

Maffett Awarded CFRE Designation



Cumberland University Vice President for Advancement Dr. Garvin S. Maffett was recently named a Certified Fund Raising Executive by CFRE International. Maffett joins over 5,000 professionals around the world who hold the CFRE designation. Individuals granted the CFRE credential have met a series of standards set by CFRE International which include tenure in the profession, education, demonstrated fundraising achievement and a commitment to service to not-for-profit organizations. Initially, candidates must pass a rigorous written examination testing the knowledge, skills and abilities required of a fundraising executive. CFRE International is an independent organization whose sole mission is dedicated to the certification of fundraising executives by setting standards in philanthropy.

Interest in Bryan's Rattlesnake Study Continues to Grow

CU Professor of Biology Danny Bryan, who also serves as director for the University's Science & Math Academy, recently discussed his ongoing research of timber rattlesnake habitats on Nashville Public Television and presented a paper on the over-winter survival rates of timber rattlesnakes to the Tennessee Herpetological Society. Featured in the June 2007 issue of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' *District Digest*, Bryan's research project also recently received international exposure, appearing in the Corps' Washington, D.C.-based *Engineer Update*.

Dressler Visits Los Alamos, Signs Publisher's Contract



CU Professor of History Dr. Jim Dressler recently took part in a three-day seminar at Trinity Site in White Sands, N.M. The site is open only to a few select visitors once each year, and the seminar included time at Los Alamos Atomic Laboratory. Dressler has also signed a publisher's contract for the publication of his historical Civil War novel, *Dance with the Devil*.

Heifner to Review Textbook, Presents Paper at Historians' Conference

Dr. Fred Heifner, Dean of the Cumberland University School of Liberal Arts and Sciences, has been asked to review a current edition of an introductory textbook on philosophy by McGraw-Hill. Heifner, who also serves as a Professor of Anthropology, Philosophy and Religion at CU, recently presented a paper entitled "Creation Seen Through Indian Eyes" at the Tennessee Conference of Historians.

Women's Council to Present 'Fashion Your Financial Future'

On Saturday, Jan. 26, the Cumberland University Women's Council for Leadership & Philanthropy will host Fashion Your Financial Future -- a professional development event with an emphasis on success in the workplace and financial well-being. Slated to include information on investments, cash management and financial planning, the event will also include a "what not to wear" fashion show hosted by Certified Image Stylist Judith Taylor of Professionally Yours and a brief fitness segment hosted by Bobbie Mofield, a Certified Personal Trainer Group Exercise Instructor at Sports Village Fitness Center. Scheduled to be held in Labry Hall from 9 a.m. until 12:15 p.m., the event will be followed by lunch, networking and entertainment in Baird Chapel. Cost is \$15 and includes lunch. For more information, please contact Amber Sanders at 615.547.1241 or asanders@cumberland.edu. For more information on the Women's Council for Leadership & Philanthropy, visit <http://www.cumberland.edu/alumni/womenscouncil>.

IN MEMORIAM

Natalie Klein (2007) recently made her theatrical debut in California. Klein received her B.A. in Fine Arts, with an emphasis in theatre and a minor in dance in May. She has been selected to represent the State of Tennessee in a performance company known as the Young Americans. The Young Americans is a company that encompasses dance, singing and acting into a variety show. They hold performances in and around the Los Angeles area and also hold national and international tours. The tours are used as outreach to high schools around the globe, emphasizing the importance of music and drama in curriculum.

Cameka Sibert (2006) was recently named a "Guardian Angel" for her work in the Emergency Department at Saint Thomas Hospital. Sibert, who completed her RN degree at CU in 2006, recently celebrated her one year anniversary as a nurse. The Guardian Angel program allows patients or visitors to give a gift in honor of a care giver who made a difference in their time at Saint Thomas.

