in an academic context because of her unique experience as a public health/economics honor student. Given all that she has accomplished here at UA, it is most fitting that Boyd, a 2023 graduate, received the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award this spring in recognition for her excellence of character and service to humanity. One of six UA Premier Awards, it is one of the Capstone’s highest honors.

Boyd’s mission to improve the lives of those with intellectual and developmental disabilities goes back to “growing up with a sibling who experiences significant discrimination in their day-to-day life and seeing the results of non-inclusive spaces,” she says.

“That [experience], in tandem with the lack of community infrastructure to support those with lifelong disabilities and their caregivers is what drives me to improve health outcomes for all.”

—Izzy Boyd

For her, eliminating healthcare disparities and creating supportive infrastructure and resources would mean “seeing people with intellectual and developmental disabilities live life with a higher degree of personal autonomy in decision-making, the ability to exert their own wills and realize their dreams,” she says.

As Stellefson notes, “Izzy is incredibly passionate and committed to using her time and energy to make a difference in the lives of people living with health issues.” This is what inspires her to continue working to create a world where communities are “equitable and inclusive for those with all degrees of diversity.”
In September of 2021, The University of Alabama launched a 10-year fundraising campaign with the goal of raising $1.5 billion. As the largest such undertaking in state history, The Rising Tide Campaign will further the University’s mission of exemplary teaching, research and service. For years to come, the waves of this campaign will continue to swell and spread outwards from the University to the community, the state, the nation and the world.

As we work to prepare future generations of leaders, innovators and legends through this campaign, one message continues to resonate: Every gift matters, and our collective force is stronger than our individual efforts alone.

Students are at the very heart of our commitment to excellence, and we believe the promise of a better future should be accessible to all. Through increased funding for scholarships, fellowships and experiential learning opportunities, we hope to lower the financial barriers deserving students may face.

Investments in student success will strengthen our effort to recruit, retain and grow a diverse and talented student body. Central to preparing students for success is supporting the faculty who teach them. Additional funding for research helps train the next generation and advance scientific knowledge.

risingtide.ua.edu
Experiential Learning Made Possible for CTD Student

Apparel and textiles major, Lauren Wong, participated in the National Retail Federation’s Student Program last fall and says, “Without gifts and scholarships from generous donors, I would not be able to consider options such as travel for work and professional development.”

To learn more about Lauren’s experience and the immediate and enduring impact your philanthropy makes visit: www.risingtide.ua.edu/ches/
The Jack Davis Professional Achievement Awards honor Dr. Lewis Clifton “Jack” Davis, Jr., an esteemed graduate of the College of Human Environmental Sciences. With a degree in nutrition, Davis went on to become a successful dentist who pioneered our understanding of the connection between nutrition and dental health. First presented in 1986, this award has since been given to nearly 300 of our exceptional alumni.

Congratulations to the following award recipients whose accomplishments pay homage to Davis’ legacy.

**Kirkland Kasmer** graduated in 2011 with a BS in apparel and textiles. As the senior vice president of Cinq à Sept at Jaya Apparel Group, Kasmer’s responsibilities include strategizing with the CEO and executive team members to achieve growth and profitability goals, as well as overseeing global sales and merchandising teams.

**Ron Andro, BSN, MSHES, MSHSM, RN**, earned both his Master of Science in human environmental science and conflict resolution graduate certificate from the Capstone. Andro puts the skills learned from his degree programs to use as the senior vice president and chief clinical operations officer of Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York, where he leads a team responsible for delivering patient-centered ambulatory, inpatient, surgical and ancillary patient care services and operations.

**Lee Bonner**, a 2018 hospitality management graduate, has worked in the office of Kevin McCarthy since 2019. Using skills she gained in HES, Bonner coordinates travel, manages calendars, filters meeting requests and oversees all logistics and planning for Speaker McCarthy and other members of Congress. She serves as liaison between Speaker McCarthy and external groups including the President of the United States, cabinet secretaries, CEOs, foreign dignitaries, and constituents.
Beth Moody, CFP®, is a two-time graduate of CHES, earning a bachelor’s degree with a concentration in family financial planning and counseling in 2007 and a master’s degree in the same concentration the following year. Moody is a member and senior advisor at The Welch Group in Birmingham, Alabama. She has remained an active partner with the HES financial planning program for years, providing internships for our students and serving on alumni panels for the UA student organization, Capstone Financial Planning Association.

