

Wesleyan



SMALLER. SMARTER.

Meet the people working to stop racism in its tracks

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WRITE THIS DOWN

How Wesleyan authors are getting noticed

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HOW TXWES MAKES HISTORY

Curious finds in the digital archives

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COVID-19 Quiets Campus

TXWES suspended all on-campus classes and transitioned students to online instruction March 23. The global rise of COVID-19 cases left Wesleyan's campus empty for three months.

Students, faculty, clubs and other campus-related activities went completely virtual for the first time in Wesleyan's history. This photo by senior theatre major Lauren Garza shows her at-home setup for online classes for the final months of the spring semester of her junior year.





Libretto Vocal Designer Book Copy!



Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Bart Shevelove and Larry

THE REAL PROMISE OF OUR PURPOSE

We denounce racism in all its forms

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Equal Justice Under Law

These words, carved in stone above the entrance to the U.S. Supreme Court, express this nation's commitment to its people.



Atatiana Jefferson of Fort Worth, George Floyd of Minneapolis and many more people of color died through senseless acts of violence at the hands of the system pledged to provide equal justice.

To our alumni, students, faculty, staff and community members of color, know that your university stands with you. We share your grief and frustration. We denounce racism in all its forms – individual and systemic. This time requires leadership and a commitment to anti-racism.

Our mission is to develop students to their full potential as individuals and as members of the world community. In other words, our mission is to develop leaders. Leadership requires empathy, which takes introspection into our own lives. Empathy nurtures common bonds. Empathy builds common cause among diverse communities and creates a culture of equality and equity for all.

Four years ago, I spoke to the university community about the relevance of our mission. You can read my remarks at txwes.edu/relevance. This time calls for us to redouble our efforts and make real the promise of our purpose.



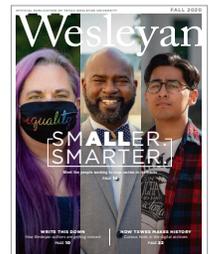
Frederick G. Slabach
President
Texas Wesleyan University



ON THE COVER

Beth Jackson MFT '19, Jamal Williams, director of collegiate academy and college credit partnership, and Daniel Garcia Rodriguez, senior political science major, are members of Texas Wesleyan's Diversity and Inclusion Council.
Read more on page 14.

Photos by Braidon Clemence





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FROM THE ARCHIVES

Texas Wesleyan's digital archives reveal the university's hidden stories.

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Texas Wesleyan forms new school for more efficient learning

TXWES creates School of Arts & Sciences

The Schools of Arts & Letters and Natural & Social Sciences merged in June to form the new School of Arts & Sciences. The new structure will allow for more efficient scheduling of general education courses, making it easier for students to select classes and get to graduation faster, while allowing faculty and staff to operate more efficiently as a single school.

“The education Texas Wesleyan offers is unmatched. However, we must always be looking for ways to improve how we serve our students,” Hector Quintanilla, vice president for academic affairs and provost, said. “The two schools, which already work so well together, will now combine efforts and be able to make better decisions for our students. Considering that

the schools already manage 90% of our general education classes combined, it is a move that makes sense.”

Faculty from both schools worked closely with their deans to provide feedback on the realignment. The university also considered the needs of our students and higher education best practices.

“Every decision we make at Texas Wesleyan is made with students, faculty and staff in mind,” said President Frederick G. Slabach. “By merging these two high-performing schools into one, we’re ensuring that resources are being used – and class planning is being done – in the smartest way possible. This move embodies ‘Smaller. Smarter.’”



TXWES alum provides care during national pandemic

ER nurse Alex Hendee '15 reports from the front lines of the COVID-19 virus crisis

Alex Hendee '15, registered nurse at Texas Health Resources, gave us her perspective of the COVID-19 virus crisis.

How did you become a nurse?

In 2015, I graduated with a biology degree from TXWES. After graduation, I started a job as a scribe (someone who follows a physician and completes their charting) in the emergency department. I was terrified of the setting I would be working in, but I wanted to get my feet wet in the hospital environment. I had an amazing two-year experience as a scribe and realized that, ironically, emergency room nursing was the route for me!

What kind of growth has your hospital seen, and how are the nurses and doctors adjusting?

The emergency department I work for typically has between 350 to 400 patients daily. When COVID-19 started to be a concern in Dallas-Fort Worth, more patients were coming in with concerns about their symptoms. We have an amazing management team who immediately began working on a system to accommodate the potential growth in COVID-19 cases. Part of these changes included completely restructuring how our ER patients are triaged, roomed and cared for in an attempt to keep potentially infectious COVID-19 patients separated from our healthier patients. This is a process that we continue to test, evaluate and adjust as needed.

Our primary concern is providing the best patient care we can, in the safest way possible. My hope is that social distancing and the population staying home will prevent this, but we as a team are doing our best to be prepared for the worst.

What are healthcare workers doing to stay safe?

The use of proper personal protective equipment is the largest contributing factor to staying safe as a hospital worker. The CDC defines which PPE is necessary for each patient based on symptoms and which disease/illness is being ruled out or treated.

As a result, our PPE guidelines while taking care of potential COVID-19 patients have changed and fluctuated multiple times, but we are flexible and follow the guidelines that are given to us each shift. Aside from PPE, our charge nurses and managers take care to avoid placing staff who are immunocompromised or pregnant with potential COVID-19 patients.

What can we do for friends and family members in the healthcare industry during this crisis?

I know that I'm not the first person to say this but, please stay home and wash your hands! I understand everyone is getting stir-crazy, but we all play a huge part in preventing the spread of this virus. By staying home, you're helping healthcare workers!

Reach out to your friends/family members who work in healthcare and check in on them. They may not be able to see you physically, but your emotional support may be exactly what that person needs at this time more than anything else. It's a scary time of uncertainty and isolation for us.

A lot of people have wanted to donate food/treats to the hospital. This is such a kind gesture! If you decide to give food, individually wrapped treats are the way to go! This helps prevent spreading germs across staff members. 🍷



TXWES awarded for response to the COVID-19 virus crisis

TXWES ranks in top tier for response to COVID-19

Closing a college campus indefinitely is not something you plan for. It's not something you train your students, faculty or staff for. Texas Wesleyan ranked among top-performing schools in the country in its reaction to the COVID-19 virus crisis, according to Educate to Career, a California-based education nonprofit.

"Our dedicated faculty and staff have committed themselves to offering the top-tier education we are known for, even while working remotely," said President Frederick G. Slabach. "This has not been an easy time. However, we will continue to support our students any way we can to keep the goal of a quality college education attainable, no matter what."

Ranking four-year schools were divided into four tiers. Tier 1 schools, the highest ranking, had to have a physical campus for in-classroom instruction, robust software and systems to support distance learning programs, faculty experience in teaching online, and reasonable tuition and fees on a relative basis.

Other schools joining Texas Wesleyan in the top tier included Texas Tech University, University of Texas at Austin, University of North Texas and Dallas Baptist University. 🍷



Music students find creative ways to perform

Music department spring and alumni performances go virtual

The Texas Wesleyan music department understands that the show must, and will, go on. Every spring, Wesleyan music students spend months preparing for individual and group recitals at the annual spring performance.

Keith Critcher, adjunct collaborative pianist, and Daniel Pardo, assistant professor of flute at Prairie View A&M University, featured clips from TXWES music students as they performed in the virtual spring recital on YouTube and txwes.edu.

The music department also performed their first-ever virtual performance of the alma mater. All students, alumni, faculty, staff and friends of the university were invited to partake in the online event.

While brainstorming ideas to showcase the music department virtually, Dr. Paul Sikes, associate professor of music, recognized what a great opportunity it could be to engage the whole campus community remotely in a unique way.

“I think it’s a wonderful way for us to add our collective voices together in a way that reminds us that we are not alone,” Sikes noted. “We are part of the Wesleyan family, a family who loves and supports each other even when we’re apart.” 🎵

WEB EXTRA ▶ WATCH AT [TXWES.EDU/PERFORMANCES](https://txwes.edu/performances)

Texas Wesleyan honored for its commitment to transfer students

TXWES gains national attention for commitment to transfer students

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society named TXWES to its 2020 Transfer Honor Roll, which recognizes excellence in developing pathways designed for transfer students.

“The Transfer Honor Roll reflects the growing importance of recognizing and responding to the needs of transfer students,” Phi Theta Kappa President and CEO Dr. Lynn Tincher-Ladner said. “They [four-year schools on the Honor Roll] are the best at providing



a supportive and smooth transition from community college – equating to increased rates of bachelor’s degree attainment for transfer students.”

Texas Wesleyan recently joined forces with Tarrant County College to form the TCC to TXWES Pathway, allowing TCC students to pursue their associate’s degree and automatically transfer to TXWES, with the full support and guidance of TXWES counselors along the way.

It only takes one year for TXWES MBA grads

Nearly half of TXWES online MBA grads finished in just one year

At Texas Wesleyan, students can graduate with their MBA in as little as 12 months, 100% online. And many have been doing just that.

According to data compiled by the Texas Wesleyan School of Business Administration, nearly half – 46% – of all TXWES online MBA graduates finished their degree in one year. Another 27% finished in 15 months, 26% in 18 months.

“We take pride in the flexibility that our 100% online MBA offers,” Sameer Vaidya, interim dean of the School of Business Administration, said. “With four concentrations and multiple degree plans for each, students can keep their current job, while working toward the next one. We’re confident that our students are getting the most out of their education.”