Robert E. Bomar (1939), founder of the Shelbyville (TN) Municipal Airport, was recently inducted into the Tennessee Aviation Hall of Fame. The airport was originally built by Bomar, begun while he was home on leave as a World War II Navy pilot in 1944. Prior to enlisting in the Navy, Bomar graduated from Cumberland University's first civilian pilot training class in 1939. From 1968 until 1992, Bomar devoted himself to the Shelbyville airport, according to the *Shelbyville Times-Gazette*. Upon his retirement in 1992, Bomar and his late first wife were named recipients of the State of Tennessee's Career Contributions to Aviation award.

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Alumni Association, Nashville Predators to celebrate 'Cumberland University Day'

The Cumberland University Alumni Association and the Nashville Predators will host "Cumberland University Day at the Nashville Predators" on Saturday, March 22, 2008, when the Preds will take on the Chicago Blackhawks at the Sommet Center. And though the puck drops at 2 p.m., Cumberland University alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends in the community are invited to a private, pre-game reception at the Sommet Center scheduled to begin at noon.

This special pre-game reception will feature a full lunch buffet and a raffle -- with a bevy of prizes slated to include Predators jerseys, select apparel and special autographed items and memorabilia from Music City's hockey club, now celebrating its 10th season in Nashville.

Tickets for "Cumberland University Day at the Nashville Predators" are \$35 each. The ticket price includes admission to the game, the pre-game reception and lunch, and all taxes and service charges. Fans participating in "Cumberland University Day" will be seated together in Section 327, which is located in the third tier of the Sommet Center near center ice.

On game day, those who attend the pre-game reception will enter the Sommet Center via the 501 Broadway entrance, located at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Broadway, according to CU Alumni Relations Intern and Student Government Association President Justin Bradford.

Perhaps the biggest hockey fan on the CU campus, Bradford played a key role

in helping facilitate the first-ever "Cumberland University Day at the Nashville Predators." "To say I'm excited about this event would be a tremendous understatement," Bradford, a Michigan native, laughed. "There's nothing quite like seeing an NHL contest in person. Once you've experienced all the excitement and fast-paced action professional hockey has to offer, it's easy to become a fan."

The private, pre-game reception, Bradford added, will provide a great opportunity for old friends and colleagues to socialize prior to taking to the stands to cheer on the Nashville Predators. "It's just going to be a great day for Cumberland," he noted. "I'd encourage everyone to come out, represent CU and enjoy

an awesome game. Our seats alone are worth the price of admission, and the private reception before the game is just the icing on the cake."

To download a ticket reservation form for the event, please visit the Cumberland University website at www.cumberland.edu/alumni/cudayatpreds. Free gifts will be provided to those who confirm their reservations on a first come, first served basis, according to Bradford. For more information, please contact Bradford at 615.547.1253 or via e-mail at jbbradford07@students.cumberland.edu. "I'd love nothing more than to see a few hundred of Cumberland University's own in the stands on March 22nd," Bradford said.



INSIDE: Q & A with alumna Laura Marsh: 'Nashville's Best Actress'



Cumberland University

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Giovanni shares poetry, life lessons with CU community

Though her writings have garnered international acclaim and secured her a spot among Oprah Winfrey's 25 "Living Legends, world-renowned poet and educator Nikki Giovanni offered much more than a poetry reading during a recent appearance at Cumberland University.

Giovanni, a University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech, told an audience in the June and Bill Heydel Fine Arts Center of her life experiences and the inspiration behind many of her most famous poems. She also offered up sage advice on the steps students should take in order to maximize their chances for success in life.

The first-ever recipient of the Rosa L. Parks Woman of Courage Award, Giovanni encouraged students to live life to the fullest, to cherish the company of friends and loved ones and to never doubt themselves or their abilities.

"She spoke timeless truths," CU President Harvill Eaton commented. "The clarity of her observations about people and their lives and situations were a lesson in themselves, but most importantly, she connected instantly and directly with Cumberland's students."

A native of Knoxville and a graduate of Fisk University, Giovanni shared stories of her life -- many of which offered valuable lessons and ignited the creative spark behind many of her award-winning works.

Before reading "I Am in Mexico," Giovanni explained the poem was written as she sat with her dying mother and that its writing proved to be therapeutic during deeply troubling times.