Dr. Benjamin T. Raines, MD, graduated cum laude with a BS in athletic training and an MA in health education and health promotion at UA. He went on to medical school at the UAB School of Medicine, where he completed an orthopedic surgery residency and an orthopedic sports medicine fellowship. During the past 16 years, he has treated and worked on sports medicine teams for middle and high school athletics, collegiate and professional programs. In addition to his role as an MD, Raines continues to advocate for athletic trainers and the athletic training program at The University of Alabama.

Jay Roberson earned an MS in hospitality management with a sport hospitality concentration in 2021. Roberson boasts an impressive resume as the CEO for Top Ten Management, the AVP for Business Development at Volkert, Inc., and the former vice president for the World Games held in Birmingham in 2022.
**Jereme Wilroy, PhD**, completed his doctorate in health education and health promotion in 2016. He is an assistant professor in the department of physical medicine and rehabilitation at UAB, co-director of research at Lakeshore Foundation and associate scientist and co-director of UAB Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems. Wilroy has functioned as primary investigator, Co-PI or behavioral expert on funded grant awards totaling over $25,800,000. He has also authored 26 publications in peer-reviewed journals and is active in student research mentoring.

**Vicki Peeples** earned her Master of Science at The University of Alabama in human development and family studies. She served as an assistant professor in the department and oversaw all departmental advising. In 2010, she became an assistant dean with responsibilities over student services, academic misconduct, undergraduate advising and coordinating the BS in general studies in human environmental sciences, where she served until her retirement in 2017.

**Kelsey Carnes Scott**, a 2012 apparel design program graduate, is a senior technical designer at Old Navy, Inc. Scott serves on a team that evaluates software for digital product creation and is currently working to improve sustainability practices by utilizing 3D product creation to limit the number of fit samples required. She continues to give back to our program, having served as a mentor for the past nine years to our senior design students.
Amanda Black, a 1989 interior design program graduate, is the southern area regional manager for Via Seating, Inc., where she manages 10 independent rep groups and 35 reps in commercial office, healthcare, education and government furniture sales across 18 states. Black has a wealth of experience in the built environment, having worked in design, construction, and as a business owner, project manager, dealer sales executive, business developer and regional manager for a major furniture manufacturer.

Lindsay Langford, MS, CSSD, RDN, graduated with a bachelor’s degree in food and nutrition in 2004 and went on to become one of the first full-time sports dietitians in the country. Langford now works as lead dietitian for Acensions St. Vincent Sports Performance in Indianapolis, Indiana. Her scholarly work has been published in more than 50 journals, and she has presented nationally and internationally.

Shining in their respective fields, these outstanding alumni are an inspiration to the current and future students who will follow in their footsteps.
NEW FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**Rebecca Burney** transitioned from adjunct to full-time instructor in the department of clothing, textiles, and interior design. She recently completed her Master of Fine Art in Fashion Design from Savannah College of Art and Design after a 20-year career in the New York fashion industry. Burney's teaching focuses on the hands-on creative components of fashion, instructing students in designing, draping, patternmaking and sewing construction.

**Stephen Compston, MS, RD, LD, CDCES**, joins the faculty in the department of human nutrition and hospitality management. He has been a practicing registered dietitian since 2011 and specializes in diabetes management and care with an emphasis on pediatrics. Coming to us from Reno, Nevada, Compston received his Master of Science in Nutrition from Texas Tech University.

**Lauren Creel**, an academic advisor for CHES, transitioned to full-time faculty in the fall as an instructor in the department of consumer sciences. Holding a Master of Science in Human Environmental Sciences with a focus on consumer quality management from The University of Alabama, Creel teaches several undergraduate CSM courses and continues to serve as an undergraduate faculty advisor for the department, a role she has enjoyed for the last four years.