The program will offer a new 100% online data analytics concentration in March. It also offers 100% online concentrations in Business Administration, Healthcare Administration and Supply Chain Management. 🎓

Seniors committed to community service through social distancing

Hatton W. Sumners Scholars help homebound senior

Three of Texas Wesleyan's Hatton W. Sumners Scholars delivered needed toiletries and cleaned up the yard of a homebound senior in east Fort Worth on Saturday, March 21, prior to Tarrant County's stay-at-home order. Donning masks, seniors Stuart Tennyson, Bailey Dozier and Emilia Egel spent the morning cutting grass, trimming branches and providing general assistance.

Hatton W. Sumners Scholars are required to perform acts of community service and, according to these students, "our most vulnerable populations always need a helping hand, even if it requires safety precautions like masks and social distancing."

The Hatton W. Sumners Scholarship provides up to \$3,500 per semester toward tuition for outstanding students



during their junior and senior years. The scholarship is open to all students – particularly those students studying political science, pre-law, history or social studies. Sumners Scholars participate in exclusive forums, lectures and programs on public policy, leadership and civic participation. It encourages the study, teaching and research into the science and art of self-government. To earn the scholarship, a student must attend full time, have a 3.0 grade point average or better, and participate in campus or civic activities that benefit Texas Wesleyan, the community or the Sumners Foundation. 🇺🇸

Stories From the Virtual Classroom

TXWES professor shares funny stories through online learning

"Can you hear me now? Can you see my screen? Hey, you're on mute."

These continue to be the infamous phrases of Zoom calls, online learning and business meetings across the country.

We wanted to find out how things are going now that living rooms, bedrooms and kitchens are serving as classrooms.

Online learning is better with dogs

Connie Whitt-Lambert, professor of theatre arts, definitely had the funniest animal-related class story. It began when her puppy teaching assistant, Patch, barked at a passer-by during her first online class. "My playwriting students thought it was hysterical," she wrote. "They took turns turning on their webcams to show me that more than half of them had a dog in their lap or nearby, proving that online learning is better with a dog."

"It got better on Tuesday when Patch barked in one of my speech classes. Apparently, several of those students also had



dogs with them and my pup's barking set off a chain reaction of barking throughout the world – I have several students who returned to their homes abroad." Laughter has been good medicine for all as we've settled into the "new normal."

Faculty missing face-to-face interaction with students

During a virtual faculty happy hour in June, several shared that they missed walking around the classroom and seeing students' faces. Working, teaching and, indeed, learning in this new environment is challenging for all – students, faculty and staff. We will all make mistakes and deal with the new disruptions, such as dogs barking, parents/spouses/children popping into the audio or video, and other technical issues.

Through all of this, our institution is engaging in different aspects of creative problem-solving. Faculty are figuring out how to accomplish learning, while staff are developing creative ways to engage current students and advise and recruit future students. Our performance now is not only a demonstration of what we aim to impart to our students, it's an indicator of Texas Wesleyan's resilience. 🇺🇸

TXWES family comes together to support professor

Former students share inspiration for Pam Rast



Pam Rast, professor of athletic training, was recently diagnosed with cancer. She has been the athletic training program director at Texas Wesleyan for more than 25 years and the kinesiology chair for 18. If you ask any of her former students or colleagues, the Baylor University alum lives and breathes Texas Wesleyan.

As Rast says, “I certainly don’t get rich teaching, but the love that those students have shown me is worth more than any paycheck.” That’s why she continued to work through her treatments. Here are just a few sentiments from alumni and friends that show the impact Rast has made and continues to make on the TXWES community.

“ In April 2020, I received my second cancer diagnosis, breast cancer. Dr. Rast and I have become even closer since both our diagnoses. Dr. Rast has inspired me to fight for what I want in life. Without fighting, I couldn’t have grown into the person I am today. I currently work for Texas Health Sports Medicine with many individuals on district and national committees. I am able to see some of the things Dr. Rast does in the background and am inspired to work toward many of the same goals she has throughout her career.

— **Laura Giesler '10**

Texas Health Sports Medicine

Since 2008, Dr. Rast has always been a constant and consistent support system for me. I know I can always rely on her for an ear to listen and to provide wise advice. The most important reason I support Dr. Rast through her fight with cancer is because it is now my turn as her former student, peer, co-worker and friend to be, more than ever before, the constant and consistent support system that she has been for me the last 12 years.

— **Christina Kelley '12**

Coordinator of Clinical Education and Visiting Professor for Athletic Training, Texas Wesleyan University
President, Texas Wesleyan Athletic Training Alumni Association

Dr. Rast and the Texas Wesleyan AT program helped prepare me for life by giving us real-time problems and making us think on our feet. Throughout my time at Wesleyan, no matter what time of day it was, we could contact Dr. Rast and she would always respond. She wanted nothing more than for us to succeed at everything we did.

— **Cody Marlow '15**

Chiropractor/Owner, Kinisi Chiropractic
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Counseling professor talks calming anxiety during COVID-19

TXWES professor helps boost mental health



For some, the COVID-19 pandemic brings more than social distancing or stay-at-home orders – it brings a rise in mental health and struggles of anxiety and depression. Linda Metcalf, professor and director of graduate counseling programs, shares how parents and students can calm their anxiety levels during a pandemic.

What are some tips for calming anxiety during the COVID-19 crisis?

Many people already have coping mechanisms they use with other situations, which can be applied to the current circumstances. Thoughts in isolation can be overwhelming – writing down our anxious thoughts can make them seem more manageable and allow our minds to reframe our thinking.

What can we do to feel more in control during this time of uncertainty?

Think about what you do have control over. Focusing on things that can be done, such as studying, eating healthy, practicing social distancing and tackling unfinished projects, can provide a sense of accomplishment and a feeling of control.

How can parents support their children through the COVID-19 crisis?

They can encourage them to do schoolwork when it is assigned. Talk to kids about the benefits of learning and hard work, even if traditional grades are no longer an incentive. If workloads become too challenging, be sure to communicate with teachers. Everyone is on a learning curve.

For extroverts, social distancing may be difficult. How can they deal with the lack of personal interaction?

Talking 6 feet apart can work! If people live in neighborhoods, gather occasionally in the street or on a lawn 6 feet apart and chat. It is amazing how many neighborhoods are coming up with social means of staying in touch. Making some adaptations to our lives can lead to personal satisfaction and accomplishing something that you can feel good about, both emotionally and cognitively. 🍷



TXWES STUDENTS IN THE NEWS

Future doctor makes Fort Worth proud

TXWES alum joins the medical ranks in the fight against COVID-19

Fifteen years ago, Gabriel Ceceñas '13 was living in Mexico with no background in English. Ceceñas is a graduate of Texas Wesleyan and just finished medical school at Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine at the University of North Texas Health Science Center. After graduation, he jumped into the fight against COVID-19 as Dr. Ceceñas. His story was recently featured on NBC 5.

"I wanted to be a doctor ever since I probably was a little kid," Ceceñas told NBC 5. "I wanted to do something in medicine, and I decided in the middle of my college years that doctor is the way to go."

Gabriel moved to Texas when he was 15. He learned English in two years, graduated from Lake Worth High School and attended Tarrant County College, finishing his four-year degree in biology at TXWES. Earlier this month, he completed his medical degree at the UNT Health Science Center and has started his intern year of residency at the University of

Missouri-Kansas City emergency medical program.

"My parents only finished elementary school, so like fifth or sixth grade in learning. My dad was a farmer, my mom was a housewife in Mexico." Ceceñas said. "Their education was nonexistent I guess, but they always, always encouraged us to get something better, there was never an option if you should go to college. It was like, 'You're going to college.'"

Ceceñas was undocumented, but because of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, he was protected and able to continue with his studies. He became a U.S. citizen in 2019.

"DACA was a very important part of my education and why I was able to get into medical school, because without that I wouldn't be able to," he said.

Gabriel moved to Kansas City with his wife and two kids to start their new life. 🇺🇸

WEB EXTRA › SEE FULL STORY AT [TXWES.EDU/GABRIEL](https://txwes.edu/gabriel)



SOCIAL CHATTER



 **@txwesalumni**
Check out these awesome @txwesalumni teachers at Worth Heights Elementary in @fortworthisd showing their Ram Pride! 🐏💙🇺🇸



 **@ana_laura7**
It finally came in. I cannot believe it. The NEW YORK TIMES?!?!?
Never stop dreaming! ✨ Anything is possible. All Glory to God!



 **@txwesadmissions**
Freshman Brooklynn Rowe is leaving her impact on #TXWES! Brooklynn started the first-ever TXWES swim club her first semester! Way to go, Brooklynn! #RamsUp 🏊🇺🇸

FOLLOW US @TEXASWESLEYAN

Writers, inspired

“If you’re trying to decide among a few people to fill a position, hire the best writer.”



So says *Rework*, the 2010 book by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson, the founders of tech company Basecamp. A few sentences later, they sum it up thusly: “Clear writing is clear thinking.”

With all due respect to Fried and Heinemeier Hansson, it’s also *critical thinking*, something Texas Wesleyan graduates value and do on a daily basis across the world. It’s no surprise to find them writing and publishing ideas that are getting noticed.

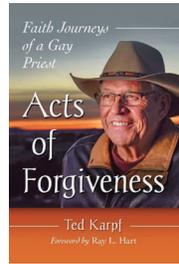
We caught up with a few Texas Wesleyan grads who are publishing – including a priest, a mystery writer and a poet. Along the way, we catch up with some notable Texas Wesleyan authors you might not have known ...