And although her words were at times somber, Giovanni's world-famous wit and sensibility dominated the hour-long appearance.

Following the event, Giovanni made ample time to visit with Cumberland students, faculty and guest from around the community. She shared even more stories, warm embraces and even took the time to sign books and pose for photographs with guests.

"We were so very fortunate to have one of the most prolific figures in American poetry here today," Cumberland University Assistant Professor of English Dr. Michael Rex said. "She is truly a national treasure, and it was an honor to have her visit our campus and share her works with us."

To view select clips from Giovanni's visit, check out Cumberland University's YouTube



Photo courtesy of Stephanie Walker

channel at www.youtube.com/CumberlandUniversity. Once there, you'll find footage of Giovanni sharing several of her poems, including "I Am in Mexico," "Tennessean by Birth" and "Howl."

Six New Members Join CU Board of Trust

Cumberland University's Board of Trust recently welcomed a half-dozen new members to its ranks, electing prominent corporate citizens and a pair of CU grads to serve as Board members.

"Cumberland University is proud to welcome these outstanding men and women to the Board of Trust," Board Chairman Edward L. Thackston said. "These six people have been highly successful in their respective fields. They bring a great deal of knowledge and expertise to the Board, and they're enthusiastic about Cumberland University's prospects for the future."

The newly elected members of the Cumberland University Board of Trust are:

- Vince Cherry, Chief Executive Officer, University Medical Center (Lebanon)
- Jacqueline West Cowden, Chief Executive Officer, Custom Packaging Inc. (Lebanon)
- Trent McCracken, President and Co-Owner, Spectrum Inc. (Cincinnati, Ohio)
- N.B. Forrest Shoaf, Senior Vice President & General Counsel, CBRL Group Inc. (Lebanon)
- Bill Vallett Jr., President, Lochinvar Corporation (Lebanon)
- Robert N. Vero, Ed.D., Chief Operating Officer, Centerstone (Nashville)
- Bob McDonald, Chair of the Board's Membership Committee, said the *(continued on page two)*



Homecoming 2007 - Cumberland University President Dr. Harvill C. Eaton and Mrs. June Heydel, long-time supporter of the arts at CU, congratulate 2007 Homecoming Queen Morgan Vero during the University's recent Homecoming celebration. Vero, a senior, represented the Jeanette C. Rudy School of Nursing.



A Message From The President

Dear friends,

By the time you read this, Christmas will have come and gone, but I am writing this note to you in early December -- so, for me, the holiday season is ramping up rather than winding down.

Last night, in fact, there was no mistaking that it was Christmastime in Lebanon. I visited Baird Chapel to see a packed house as more than 250 friends came to hear the University Singers begin the holiday season with their annual concert, "Sing We Now of Christmas." This special concert featured holiday music from around the world, a reflection of our goal to

ensure our students are exposed to all of the different cultures and traditions that make our world so grand.

Christmas at Cumberland is truly a special time.

I felt thankful after last night's wonderful concert. At the end of the celebration, I thanked the parents in the audience for their gifts to the Cumberland faculty and staff. I thanked them for sharing their most precious possessions with us -- their children. Cumberland is blessed to have them. They are the only reason for Cumberland.

I continue to be amazed at the programs we offer them, programs ranging from the traditional classroom lectures to visits from people like Nikki Giovanni. We offer them the opportunity to be coached by the likes of Woody Hunt and Dwayne Alexander, to be mentored by Dr. Mildred Saffel-Smith or even to chase rattlesnakes with Professor Danny Bryan. The space I am allotted in this issue does not allow me the room to list them all.

It's Christmas at Cumberland. Your gift to us is you. Our gift to you and our students is opportunity. Lois and I wish you and your families the very best for a healthy and prosperous new year!