**Alexa Ellis** joins the department of human development and family studies as an assistant professor. As an educational psychologist, she is interested in understanding the development of mathematical skills in both the home and school contexts. Her research focuses on development in context using experimental, longitudinal and observational methodologies. Ellis earned a PhD in Education and Psychology from the University of Michigan.
Jennifer Humber, a proud alumna of UA with an EdD in Higher Education Administration, shifted to full-time faculty from her role as director of student services for CHES. As an assistant professor in the department of consumer sciences, her research focuses on students’ perceptions of engagement in online coursework. In addition to her teaching duties, Humber also serves as the director of the graduate certificate program in conflict management.

W. David Johnson, MDA, RD, CHE, MFP, joins us as an instructor in the department of human nutrition and hospitality management. In addition to being a registered dietitian, he is a chef, a Certified Hospitality Educator through the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute, and a Manage First Professional through the National Restaurant Association. Johnson is also a PhD candidate in hospitality management at Iowa State University, focusing his dissertation research on exploring the use of gleaned foods in child nutrition programs.

Nayoung Kim earned her PhD in Health Behavior from Indiana University and joins us as an assistant professor in the department of health science. Kim’s research is centered on addiction, health data science, and implementation science with a specific focus on developing, refining, and implementing interventions targeting multiple drug use, including tobacco use. The overarching goal of her work is to uncover risk factors and develop evidence-based interventions that positively impact people involved in multiple drug use.

Tiffany Marcantonio is an assistant professor in the department of health science. She is also an affiliate of the Center for Youth Development and Intervention, the Institute for Data and Analytics, the Center for Substance Use Research and Related Conditions at The University of Alabama, and the Kinsey Institute for Research in Sex, Gender, and Reproduction at Indiana University. Prior to joining CHES, Marcantonio earned her doctorate from the University of Arkansas in community health promotion.
Steven McKinney joins us as an assistant professor in the department of clothing, textiles, and interior design. He holds an MBA from Texas Christian University and a PhD in Apparel, Events and Hospitality Management from Iowa State University. While at ISU he worked on the planning, development, and opening of an on-campus, student run retail store and learning lab.

Isabella McVeagh, an instructor in the department of health science, earned her Master of Public Health with a concentration in health education and promotion here at The University of Alabama. McVeagh’s teaching focuses on health disparities, substance use policy, health literacy, rural health disparities and health advocacy.

Neika Morgan was a corporate wellness specialist for Ascension St. Vincent’s Health System in Birmingham prior to joining CHES as an instructor and academic advisor in the department of health science. She earned her Master of Science in Health Education/Health Promotion from the Capstone. Her interests include preventative health with an emphasis on women’s health; skin cancer prevention and screening; nutrition; physical activity and exercise; and prenatal health.

Ellen McKinney comes to CHES from Iowa State University, where she served as the associate chair of undergraduate academic affairs in the department of apparel, events and hospitality management. McKinney, who earned her PhD in Design, Housing and Apparel from the University of Minnesota, joins the department of clothing, textiles, and interior design as professor and chair. Her primary area of research interest is in human-centered design of worn products. Areas of specialization include sizing, fit, patternmaking, children’s wear design, functional design, design for disability, wearable technology and sustainable apparel design.
Hhye Won Shin is an assistant professor in the department of human nutrition and hospitality management here at the Capstone. Earning her PhD in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Purdue University, her research centers on the sharing economy, consumer behavior, event tourism and sustainability. Shin’s teaching interests include hospitality marketing and management; lodging operation and management; and event/Convention marketing and management.

John Vincent, formerly with the College of Education, joins CHES as a professor of sport management in the department of human nutrition and hospitality management. Vincent is also a faculty fellow in the Alabama Program in Sport Communication and has extensive experience in youth and high school sports, university recreation, and intercollegiate athletics. He earned his PhD in Physical Education at Florida State University.

Dylan Williams holds a PhD in Business with a concentration in sports management from Louisiana State University. He joins us as an associate professor in the department of human nutrition and hospitality management. His research interests include the review of accounting policies and procedures and taxation implications within intercollegiate and professional sport; law and governance issues surrounding all levels of sport; organizational behavior and institutional theory aspects within college athletics; and the historical analysis and modernization of sport facilities.