A Guardian of the Golden Shears shares his journey

The Rev. Ted Karpf '70

Acts of Forgiveness: Faith Journeys of a Gay Priest

The Rev. Ted Karpf studied religion and journalism at Texas Wesleyan and served as the 1970 student body president. He was a *Rambler* editor and a Guardian of the Golden Shears. He told his life story



in his 2019 book *Acts of Forgiveness: Faith Journeys of a Gay Priest*.

Tell us about *Acts of Forgiveness*

Acts of Forgiveness tells of my spiritual and faith journeys from diverse communities to personal solitude, from conventional marriage to gay partnership. Covering the years 1968 to 2018, *Acts of Forgiveness* contains poetic meditations designed to inform and remind readers that we are neither abandoned nor alone.

What inspired you to write your book?

It was time. I am breaking silence; silence about the past events and demons as well as attempting to clarify the meaning of life and my experience. From writing, I am learning again that a life lived and then reflected upon can reveal many aspects one has not considered before or during an event themselves, and that years and even decades later one’s life can take on different meanings and values.

How do you write?

I write daily, roughly six to eight hours per day. I have an idea of what I would like to write about, but no specifics as to how it gets there. With *Acts of Forgiveness*, it felt like taking dictation from my soul. I just sat, placing fingers on the keys and the words emerged. I really didn’t read what I wrote until

a chapter was done. Then it was back to clarifying spelling and meanings, missed words and typos. A great experience all around.

What advice would you give to anyone who is considering sharing their story through memoir?

Be yourself and tell your own story. Rarely do we think we have something important or valuable to say about life and experience, faith and understanding until we are prepared to try to write it down. The depth and possibility of meaning often does not occur in the first iteration of a person’s story. It takes a number of tries to liberate meanings. Just keep at it until you can say “aha, that’s what it means.”

*Where does this poet find inspiration?
Her son.*

Tamika Reynolds '11 MBA '19

A Whirlwind of Life: Genres of Poetry

Tamika Reynolds earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Texas Wesleyan, where she’s also worked for the last seven years, most recently as coordinator for the Dean of the School of Arts & Sciences. Her book, *A Whirlwind of Life: Genres of Poetry*, includes meditations on life, love, family and much more.



What inspired you to write your book?

I had been writing poetry since high school and always kept the poems in a binder. My son, Davion, motivated me to publish my works.

What do you enjoy most about writing?

What I enjoy most is being able to connect with others through my writing.

What are your future plans?

I am in the process of writing my second book, titled *Luck in the Hearts*.

Telling the tales behind the typewriter

Amy Condon '90

A Nervous Man Shouldn't Be Here in the First Place

Condon studied journalism and political science at Texas Wesleyan, served



on the *Rambler* staff and was a member of Phi Mu sorority. She is a freelance writer who currently teaches creative writing courses

and provides editorial services at the Refinery Writing Studio in Savannah, Georgia. She has co-authored two cookbooks and serves as associate editor of a quarterly publication produced by *Savannah Morning News*.

Her most recent book, *A Nervous Man Shouldn't Be Here in the First Place*, is a biography of late *Miami News* editor Bill Baggs. Amy credits her time at Texas Wesleyan for inspiring her love of journalism and political affairs.

What is your latest book about?

Bill Baggs was one of the most influential newspaper editors of the 20th century that almost no one has ever heard of. He led on civil rights and environmental and historic preservation, broke the Cuban Missile Crisis story and fought hard in his daily column for peace in Vietnam. He was also the last U.S. journalist to interview Ho Chi Minh.

How did Texas Wesleyan inspire you to become a writer?

When I think back to my years at Texas Wesleyan, I can see how the seeds for writing this book first blossomed. I wrote papers on Cold War relationships, specifically the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis during classes with Ibrahim Salih and Margaret Patosky. Michael Sewell's course on the mass media of the Vietnam War was

a revelation for me, as was his History of Pop Culture course, which was truly a study in modern-day humanities, weaving music, film, politics, art and literature together.

I remember my uncle teasing me that I was taking classes akin to underwater basket-weaving, but now he understands how foundational they were for me as I pursued writing this biography.

What advice do you have for aspiring writers?

The most important quality any writer can have is curiosity. Curiosity allows you to ask, "What if ..." or "Why?" and that leads to all manner of storytelling, fiction or nonfiction. It also propels you to learn as much as you can about processes, such as the submission or proposal guidelines required by agents or editors.

I've also found taking improv classes tremendously beneficial. The mindset of accepting what is, rolling with it, then saying "Yes, and ..." removes the resistance that invariably comes when you sit down and stare at a blank page, which you do every time you start a new sentence or story.

There is no shortcut to the writing process. You have to study the craft of beautiful sentences, powerful beginnings, the underlying architecture of narrative structure. You must be an unrepentant eavesdropper to soak up the nuance of dialogue – what's being said on the surface and in the silences. You have to sit down in that chair (or stand up at that adjustable desk), quiet all of the voices telling you something is more important in that moment and put down the words.

A nom de plume croons a crime tune

Hank Sinatra '04

The Bone-Handled Stiletto

Hank Sinatra attended Texas Wesleyan as a nontraditional student



and graduated in 2004 with a degree in English with a writing concentration. His novel, *The Bone-Handled Stiletto*, is

a fictional crime mystery centered on an Italian family.

What inspired you to write your book?

I am of Italian heritage and liked the idea of writing about some of the issues that impact Italians. The story is about Fortunado, who had two sons; one from his marriage, and one outside of marriage. One became a cop, and one became a gangster.

What are some of your best memories from your time at Texas Wesleyan?

While attending TXWES, I had several notable experiences. I went to England for a six-week course. We traveled all over England, Scotland and Wales and took time to study and test as well. Also, I was on the debate team that went to Cincinnati.

Sharing her journey to health to empower others

Genika Reed '07

Scars With an Untold Story

Scars With an Untold Story tells Reed's journey of a yearslong personal



battle with hidden endometriosis that was not properly diagnosed. Within one year, she had four surgeries that literally changed her life. Her memoir

shares how her faith helped her along the way and about her efforts to raise awareness among women.

What inspired you to write your book?

My ultimate goal is to continue to spread awareness of endometriosis.

Hopefully, in sharing my story it will help or inspire others to keep seeking answers for this painful disease. My biggest challenge was first getting over my own emotions of the pain I suffered with endometriosis in order to write my own story.

A mother's journey inspires a son's mission

Xavier Sanders '09

The Other Side of Real

Xavier Sanders graduated from Texas Wesleyan in 2009 with a degree in psychology. His novel, *The Other Side of Real*, tells his story of caring for his mother as she battled breast cancer. Xavier is executive director at BarbaraCares Foundation, a nonprofit that he founded to provide resources to breast cancer patients and their families in Texas.



What inspired you to write your book?

My mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. Watching her go through her journey devastated me mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. When she died, a part of me died. This book details how I learned to accept that sometimes, God says no!

Why did you feel this story needed to be told?

No one ever auditions for this job; there's no amount of preparation that can adequately prepare a person for the role of caregiver. At what point does caregiving turn to care-grieving? It was important to share with others about seasons of tests and loss.

How and why do you stay connected to Texas Wesleyan?

I transferred to TXWES during a hard period of my life after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. The kindness and generosity shown I'll never forget.

Romance and suspense meet their match

Lisa Landolt '90 JD '01

Good Man Hunting

Lisa Landolt is connected to Texas Wesleyan first as an undergraduate mass communication major, then graduating second in her class at Texas Wesleyan School of Law and, finally, serving as an adjunct professor, teaching communication law and ethics. Lisa's book, *Good Man Hunting*, is a fictional tale that mixes suspense with romance.



Tell us about *Good Man Hunting*.

What if you could have any man you wanted – no matter how rich or good-looking? Sandra is promised she can have the man of her dreams, and all she has to do is play the Hunt Club's matchmaking "game."

What inspired you to write your book?

I wanted my clients to be inspired to not feel trapped with their lives and also show that, with real love, there are no hoops you have to jump through. 🍷

Are you a Ram writer ... or do you know one?

If you or a fellow alum has a published work, contact the alumni office at alumni@txwes.edu to be considered for future feature stories.

A beloved writer soars to new heights

Julie Murphy '10

Faith: Taking Flight



If you're a regular Wesleyan reader (and we hope you are), you probably know Julie Murphy by name. If not, you might know her from the Netflix movie, *Dumplin'*, which is based on her novel of the same name, or maybe you're one of the 25,000 people who follow her on Twitter.

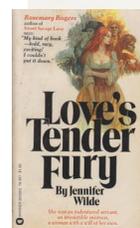
Murphy's latest book, *Faith: Taking Flight*, published by Balzer + Bray, is the first part in a two-part origin story of Faith Herbert, an everyday (and unbeknownst to her) superhero whose life begins to collide with her favorite TV show, *The Grove*. In a recent interview with *Nerd Daily*, Murphy said, "It's a superhero origin story, yes, but I really like to think of it as a coming-of-age story first and foremost."

When the mystery of romance begins with the author ...

Tom Huff '60

Love's Tender Fury

In 1968, Tom Huff quit his job as an English teacher at nearby Paschal High School to become a full-time novelist.



The 6-foot-tall Army veteran wrote romance novels and, concerned that women wouldn't read romance written by a man (it was 1968, after all), began publishing his work under various pseudonyms to disguise his gender.

His most famous paperback, *Love's Tender Fury*, which was published under Jennifer Wilde, his most successful alias, spent 26 weeks on *The New York Times* Best Sellers list and has sold over 3 million copies.

Read more about Huff and the original post by Mike Nichols on his blog "Hometown by Handlebar" that uncovered a local legend.