Sincerely,


Harvill C. Eaton, Ph.D.
President

Alumni Alerts

New Officers Elected to Cumberland University Alumni Association

Congratulations to the new officers-elect of the Cumberland University Alumni Association! In mid-November, the Association elected Rick Bell (1989, 1996) as president, Jamey Eldridge (1996, 2000) as vice president and Becky Jennings as secretary. The new officers will assume their new positions on Jan. 1, 2008. Special thanks go to John Pope, Tracey Parks and Leann Lavender for their years of dedicated service as officers of the alumni association!

A New Way to Stay Connected: CU Alumni Now on MySpace.com

 The *Phoenix Rising* offers a quarterly glimpse into all of the latest news and events from Cumberland University. But, with such an active campus and alumni community, how can you stay up-to-date with all the latest happenings at One Cumberland Square and across the entire University family?

It's as simple as adding the Alumni Association to your list of friends at MySpace.com! Launched earlier this fall, the Alumni Association's presence on the original social-networking website has grown at an impressive rate. Already, the CU Alumni Association's MySpace list of friends has grown to more than 200!

So what are you waiting for? Surf on over to www.myspace.com/cumberlandalumni and make a new friend! Don't miss out on this opportunity to stay connected with your alma mater, share stories from your college days and maybe even reconnect with old friends from your days at Cumberland University! The new Alumni Association profile also offers up a bevy of photos, news and other information certain to make it a destination for all things Cumberland. We might even wind up in your 'Top 8.'

Vickers' Generosity Benefits Students

Nearly eight years ago, Harry G. Vickers and his late wife, Mary Neil, made a gift to Cumberland University to establish the Harry and Mary Neil Vickers Endowed Scholarship.

Both Vickers and his wife had connections to the University -- he was a member of the class of 1937, and she had graduated from Cumberland in 1936.

The decision to establish the endowed scholarship at Cumberland, Vickers recalled during a recent interview, was driven by his late wife and his daughter, Gwen Bottoms.

"My daughter is closely involved with education in Green Castle, Indiana. Her husband is president of DePauw University," Vickers said. "She was the one who planted the seed, so to speak, the one who initially suggested we should consider starting a scholarship. As my wife was a graduate of Cumberland University, we decided we would help establish a scholarship there."

While Vickers noted the idea of an endowed scholarship was new to him at the time, he said it has proven to be a worthwhile and rewarding decision.

"I like helping people who are in need. I get more joy out of that than anything else," Vickers said.

Over the years, the Vickers' gifts to Cumberland University have helped an untold number of students realize the dream of a college education. Many of them were among the first in their families to receive a college degree.

"Cumberland University and its students are very fortunate to count the Vickers family as a friend," CU Vice President for Advancement Dr. Garvin S. Maffett remarked. "Their generosity has helped build our endowment, and their legacy will include academic support for generations upon generations of Cumberland University students to come. The Vickers family is to be commended for its generosity and thoughtfulness." Vickers, the co-owner of Alabama-based

Six New Members Join CU Board of Trust

(continued from page one) new members are eager to begin working with the University and have already begun familiarizing themselves with the responsibilities associated with Board membership.

The new members, CU President Dr. Harvill Eaton added, represent a tremendous addition to the University as it seeks to meet and exceed the needs of a new generation of college students.

"These new Trustees will undoubtedly help us continue to move toward becoming the institution of choice for Generation Y," Eaton said. "We chose these men and women, not only because of their professional accomplishments, but because they strategically diversify the Board and enable us to address the demands of a totally new generation of students, Generation Y. Students who graduate today must be prepared for a new kind of workplace, one that is global and driven by technology that connects and informs instantly.

"At a pace that is very difficult to achieve at most universities, Cumberland is undergoing a transformational change necessary to be a part of this new world," Eaton concluded. "We led in 1842 when visionary leaders saw a very new world, and we are leading today in an even more fundamental way. I welcome the new Trustees to a great University!"

Trustees Cowden and McCracken share a common bond in that they are both graduates of Cumberland University. Cowden earned her A.A. from then-Cumberland College of Tennessee in 1975 and an M.S. from Cumberland University in 1995. McCracken, a former member of the CU Bulldog basketball program, was awarded his B.B.A. from Cumberland University in 1995.