Taylor Zingg comes to us from the University of Oklahoma, where she earned her PhD in Health Promotion Sciences. She serves as an assistant professor in the department of health science. Her primary interests are the prevention of sexually transmitted infections, HIV, HPV, and unintended pregnancy; sex education short- and long-term health consequences; implementation science of sexual health prevention in school, home, community, and hospital-based settings; geographic determinants of sexual health; sexual health disparities among racial/ethnic/sexual minorities; sexual health protective factors; and the biological components of sexual health behaviors and outcomes.
REUNION | 42

Public Health major, Izzy Boyd, received the prestigious Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award, one of the University’s Premier Awards, whose recipients demonstrate the highest standards of scholarship, leadership, and service. The award recognizes the practical application of noble ideals and is based on excellence of character and service to humanity. You may read more about Boyd on page 28.

Sarah Mason Avery, a public health major, was awarded the Holle Award for Excellence in Public Speaking. Her winning speech addressed the need for UA to require Narcan training for students, faculty, and staff in response to the epidemic of opioid overdoses on college campuses. Over 1,000 students around the nation competed for this prestigious award, which included a $10,000 prize.

Jessica Hovis Smith, CFP®, CLU®, CPWA®, CAP®, a graduate of our family financial planning and counseling program, was honored by the National Association of Personal Financial Advisors with the 2023 NAPFA Inspiring Leader Award.

Sheena Gregg, assistant director of health promotion and wellness at UA and two-time CHES graduate, was named Dietitian of the Year for 2022-2023 by the Alabama Dietetic Association.
CHES was proudly represented at the 2022 World Games by both a current student and a recent graduate.

While working on her MS in Sport Hospitality, Montana Fouts, helped lead the USA Women’s Softball team to its third consecutive gold medal.

Champion water skier and CHES graduate, Anna Gay, took home the silver in the Trick Waterski event.

Crystal Evans, a distance student in early childhood education, was presented the Harold Bishop Award at UA Black Scholars Day. This award is given to seniors with the highest academic standing to honor the legacy of one of the first Black professors at UA.

Yanqi Zhang, a CHES doctoral candidate in Human Nutrition, received the Outstanding Presentation Award at the International Conference on Carotenoids in April. The study will inform clinical research to optimize the visual health of at-risk infants.

Recognizing the accomplishments of CHES students, faculty, staff and alumni.
Dr. Kristi Crowe-White, a registered dietitian and associate professor of human nutrition and hospitality management, led an international workgroup, including CHES doctoral student Katelyn Senkus, to develop the dietary guideline for a bioactive food compound known as flavan-3-ols, which are found in foods like apples.

Dr. Lingyan Kong, assistant professor in human nutrition, won the Culverhouse College of Business Entrepreneurial Growth Business Award, which recognized Kong’s business model and strategy to grow his local bubble tea shop, BobaMania, into a chain.

Joylyn Baggs, the family service coordinator for RISE Center, was honored with a CHES Distinguished Service Staff Award for going above and beyond to coordinate special needs services for students and assisting families in the community find additional resources to help their child flourish. Baggs also leads a program called REACH, (Recreation, Education, Activity, Community, Health) that employs adults with special needs at RISE Center.

Dr. Jeri Zemke, assistant professor in health science/athletic training received grant funding through the CHES Mary A Crenshaw Research fund for her project, The Use of Pocket-talk and Standardized Patients to Improve Athletic Training Students’ Preparedness to Provide Care to Patients with Limited English Proficiency.
Dr. Blake Berryhill, associate professor in human development and family studies, was the 2022-2023 recipient of the HES Leadership Board Excellence in Scholarly Research. Dr. Bobby Laird nominated Berryhill based on his strong and increasing trajectory of research and teaching productivity balanced by his ongoing commitment to serving the department, college, and University. Laird says of Berryhill, “He has energized the marriage and family therapy program while simultaneously increasing the enrollment, academic rigor and performance of graduates.”