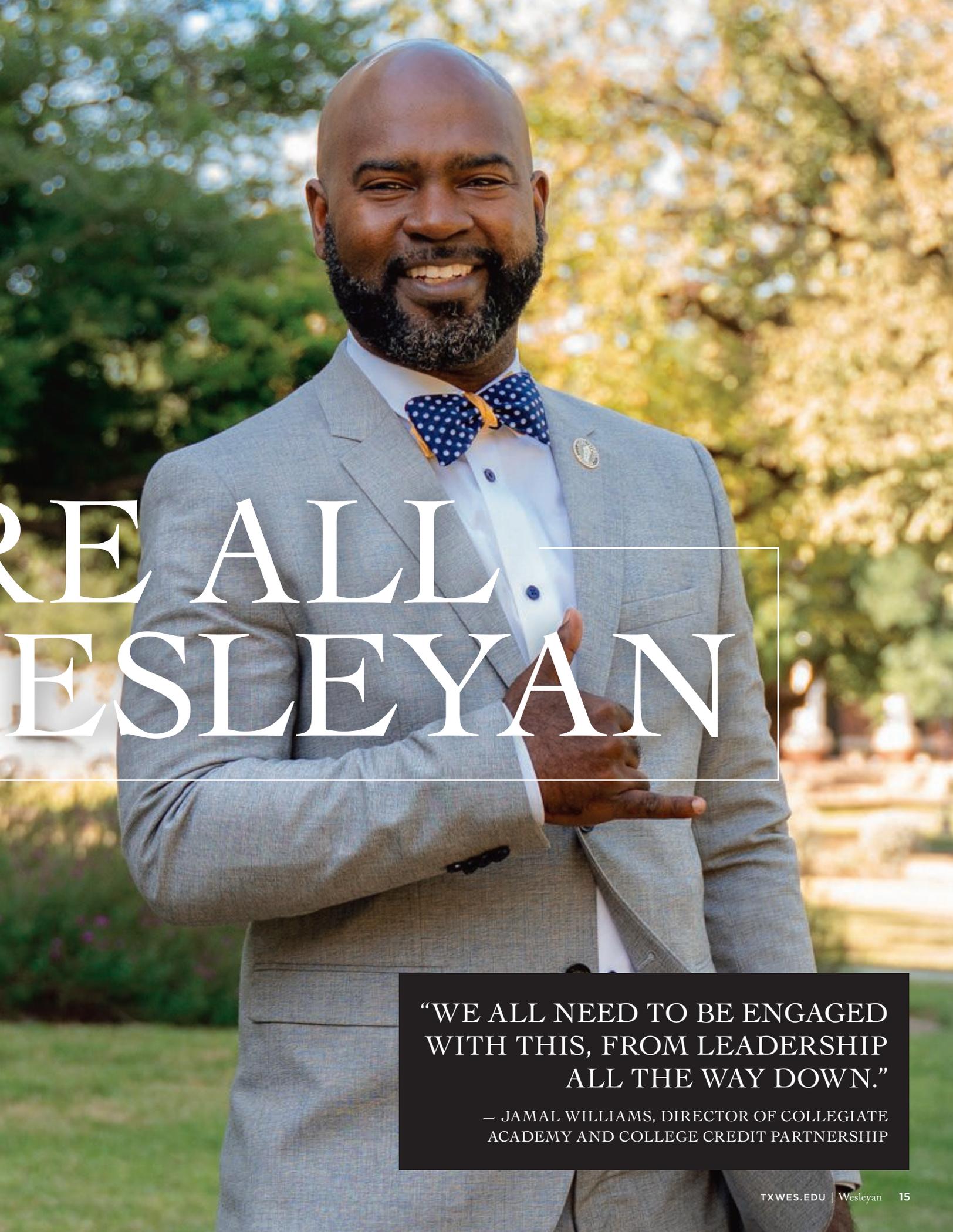
WEB EXTRA ▶ TXWES.EDU/HUFF

equality

WE ARE TEXAS W

TEXAS WESLEYAN'S DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION COUNCIL IS TAKING A
STAND AGAINST RACISM.

Beth Jackson MFT '19, Diversity and Inclusion
Council member



WE'RE ALL WESLEYAN

“WE ALL NEED TO BE ENGAGED
WITH THIS, FROM LEADERSHIP
ALL THE WAY DOWN.”

— JAMAL WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF COLLEGIATE
ACADEMY AND COLLEGE CREDIT PARTNERSHIP

The George Floyd video felt visceral for Dr. Angela Dampeer.

Dampeer is the associate vice president for human resources and the co-founder of the Diversity and Inclusion Council at Texas Wesleyan. She's a subject-matter expert: Her doctoral dissertation studied Black undergraduate students' perception of campus racial climate.

Still, it's personal. She says the June 2020 events made for "one of the saddest times in my life."

She wasn't alone. Her inbox started filling up immediately with co-workers sharing their experiences – some good, some bad. The messages came from Wesleyan community members of all races. Many shared similar feelings – pain, grief, sorrow and support.

Many also referenced President Frederick G. Slabach's 2016 convocation speech, where he said "progress toward justice is neither elegant nor inevitable – merely possible" and that "those of us who do not resort to divisive rhetoric ... share responsibility if we do nothing to stop the poison."

Those words were galvanizing. Texas Wesleyan has always been welcoming, but this was an opportunity for the "Smaller. Smarter." school to be even more. This was an opportunity to lead.

"Texas Wesleyan should be the leader in diversity and inclusion," Beth Jackson MFT '19, council member, said.

These are the people working together to make that opportunity a reality.

WORKING TOGETHER

Diversity has been a point of pride for Texas Wesleyan for many years. Its 2020 Vision strategic plan centered on representing the demographics of Texas throughout the institution.

It was fourth on *Time* magazine's most diversified colleges list in 2016, and College Factual rates its diversity as "very good overall."

But the goal at Texas Wesleyan is bigger picture than facts and figures: How to manifest the core ideas associated with the university – its mission and vision, critical thinking, its Methodist roots, "Smaller. Smarter." – into repeatable, measurable anti-racist practices?

Enter the council, who was already at work on the ground implementing a community-driven strategic plan for diversity and inclusion when the Floyd story broke. The outpouring of messages the council received only reinforced the support they were already seeing: Texas Wesleyan was united and ready to get to work. "I've always felt that Wesleyan was an inclusive and inviting university and workplace for students and faculty, without practices," Jamal Williams, director of collegiate academy and college credit partnership and council member, said, "I think the events opened everybody's eyes that we really need to do more."

PUTTING IT IN PRACTICE

The council understands that the work of diversity and inclusion happens on the ground in day-to-day interactions. That's why they've focused on what diversity and inclusion looks like *in practice*. It's serious work, meant to make a real impact. "We are in as much control of [diversity and inclusion] as we build the structure to do it," Dennis Hall, vice president for student affairs and dean of students, said.

The strategic plan is organized into four pillars: Campus Climate, Institutional Climate, Curricular and Co-Curricular Transformation and Representational Diversity – key focus areas developed from extensive listening sessions and research across the campus community. From there, the work breaks down into four subcommittees: faculty and staff, students, education and outreach.

Allen Henderson, professor of psychology and council member, believes those focus areas are a natural extension of the university's mission to help students reach their full potential as members of the world community. As an educator, and as a student himself, he has seen their importance in his own life.

"I had two or three amazing professors that changed my life because they taught me to think and question things in an open and reasonable way. They taught me to listen," Henderson said. "Sometimes you just have to listen."

The council is leading unconscious bias training, faculty training for equity in pedagogy, and student forums. Listening is a key component of each initiative. Programs will be run by individual departments and supported by the council, which allows greater ownership.

Hall is quick to point out diversity and inclusion isn't censorship or "cancel culture." The goal is just the opposite: Better, deeper discussions that lead to life lessons.

"We can't do that by censoring," Hall said. "We're not shying away, we're not creating an echo chamber. We're not creating a snowflake stereotype."

It takes a learning environment where students are empowered to speak up and ask tough questions. In short, it takes critical thinking, the cornerstone of a Texas Wesleyan education.

"That attitude of openness and being able to critically think and maybe even question things," Henderson said. "Is so important for students."

THE STUDENT VOICE

Dampeer says she sees the council's work as part of a larger culture shift already happening on campus. It's not just a subject in a book for students. It's everyday life.

"It is impossible to be a critical thinker without a diverse understanding of the cultures and ideas that shape your world," Dampeer said.

Daniel Garcia Rodriguez, senior political science major and council member, agrees. He is co-founder of United Fort Worth, a local grassroots organization that challenges systems of oppression for diverse and marginalized communities. The son of immigrants, he and a group of other Texas Wesleyan students became politically involved to oppose Texas Senate Bill 4. He and his group have put equity at the forefront of their efforts in Fort Worth.

He believes that Texas Wesleyan is home to many important stories that need to be heard. "Diversity and inclusion shouldn't be like it was in elementary school where different ethnic communities bring a plate of food and their music," Garcia Rodriguez said. "It should be intentional and responsive in creating systems for student voices to be heard."

He points out that these issues go far beyond a campus culture – higher ed and society are in a state of transformation. "There are systemic issues that really impact the lives of young people and how they are able to navigate the institution of education and higher ed," Garcia Rodriguez said.

He believes listening systems allow voices to be heard and empower Texas Wesleyan to better serve its students.

"It's important to develop strategies that eliminate racial barriers and disparities," Garcia Rodriguez said. "You cannot

"IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO BE A CRITICAL THINKER WITHOUT A DIVERSE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CULTURES AND IDEAS THAT SHAPE YOUR WORLD."