Birmingham Hide & Tallow, was awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters during Cumberland's 165th Commencement Ceremony in May 2006.

In addition to Cumberland University, he includes St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis among his philanthropic priorities.

"You always hear that it is better to give than to receive," Vickers said. "Well, I would certainly argue that there's a lot of truth in that statement."



Harry and Mary Neil Vickers

Alumna Laura Marsh: 'Nashville's Best Actress'

Multi-talented '04 grad in spotlight following string of critically acclaimed performances

If you attended a stage production at Cumberland University between 2000 and 2004, chances are Laura Marsh is a familiar face. After all, as a member of CU's Phoenix Players, the Georgia native appeared in more than 10 shows at the June & Bill Heydel Fine Arts Center.

From drama to comedy and everything in between, Marsh has continued to enjoy a successful acting career since graduation.

And Music City has taken notice.

In the *Nashville Scene's* annual "Best of Nashville" edition published in October, veteran theatre critic Martin Brady named Marsh "Nashville's Best Actress."

"Laura Marsh has been making a lot of noise lately," Brady wrote, referencing Marsh's versatility in roles with GroundWorks Theatre and the Boiler Room Theatre. "... The kid's got talent."

Shortly after earning the distinguished title, the ever-modest young actress sat down for an interview with *The Phoenix Rising*.

PR: How long have you been interested in acting? Was it an interest that emerged at Cumberland, or was it something you'd always wanted to do?

LM: Honestly, I'm not really sure when I first became interested in acting. I can remember watching "Saturday Night Live" and thinking, "That looks like fun! I want to do that!" I started doing skits and things with a church group in junior high, and then I took drama classes in high school. By the time I got to Cumberland, I knew exactly what my major was going to be. I didn't even have to think about it.

PR: How did your time at Cumberland help prepare you for your career?

LM: Cumberland gave me more hands-on experience than I could have gotten anywhere else ... I got to help build sets and assistant direct in addition to

acting. I also worked with lighting, sound and even costumes. I was able to see theatre from every angle, to get varying perspectives and to see the importance of each aspect of a show and how they come together to create the final product. When I left Cumberland, I felt confident that I had a great deal of stage experience, and I was able to dabble in a variety of character types. It really helped me to feel at home on stage.

PR: How did you get your foot in the door, so to speak, of the Nashville acting scene?

LM: Two experiences really helped me along. The summer before I graduated from CU, I auditioned for the Nashville Shakespeare Festival. I didn't receive a role, but I was asked to participate in the apprentice company. Then, the following fall, (CU Dance Instructor) Pam Atha put me in touch with someone who needed dancers for the People's Branch production of an original musical called "Zombie's Can't Climb." The director of that show turned out to be the artistic director for Chaffin's Barn, where I had my first paying role. Even though I wasn't compensated for those first two jobs, I was able to meet a dozen working actors and directors in Nashville, most of whom I'd admired for years. I have since had the opportunity to work with many of them professionally.

PR: What was your reaction when you learned you'd been named Nashville's best actress?

LM: I was at work -- my day job, most of us have them -- and I'm pretty sure I just stood there with my mouth open for a while sputtering syllables but not quite forming words. Then, I started making phone calls and jumping up and down and squealing. I think the bank customers were pretty entertained.

PR: Career-wise, where do you hope to go from here?



Laura Marsh

LM: It's a question I've been asking myself for a very long time. I want to work. I love to work. There are lots of great opportunities in Nashville, and I am happy here for now. I love the theatre. I think pursuing another medium would be fun, and I might. I always wanted to see what soap operas were like. It's exciting and scary to have a world of possibilities before you. I think that's where I am. Sometimes, you have to see what you have before you can decide what you want.

CU TRAVEL UPDATE:

Besure to join the CU Alumni Association for the *Literature and Legends of the British Isles* in June 2008 for the newly reduced price of \$3,985 per person!



Point your web browser to www.cumberland.edu/alumni/tour for a detailed itinerary of this exciting trip! Tour stops are scheduled to include visits to a number of unforgettable sights, including Piccadilly Circus, Salisbury Cathedral, Stonehenge and Edinburgh Castle!