Dr. Karly Downs, assistant professor and clinical director of the marriage and family therapy program, received the CHES Joseph S. Rowland Teaching Excellence Award for 2022-2023. Her nominator, Dr. Blake Berryhill, notes that Downs provides an individualized learning environment tailored to each student’s developmental needs. One of her students shared, “Whether Dr. Downs is in the classroom or the clinic, she utilizes every opportunity to teach and help her students grow.”

Dr. Blake Berryhill has also been named the faculty recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Community-Engaged Scholar Award, by The University of Alabama’s Council on Community-Based Partnerships. The award recognizes his outstanding achievements in the area of community engagement and his leadership role in advancing engagement scholarship and outreach at The University of Alabama.

Casey Faulkner, instructor in the department of clothing, textiles, and interior design, was named the American Society of Interior Designers’ Dr. Mary Ann Potter Outstanding Educator Award for the second year in a row in recognition of her significant contributions to interior design education.
The following CHES faculty and their co-investigators received grant funding through the Small Grants Program from the Office for Research and Economic Development:

**Dr. Jessica Wallace**, health science/athletic training, for Mitigating Inequity in Concussion Education within Rural Alabama and the Alabama Black Belt

**Dr. Nayoung Kim**, health science, for Risk Prediction Models for Cannabis Initiation and Use Among US Young Adults

**Dr. Shinae Choi**, consumer sciences, for Disparities in Access to and Quality Healthcare Services Among Asian Americans in Alabama: Understanding and Closing the Health Gap

Clothing, textiles, and interior design faculty members **Dr. Michelle Tong (PI)**, **Brian Taylor** and **Dr. Ellen McKinney** received a grant from the USDA titled Building Adaptive Apparel Competencies into the Higher Education Curriculum. Working in collaboration with investigators from UNC Greensboro, their project will foster awareness of adaptive apparel merchandising and design for professional development among diverse undergraduate student populations. And it will ensure inclusive mindsets and adaptive apparel competencies are part of agricultural sciences undergraduate curricula with institutions of higher education.
Summer Research Programs for Undergraduate Students

Our athletic training and human nutrition programs took part in the **UA Graduate School’s Strategic Graduate Partnerships Initiative (SGPI)** that provided support for undergraduate research experiences. The goal of the 10-week in-residence summer research program is to form partnerships with other academic institutions to create pathways for undergraduate students from primarily Historically Black Colleges or Universities (HBCUs) to enter into graduate programs.

**Dr. Jeri Zemke**, assistant professor in athletic training says, “We were thrilled with the quality and quantity of applications we received from across the country.” **Dr. Lizzie Elder**, associate professor and AT program director adds, “[The students] worked hard this summer providing health care within UA Athletics and the local community.” Zemke hopes it allows students “to discover the athletic training profession and hopefully spark an interest in applying to our Master of Science in Athletic Training degree.”

A total of five students took part in nutrition research. Two students worked with **Drs. Libo Tan** and **Lingyan Kong**. “Through the SGPI program, we recruited a group of highly-motivated students from nearby universities and UA,” says Kong. “We provided them with comprehensive training that included basic lab skills, various experimental assays and the operation of state-of-the-art lab instruments. They are now better prepared for further graduate studies in fields such as nutrition and medicine.”

**Drs. Linda Knol** and **Joy Douglas** mentored three students in brain injury research. Douglas says, “Our participation in the SGPI program has allowed us to recruit outstanding students from other universities to serve our clients with brain injury in Alabama. They have engaged in every part of our research, and we hope they will attend our graduate programs in the future.”

CHES was proud to represent two of the eight programs offered from across campus for this new initiative.
Now that you’ve read some of the great things happening here at CHES, why not return the favor?

We love hearing from our alumni and want to give you a chance to share your news. We know that every day across the nation, CHES alumni are using their skills, talents and resources to fulfill our mission of improving lives. So, use the QR code below to update your information and fill us in on the latest in your world. Whether you are here on campus or across the globe, you remain a part of our CHES family.
Friday, October 13TH

CONVOCATION
Judy Bonner Child Development Center
4 PM

RECEPTION
Judy Bonner Child Development Center
5-7 PM

Saturday, October 14TH

GAMEDAY BREAKFAST
Doster Hall
9-11 AM

CHES HOMECOMING 2023
ALABAMA VS. ARKANSAS