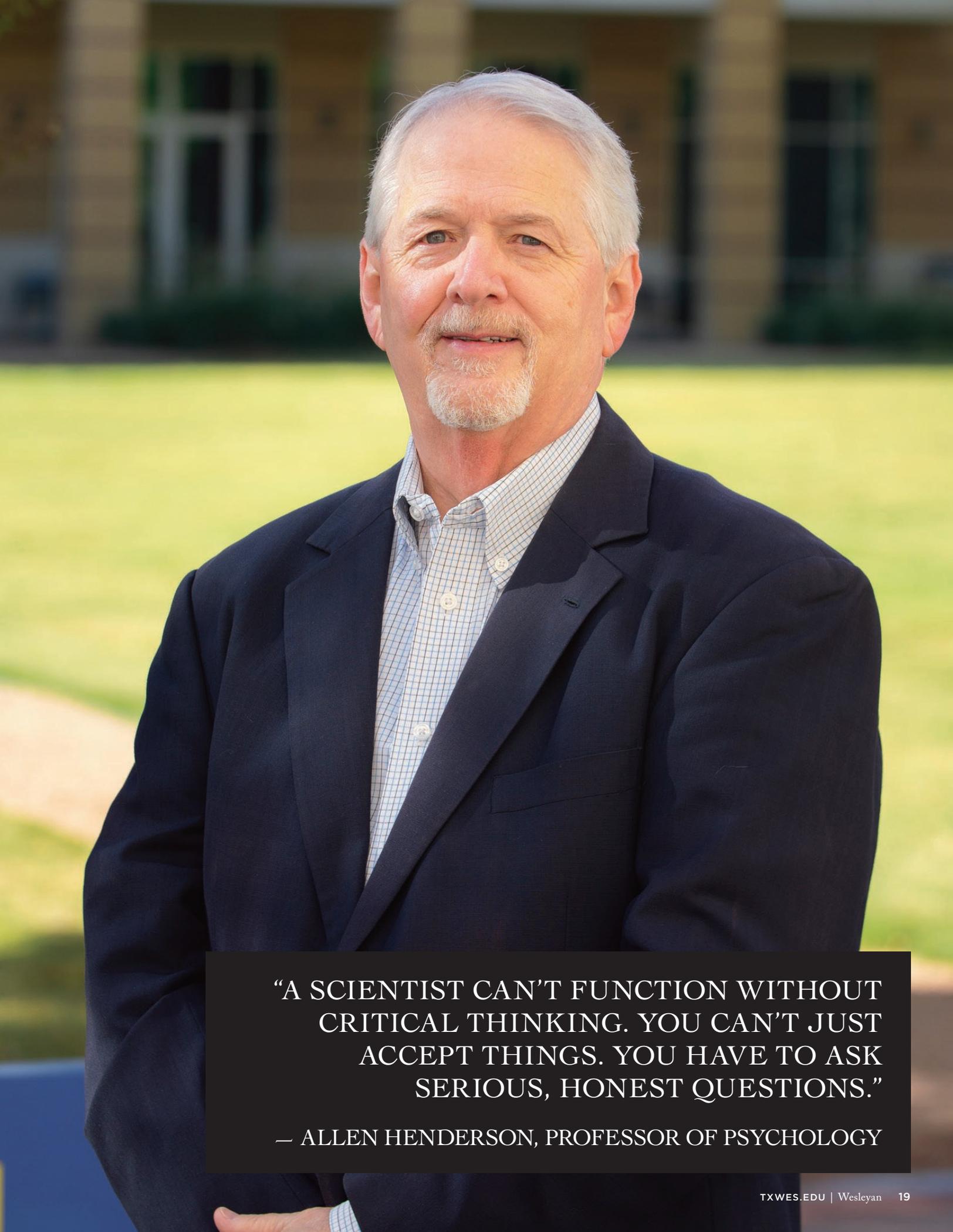
— ANGELA DAMPEER, VICE PRESIDENT FOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND THE CO-FOUNDER OF THE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL





“WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO
BE CHAMPIONS OF EQUITY AND
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION.”

— DANIEL GARCIA RODRIGUEZ
SENIOR POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR



“A SCIENTIST CAN’T FUNCTION WITHOUT
CRITICAL THINKING. YOU CAN’T JUST
ACCEPT THINGS. YOU HAVE TO ASK
SERIOUS, HONEST QUESTIONS.”

— ALLEN HENDERSON, PROFESSOR OF PSYCHOLOGY



READ MORE ABOUT
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
AT TEXAS WESLEYAN:
TXWES.EDU/INCLUSION

create a sense of change without the voices at the margins.”

Listening. It’s a word that comes up again and again. For students, offering forums and other opportunities to tell their stories are game changers.

“I think our council can be a vehicle for those voices,” Garcia Rodriguez said.

Jackson says hearing those stories helped deepen her understanding of herself and others.

“It doesn’t matter if you approach it with a liberal or conservative mind,” Jackson said. “If you approach it with kindness, you get comprehension. You have to sit in that kindness for a while.”

THE TIME TO LEAD

At a campus stock full of expertise, partnership is essential. The council is an umbrella for the wider efforts of the Texas Wesleyan community – and campus engagement is high. Each council member lists a wide range of campus allies who are stepping up to lead.

“We all need to be engaged in this, from leadership all the way down,” Williams said. “[Having practices in place] means when issues arise, we know how to address them as a community.”

The council is also developing strategies to improve representational diversity. It is taking a data-driven approach to increase administration and faculty diversity to reflect the diverse demographics of Texas, an important goal for the university.

Then there’s the other elephant in the room – the classes themselves. Garcia Rodriguez and Henderson both see opportunities for more diverse areas of study at Texas Wesleyan, and the council plans to partner with Academic Affairs to explore those opportunities.

Every council member is quick to note that the work of anti-racism never ends.

“A scientist can’t function without critical thinking,” Henderson said. “You can’t just accept things. You have to ask serious, honest questions.”

Everyone agrees that there’s more work to be done, but that work goes hand-in-hand with other words: Excited, energized, ready, opportunity. It’s the same community spirit that has defined the university’s greatest successes for well over a century.

For Garcia Rodriguez, this is Texas Wesleyan’s moment to lead. “We have an opportunity to be champions of equity and diversity and inclusion.”

Dampeer sees that opportunity in every conversation.

“You just have to be authentic,” Dampeer said, “and care about the person you’re talking to.”



“IT DOESN’T MATTER IF YOU APPROACH IT WITH A LIBERAL OR CONSERVATIVE MIND. IF YOU APPROACH IT WITH KINDNESS, YOU GET COMPREHENSION.”

— BETH JACKSON MFT '19, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COUNCIL MEMBER



Texas Wesleyan's archives started with a doorstep.

“There was a box of playbills being used as a doorstep in the technical services area,” Louis Sherwood '89, university archivist, said, “and I was thinking ‘what is in this box?’”

Turns out the playbills had quite a story. H. Howard Hughes, an English professor, and his wife, Erin Connor Hughes, assistant professor of romance languages (she taught French), attended 6,136 plays between 1957 and 1987. Hughes was recognized by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the “Most Ardent Theatregoer.”

“It is just a really fascinating thing,” Sherwood said. “[It] tells the story of a person’s life and their interests and what motivated them.”

Hughes was quite the archivist himself. He was an expert on the novel *Moby Dick*, and by the early '60s he owned more than 200 editions of the book in 39 languages. You can see a photo of him in a yearbook, posing and smiling next to his bookshelf. There is a cutout illustration of a whale on the wall behind him.

History: It leaves a paper trail. If you're a 130-year-old university, it's a long and winding one. You're going to need a good archivist.

Sherwood is one such person. Along with Nancy Edge, special collections archivist; Caitlin Rookey, digital

initiatives librarian; and a rotating cast of student workers, they are responsible for collecting, cataloging and curating Texas Wesleyan's history in its many forms.

DID YOU KNOW?

Texas Wesleyan began creating alumni magazines in the late '50s. The practice became commonplace in the '60s. Another interesting fact: The first alumni association president was Lamar Smith '50 HON '65. He would later become interim president of Texas Wesleyan University.

That broad charge includes everything from the original Texas Wesleyan campus land deeds to vintage team footballs and information originally collected on dated technology like floppy disks, all of which is now being digitized as part of the university's growing digital archives project.

You can access the digital archives on the West Library's website, and it quickly devolves into a near-Wikipedia-level wormhole of the important, quirky and intriguing.

Sherwood, who received a bachelor's degree in history, became the university's first official archivist, not long after he found the box of playbills, and not long after the



Nancy Edge in the university archives

university's centennial (although librarians had coordinated some archival efforts before that time).

"I'm interested in making sure that what Wesleyan is gets preserved for future generations," Sherwood said.

For years it was just him, presiding over an ever-growing list of to-dos. Edge joined in 2017.

Edge, a trained anthropologist who refers to herself as a "museum junkie" and a "museum nerd," sees a unique culture in the city of Fort Worth, the Polytechnic Heights neighborhood and Texas Wesleyan. "It's not just the university's history, it's also Polytechnic Heights' history," Edge said. "It's individual people's history – their lives when they were here."

That history doesn't always fit neatly in a box – literally. The archivists often deal with items as they come – usually from a cleaned-out storage closet or office. Many of these items find their way into Texas Wesleyan's special collections, which includes everything from handwritten notes from music composition professor George Anson to archaeological grinding stones to playbills and photos.

"The volume of the material and the breadth of what has come to us has been amazing to me," Sherwood said.

So, what's worth keeping and what's just junk?

"It depends," Edge said. "It's all about context."