And, while you're visiting the Cumberland University website, feel free to tell us where you want Cumberland's new travel program to take you! The University's travel program is expanding and, in the future, we plan to offer an array of tours and trips ranging from weeks-long excursions around the globe to day trips to some of the spectacular attractions found in our own backyard! Please take our brief online survey by visiting our website at www.cumberland.edu/alumni/travelsurvey, and let us know what appeals to you and your family!

For more information on Cumberland University's newly formed travel program, please contact Breanne Kintz, coordinator of CU Travel Programs, at 615.547.1269 or via e-mail at bkintz@cumberland.edu.

See the world with CU!

Grays Honor Son's Memory with Gift to Café

Throughout the course of his life, there were many things Tommy Gray had in abundance. Chief among them were his family's love, faithful friends, charisma and compassion.

And though a tragic automobile accident claimed 16-year-old Tommy's life in 2001, Cumberland University Vice President for Administration Joe Gray and his wife, Doris, have strived to share their son's story, his spirit and his giving nature with an entire generation of young people.

Their efforts to do so first touched Cumberland University in 2006, when they made a \$5,000 gift to the University for the establishment of an activity center in Labry Hall. Now equipped with pool tables, video games and flat-screen televisions, the activity center offers students a place to congregate, to escape from the daily rigors of college life and to have a little fun.

"It seemed like a perfect fit for what Tommy would have wanted,"

Joe Gray said of the activity center, which has fast become a popular spot on campus. "In our home in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, we had a complete activities center in our basement. It had a pool table, Ping-Pong, Foosball, an entertainment system and video games. We always had many of Tommy's teammates from his swim team over, and parents loved it because they knew where their kids were."

Tommy, like his peers, loved to have fun. It was his compassion, however, that provided the Grays with the impetus to do so much in his memory.

"Tommy was an organ donor. It was a decision that he made on his own and one that we are very proud of," Joe Gray explained.

"It gave us solace that Tommy was still helping others, even in death. Much of what we do is to keep Tommy's memory alive -- to ensure he did not die in vain, and that some good came out of it."

As a result of the Gray family's commitment to their late son, numerous scholarships and other memorials have been established with the goal of helping young people and educating them about the

impact of bad judgment on the road.

One such project came as a result of Tommy's passion for soccer. He was an extremely talented player who always put the team first, his father recalled.

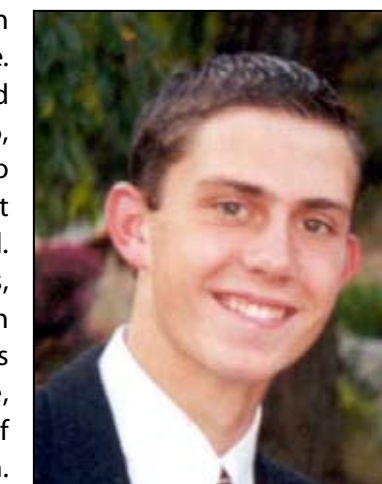
"Emmaus High School always played their soccer games at community fields that weren't always in the best of shape. After Tommy's death, we pushed to get a field built at the high school. The result was an all-purpose stadium named Memorial Field. The scoreboard has Tommy's name on it, and a permanent plaque rests by the home-field bench.

Tommy was a starting mid-fielder on the team. They finished second in the state and 11th in the country. Tommy was the only sophomore on the team."

The same fund that helped make Memorial Field a reality also provides scholarships each year to deserving Emmaus soccer players and swimmers.

Building upon the success of the new CU activity room, the Grays recently made a commitment to fund an entertainment/video room in the planned Cumberland Café. The room will be named in memory of Tommy.

"We hope this gift will give students a fun, safe place on campus to have a good time and to enjoy one another's company," Joe Gray said. "We also hope it will motivate others to make the Cumberland vision a reality, just as it happened with the athletic complex in Emmaus."



Tommy Gray