This is the precise moment that separates archivists from non-archivists and concepts like provenance, original order and respect des fonds appear in the conversation. In brief, university archives go deeper than keeping what sparks joy and tossing out everything else.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many early Texas Wesleyan students became Methodist leaders and pastors in Oklahoma – influencing the state even before its statehood in 1907. "They were right at the forefront," Risa Brown, West Library reference assistant, said.

CURATE YOUR ARCHIVE

Just because you're not a professional archivist doesn't mean you're not creating an archive. Non-archivists can help preserve Texas Wesleyan's story by paying attention to their files and items when cleaning. Don't discount small items. "You never know what little thing can be so huge and monumental in the future," Edge said.

NEED INSPIRATION? BROWSE THE ARCHIVES: WESTLIBRARY.TXWES.EDU

Long before the COVID-19 virus sent the entire world running to Zoom, the archivists were already building a digital archives that could educate and empower the Texas Wesleyan community to interact with its own history. In the light of 2020's historical reckoning, that task is even more timely and important.

The digital archives started as a collaboration between the West Library and the history department as a way for the history department to record and store oral history. It's grown since then, and for three years, Rookey and student workers have poked, prodded, photographed, cataloged and scanned all manner of objects from Texas Wesleyan's long and storied history.

Caitlin Rookey runs the digital archives project, and she's the type of person that organizes her home after a long day of organizing at work. Still, the digital archives was a massive undertaking.

"It always gets my wheels turning for digital exhibits," Rookey said. "Nancy and I did a slideshow of [Student Center history] for the Martin Center's grand opening. There was a mom with her son going to first-year advising looking at the slideshow. She called her son over and said, 'Look, there's your dad.'"

Hard work, sure. "But it's also just kind of fun," Edge said.

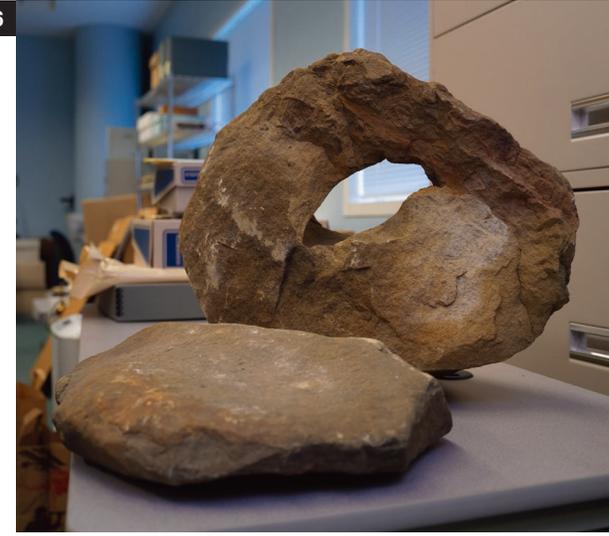
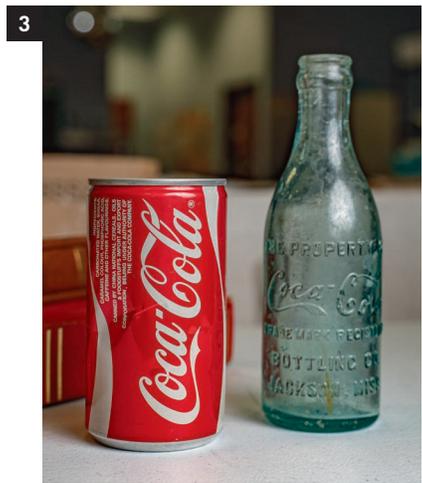
But the archivists are part of Texas Wesleyan's story, too, perhaps even more so as they are sifting through history while living through it. Rookey and Edge are also mothers living and working amid a historic time themselves, and keeping children busy is the unpaid job in between answering a magazine reporter's questions and curating digital exhibits.

Sherwood sees inspiration in Texas Wesleyan's resilient past.

"All the struggles the university has had over the years – a lot of times that's a repeating story," Sherwood said. "But in each instance the university has come through those challenges and been stronger."

THE HISTORY OF TEXAS WESLEYAN IN 10 OBJECTS

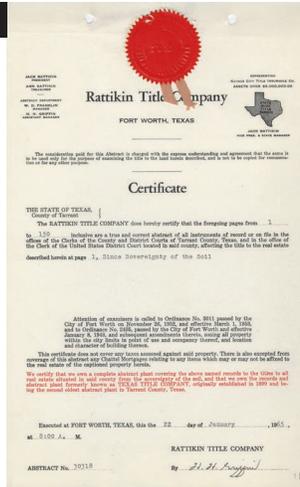
1. Handwritten sheet music from George Anson, professor emeritus of music composition from 1941 to 1970.
2. Vintage university football.
3. A few pieces from former President Jake B. Schrum's Coca-Cola collection.
4. James L. West's pen. The university library is named after West and his wife, Eunice.
5. Record books from Baker Brothers Nursery, "the first and largest nursery in the Southwest." James Baker served on the board from 1895 to 1912. His son, Edward L. Baker, served from 1945 to 1969. His daughter, Lou Martin, currently serves on the board.
6. Archaeological grinding stones.
7. Photo of James and Eunice West in front of a plaque (the shovel item) commemorating the groundbreaking of West Library. These items are located on Mr. West's desk, which is located in the archives.
8. Certificate of title for 1201 Wesleyan, after the passing of a new city ordinance in 1953. This certifies that the university still owns the land even with the zoning changes of property within the Fort Worth city limits.
9. Courtroom sketches found in Mary Apple's art files, professor emeritus of art from 1964 to 1997; these are from the infamous Cullen Davis murder trial that grabbed headlines during the '70s and '80s.
10. Playbills collected by English professor H. Howard Hughes. *The Guinness Book of World Records* named him "The Most Ardent Theatregoer."



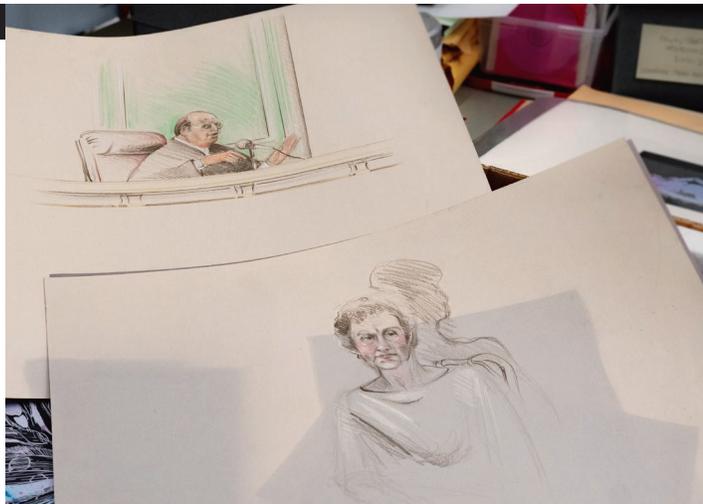
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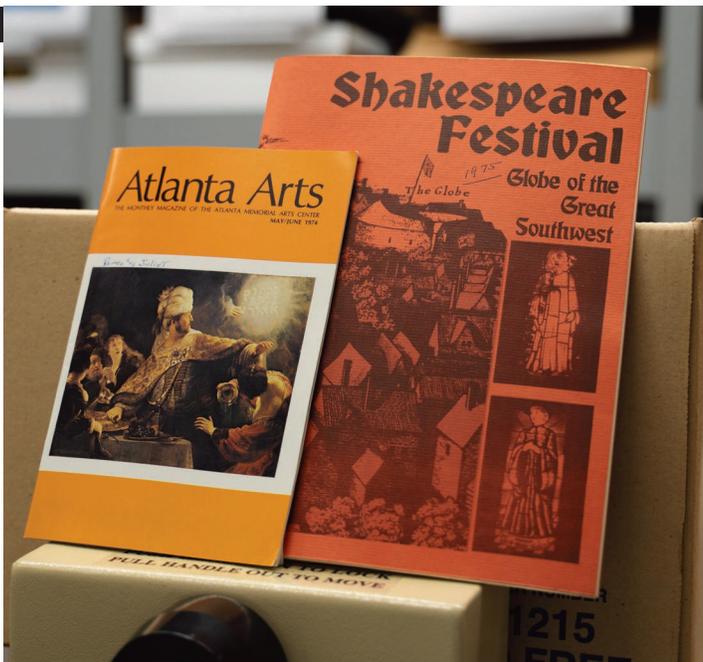
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READ ALL ABOUT TEXAS WESLEYAN: THE EARLY YEARS

Polytechnic Days: Texas Wesleyan's First Decade 1891-1901 by Risa Brown, West Library reference assistant, tells the story of Texas Wesleyan's first decade, when it was known as Polytechnic College, an educational and moral haven, high on a hill above the temptations of Fort Worth and its notorious "Hell's Half Acre" red light district.

The book, which is available on Amazon and at other retailers, took shape after discussions with Perry Cockerell '78 about the university's early years. Brown worked closely with Sherwood and the archive team to write *Polytechnic Days*, combing through documents and newspaper articles from the area.

One of Risa's discoveries was especially important – how the university and its graduates weathered virus outbreaks – and even a pandemic – with education and collaboration. The school even closed during two public health crises: First, a smallpox outbreak in 1899, and then again in 1918 during the flu pandemic. What she found challenged ideas about life in late 19th-century and early 20th-century Texas.

"There's a misconception that somehow Polytechnic College was a finishing school for girls," Brown said, "and that was not even close. They got the same assignments as male students and they were expected to be as knowledgeable as men were. They had their own literary society."

This educational parity was important for many women whose husbands' lives were claimed by the pandemic or World War I. Brown says records show these women working and teaching in Fort Worth only a few years later. Without it, they would have had few options. The school also produced an astonishing number of United Methodist leaders, which was a point of pride.

Brown was a school librarian before she came to Texas Wesleyan. She's published short stories and magazine work – even a romance novel – but this was her first formal work of history. She's sees a link between the past and the present.

"I think it's important because it's not so much different than what we're living," Brown said. "They experienced things that could shed light on what we are experiencing – going to school, navigating a career or just life. Everybody has challenges and how they meet those challenges." 🍷

Q&A with MATTHEW ESPINOSA



TXWES baseball player fights cancer for second time

The COVID-19 pandemic, back-to-back missed seasons and a second battle with cancer, Matthew Espinosa, senior business major and baseball student athlete, has had a lot on his hands in the last year and a half.

Espinosa was first diagnosed with testicular cancer in April 2019, his junior year at Texas Wesleyan. After the immediate surgery to remove the mass, he started a three-month course of chemotherapy to become cancer-free in the fall of 2019.

Espinosa then learned at a December doctor's appointment that the cancer had spread to his lungs. He had the mass removed and began another three-month round of chemotherapy starting in January and went to his last appointment in April.

How did you feel getting diagnosed a second time? What helped get you through it?

It was really tough on my family to find that out. I went through the fall cancer-free and was working out with the baseball team again – just to restart the whole process all over again.

I couldn't have done it without my mom. She was there step by step and I'm thankful for her 100 percent. She took off work, took a leave of absence just to watch me. There were many days that I didn't want to get up or go to my appointments, but she was right there with me through the whole thing. That's who I get my toughness from.

What was your involvement with the team during chemotherapy? How did your teammates support you?

I did what I could to support the team. When I was going through chemotherapy, the team had started its first few games – I would still go to practice and do what I could to help and stay active.

If there was ever a game [on a treatment day], I would go to chemo and then go straight to the game after in my uniform to support my team – that was my way of taking my mind off of my sickness. My teammates treated me as if I wasn't even sick and just a regular part of the team, and that helped me mentally. Coach Garza even gave me the lineup card (which goes to the "player of the game") after the first home victory, and that was a very special moment for me.

How is your body feeling? Will you be able to play in the next season?

My body felt beat up going through chemo; I lost 35 pounds total during my second round. I had to hold off on heavy lifting, running and other exercises until Aug. 16. Since then, I've gained that weight back and I even grew an inch – so I'm slowly working my way back to my regular self.

I have two years of eligibility left to play at Texas Wesleyan. Previously, I was brought in as a first baseman, then switched to third base, and now I'm taking reps and planning to take the field at the catcher position.

What did you learn from this experience? How can you inspire others through your diagnosis?

I learned that nothing in life is guaranteed. If you want to go do something, you have to put your mind to it and go get it done.

Being back on the field is a blessing. My goal is to play professional baseball somewhere or somehow. I don't care where it is, but that's what I want to do. And to be the best I can be, have fun and just enjoy the love of the game. 🍷

Wesleyan wrestlers claim conference title

TXWES takes SAC title for both male and female wrestlers

Junior men's wrestler Dracius McKee and first-year women's wrestler Madison Brown both claimed titles at the Sooner Athletic Conference tournament.



McKee defeated Oklahoma City University's R.J. Walker to win the 165-pound division in Bartlesville, Oklahoma, on Feb. 22. McKee won three decisions by a combined seven points to claim the joint conference title.

Freshman Madison Brown went undefeated through the tournament to win the 101-pound division in Plainview, on Feb. 29.



Freshman Clarissa Archuleta, 130 pounds, and senior Elizabeth Harris, 136 pounds,

nabbed fourth-place finishes. Freshman Aylen Vivar, 109 pounds, won two matches to place fifth.

Brown, Archuleta and Harris were set to compete at the NAIA Women's National Championships in Jamestown, North Dakota, before the tournament was canceled because of COVID-19. 🍷

NAIA cancels 2020 spring sports

NAIA spring sports canceled for 2020 season

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) announced March 16 that it canceled the spring 2020 sports season.

"All possible scenarios that would have supported a spring sports season were seriously considered by multiple NAIA governance groups," said NAIA President and CEO Jim Carr. "However, the growing state of emergency due to COVID-19, as well as the Center for Disease Control's recommendation ... to limit gatherings to fewer than 50 people for eight weeks, meant we could not in good conscience move forward with the spring sports season and championships."

In an effort to provide relief, no spring sport student-athlete will be charged a season of competition. Any spring sport student-athlete who was enrolled full time in 2020 will be awarded two additional semester terms of attendance or the equivalent. 🍷



Shannon Gower '03 gets 400 career wins

TXWES head coach claims victory No. 400

Texas Wesleyan softball's Shannon Gower '03 won her 400th game as head coach in a 10-2 defeat of Southwestern Christian, Feb. 25.

Gower has been the winningest coach in Texas Wesleyan softball history, and with 16 seasons under her belt, she is now the longest-tenured coach in program history. Gower started at shortstop on the 2002 and 2003 Texas Wesleyan softball teams before joining the staff as an assistant coach.

"Honestly, it's cool to hit that accomplishment, but ultimately it's not about me," Gower said. "My assistant coach Felix Esparza is right there with me. I feel I need to [mention] every single player and coach name – that's what it's really about. I love the game; I'm grateful for the game and what the university has done for me."

Only 25 active NAIA head coaches had 400 career wins prior to the start of the 2018 season. Gower ranks at 19 in wins-per-season and averages 26.4 victories a season. 🍷

All-American Honors

TXWES ATHLETES NAMED TO NAIA HONORABLE MENTION TEAM:

NICOLE GLEASON
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL
SENIOR, BUSINESS

CHARLES DORSETT III
MEN'S TRACK AND FIELD
FRESHMAN, EXERCISE SCIENCE

PEYTON SALLEE
MEN'S BASKETBALL
JUNIOR, ACCOUNTING

AKEEM WHITE
MEN'S BASKETBALL
JUNIOR, LIBERAL STUDIES

Jerri Schooley returns to Texas Wesleyan as vice president for advancement



Texas Wesleyan University has named Jerri Schooley its new vice president for advancement. In her role, Schooley will lead the university's strategic fundraising initiatives.

"I am so excited that Jerri Schooley will be rejoining the Texas Wesleyan team," President Frederick G. Slabach said. "Jerri has the passion and skills to help the university move forward on all fronts. Jerri previously served as the university's associate vice president for advancement, and because she knows us so well, she has hit the ground running. Jerri will help us all focus on our true mission – the students and future alumni of Texas Wesleyan."

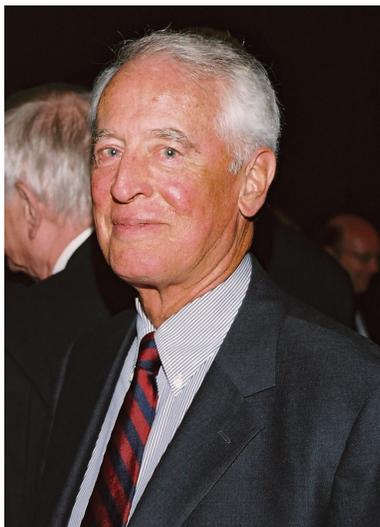
Schooley has been a fundraising professional for more than 24 years. Throughout her career, she has held key leadership positions as the associate vice president for university advancement at Texas Wesleyan University, assistant vice president for major gifts at Texas A&M Health Science Center,

and associate vice president for development at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Schooley is a graduate of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor. Prior to joining UT Arlington, she served as executive vice president for the J.F. Smith Group, an independent fundraising consulting firm. Over her 12-year consulting career, she worked with numerous nonprofit organizations, including secondary and higher education institutions, providing ongoing fundraising counsel as well as managing feasibility studies and capital campaigns.

"I am delighted to return to Texas Wesleyan and be a part of an institution that values relationships," Schooley said. "It is a privilege to work on a team of faculty and staff who are committed to providing our students with a learning environment where they not only learn, but thrive."

Jan Fersing gives back in a big way



“I want my donation to plant a hopeful seed to be nourished by other donors.”

Fersing’s remaining gift amount will provide restricted and unrestricted support to Wesleyan’s athletic programs and other fundraising initiatives throughout the 2020-21 academic year.

“Our students need scholarships, and our sports teams, particularly basketball and baseball, need improved facilities,” said Fersing. “I want my donation to plant a hopeful seed to be nourished by other donors.”

Despite never being a student of Texas Wesleyan, Fersing has been an integral part of our community for many years. He has served on the Board of Trustees for 15 years. He has been to numerous athletic events, including nearly all home basketball games. Fersing’s prior contributions to the university include ongoing annual gifts to the athletic, music and theatre programs; the Joe Brown “Pro Joe” Student Emergency Endowment; the Encore-Joe Brown Theatre Endowed Scholarship; and the Winifred and Leif Fersing Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Fersing’s contribution of time and resources have been an enormous benefit to Texas Wesleyan. As he often comments, “I give to Wesleyan because I can see my funds at work. I know I’m making a difference.”

Texas Wesleyan received a \$298,000 stock gift from trustee and longtime Wesleyan benefactor Jan Fersing HON ’11. One of Fersing’s largest donations to the university.

This gift will provide a \$100,000 challenge grant to encourage annual giving by matching dollar-for-dollar new and increased gifts to the Wesleyan Fund. Additionally, Fersing designated \$50,000 in support of the Rams Relief Fund to help provide financial assistance to students adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“I am glad I could make this gift,” said Fersing. “I hope it will stir up positive responses from other Wesleyan donors, which is one of my primary goals.”

STAY UP TO DATE WITH ALUMNI

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CLASS NOTES

1970s



Mona Kerby '73 was named the recipient of the 2020 American Association of School Librarians’ Distinguished Service Award. She coordinates the school librarianship program at

McDaniel College and oversees the school’s Writing for Children and Youth and Learning Technologies Specialist certificate programs.

Larry Cure '76 was honored by Arlington ISD for his more than 30 years of service and dedication to



his students as a theatre teacher. In February, the district named the Martin High School theatre after him.

1980s

Former TXWES baseball player **Arnold Thrower** and his wife celebrated 25 years of ministry at STC: The Well Church in Sacramento, California; the church they began. Thrower was drafted out of Texas Wesleyan by the St. Louis Cardinals in 1980.

Darcy L. Knapp-Fricks '80 was chosen as the Biography of the Month for April 2020 by Strathmore’s *Who’s Who Worldwide* for her outstanding contributions and high level of success in the fields of agriculture, real estate, investments and self-storage.

After 34 years as a Spanish teacher,

Terri Wilson '85 retired from Birdville ISD. She looks forward to full-time travel as she explores the world and seeks new adventures.

Julie Hatch Fairley '89, owner of JuJu Knits, a local yarn store on the Near Southside, was selected to receive a \$5,000 COVID-19 relief and recovery grant from the Red Backpack Fund.

1990s

Elise La Chiusa McVeigh '90 recently released her book, *A Parent’s Guide to Manners for Kids*. It is

available at Walmart, Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Sharon Roberson-Jones '96 is impacting lives of young people in her community of Carthage, Texas, through her work with her organization, Excellent Teen Choice. She has received many accolades in the community, including the Remarkable Woman designation, given by her local television station.

2000s

Stacy Dissinger '02 was recently named director of Harris College Academic Resource Center at TCU in March 2020. She also received her master's in criminal justice and criminology from TCU.

Head women's soccer coach and director of athletic advancement **Josh Gibbs '03**, welcomed a new baby boy, Logan, in February.

Jessica Sangsvang '05 JD '08 received the *360 West* Top Attorney award for Real Estate. The award is based on nominations from peers in the industry.

Shay Dial Johnson '09 who is the vice president of community engagement for Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth has been named a *Fort Worth Business Press* Forty Under Forty honoree.



Hayden Lackey '08 welcomed a baby girl, Lennox Rose Lackey, on May 29.

2010s

Alex Gudac is owner of Links Golf, linksgolfus.com, a golf apparel company. Gudac played baseball for the Rams during the 2016 and 2017 seasons.

Chadwick Scroggins '10 is pleased to announce that his oldest joined the Ram family in the 2020 fall semester. He is a graduate from Crowley High School and is majoring in psychology.



Shannon Rogers Birchett '11 and husband Chip welcomed a baby boy, Cole Ryder, on Nov. 27, 2019.

Justin Keller '11 welcomed a baby girl, Kodi Grace, in May.

Jessica Irvin '15 and her husband welcomed twins, Evvie Sumner and Elias James, last spring.

Shelese Moaning MA '15 completed her first year as the director of residential living at Sul Ross State University in West Texas. She also works as a PRN therapist at a regional psychiatric hospital.

Avery Sullivan '16, a former TXWES baseball pitcher, is working as a pitching coach for the Texas Rangers organization.

Taunya Gates MBA '19 was recently promoted to VP of operations and risk management at Howard Kane Plumbing Co.

Emily Gordon '19 started a new position as an interior decorator for Pottery Barn and Williams Sonoma.

Parker Robinson '19 and **Lauren Wernet Robinson '18** were married in July 2020.

2020s

Brooks Wallace '20 recently started his own business, The Barber Brooks, thebarberbrooks.com

ALUMNI REMEMBRANCES

Janie Ellis Faris '77, MA '83, HON '20
5/14/2020
Fort Worth

Janie Ruth Ellis Faris '77, MA '83, HON '20, 66, passed away after a four-year battle with ovarian cancer with husband Evan Faris '76 and daughter Stephanie Faris Sanders '01 at her side. Faris was born in Fort Worth on June 15, 1954, to Paul and Lillian Ellis.



Janie received her Bachelor of Music from Texas Wesleyan University in 1977 and her Master of Arts in Education in 1983. It was there that she and Evan met and fell in love. Janie loved Texas Wesleyan and was a member of the Board of Trustees for many years. Janie had also been an adjunct professor in the education department. She was a strong supporter of the fine arts program of the university and could be seen attending many concerts and countless plays and musicals. She was a member of Sigma Alpha Iota, Wesleyan Encore and the Graham Hospital Auxiliary. She was a former president of the Texas Wesleyan University Alumni Association and a member of the Graham Regional Theatre Board of Directors.

Janie was an educator who worked in various school districts and positions through the years. She taught elementary music for several years and was a tremendous singer. She and her husband always enjoyed being a part of various choirs, musical productions and singing groups. In 2007, she retired from Heritage Elementary School having been the longest tenured principal at that school since its opening.

Janie couldn't stay away from education though and began working as an advisor to new teachers obtaining their alternative certification with ECAP, even through her cancer treatments. She also became a realtor. Janie's main goal in real estate was to

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help friends find their dream homes. She helped so many people do just that over the years.

Most importantly, Janie was a friend. She had a way of making everybody feel important and special. She was kind and encouraging, and everything about her invited people to be their true selves without the fear of judgment. She always looked for ways to help people. She was very good at finding the best in people and bringing out those qualities. Janie's presence will be greatly missed by the faculty, staff, students and alumni of Texas Wesleyan, and by many other friends and family, but she will not be forgotten.

Louis "Mac" McLain
12/6/2019
Pantego

Louis "Mac" McLain was born on May 21, 1947, and passed away on Friday, Dec. 6, 2019. He served his country with pride in the National Guard and Army Reserve. As a young Dallas banker, he decided to answer his call to teach.

In 1976, Mac joined the School of Business Administration faculty, beginning a journey that would extend beyond his May 2013 "retirement." With the exception of a hiatus from 2005 to 2008, Mac held various positions at Texas Wesleyan. He was a longtime business school chair, the university's first chief investment officer and he retired as director of major gifts. But the constant during his Wesleyan career, even in retirement, was teaching. Mac taught that business is not just about increasing profit. He introduced ethical issues to students. Mac's goal was to impart a values-centered education to his students. For any teacher, that's a good call.



Barbara Bedsworth Boulware '68
2/7/2020
Fort Worth

Barbara Bedsworth Boulware '68, 73, was born in Fort Worth on Oct. 16, 1946, the daughter of Dorothy (Hood) and William Bedsworth. She attended Texas Wesleyan University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in education and met Dan Mahanay Boulware '68 during fish initiation week. They started dating during their junior year and were married on Aug. 24, 1968, in Fort Worth.



Among many college activities, Barbara became a charter member of Quadrangle, the predecessor of Mortar Board and a member of Alpha Chi and Sigma Alpha Iota (SAI). She loved music and stayed involved as an alum in the Fort Worth alumnae chapter of SAI.

Barbara was an elementary school teacher for many years, and in Cleburne for most of her tenure in the teaching profession. She was very active in civic duties in the community, serving in many capacities as a leader such as president of the Heritage Assembly. She also held numerous leadership positions within the International Order of the King's Daughters and Sons, a Christian service organization.

She attended the First United Methodist Church of Cleburne where she was an active member of the Alter Guild, worshiped with Cornerstone Sunday School and contributed to youth programming for over four decades.

Both Barbara and her late husband, Dan, were strong advocates for Texas Wesleyan. The university is grateful for their support throughout the years through both service and financial contributions.

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Photos by Chuck Greeson



Chuck Greeson, university videographer since 2012, left his post this summer for a new job in Washington, D.C.

You've seen his byline, that is, if you haven't seen him in a classroom, or snapping guests with his Canon lens, or filming the stories and lives of the people at Texas Wesleyan University. He was easy to spot – he was on campus early – that's when natural light is better. His car was often the last in the parking lot – the only thing better than morning light is evening light.

Greeson's editorial style blended perfectly with the Rosedale

Renaissance. He was on assignment everywhere – in classrooms, documenting pivotal moments of the early Rams football era, charting the growth of campus, shaping the "Smaller. Smarter." campaign. He caught the creative resurgence of Texas Wesleyan and Polytechnic Heights as it sparked. To paraphrase an old "Smaller. Smarter." ad line, it seemed small at the time, but it wasn't.

A picture says a thousand words. His work says volumes about Texas Wesleyan. 

Darren White MBA '16 is the managing editor of *Wesleyan* magazine.



Follow Chuck at greesoncreative.com



YOUR GIFT HELPS STUDENTS EVERY DAY

"I am one of those students."

When Jennifer Harrison '20 lost her job in 2017, she enrolled at Texas Wesleyan – and you were with her every step of the way. Your gifts were the support she needed to thrive at Texas Wesleyan.

"It allowed me to just focus on being a student and not worry how I was going to pay for my rent and my groceries," Harrison said.

Harrison graduated with a bachelor's degree in sociology – magna cum laude – and gave back as Texas Wesleyan's Food Pantry manager. Now she's pursuing her graduate degree. "You have helped hundreds of other people by just helping one," Harrison said.

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CREATING WITH 3D PRINTS



Special Collections Archivist Nancy Edge and Digital Initiatives Librarian Caitlin Rookey use a 3D scanner to make a digital outline of the Texas Wesleyan Ram statue in front of the Brown-Lupton Campus Center. Read more on page 22.