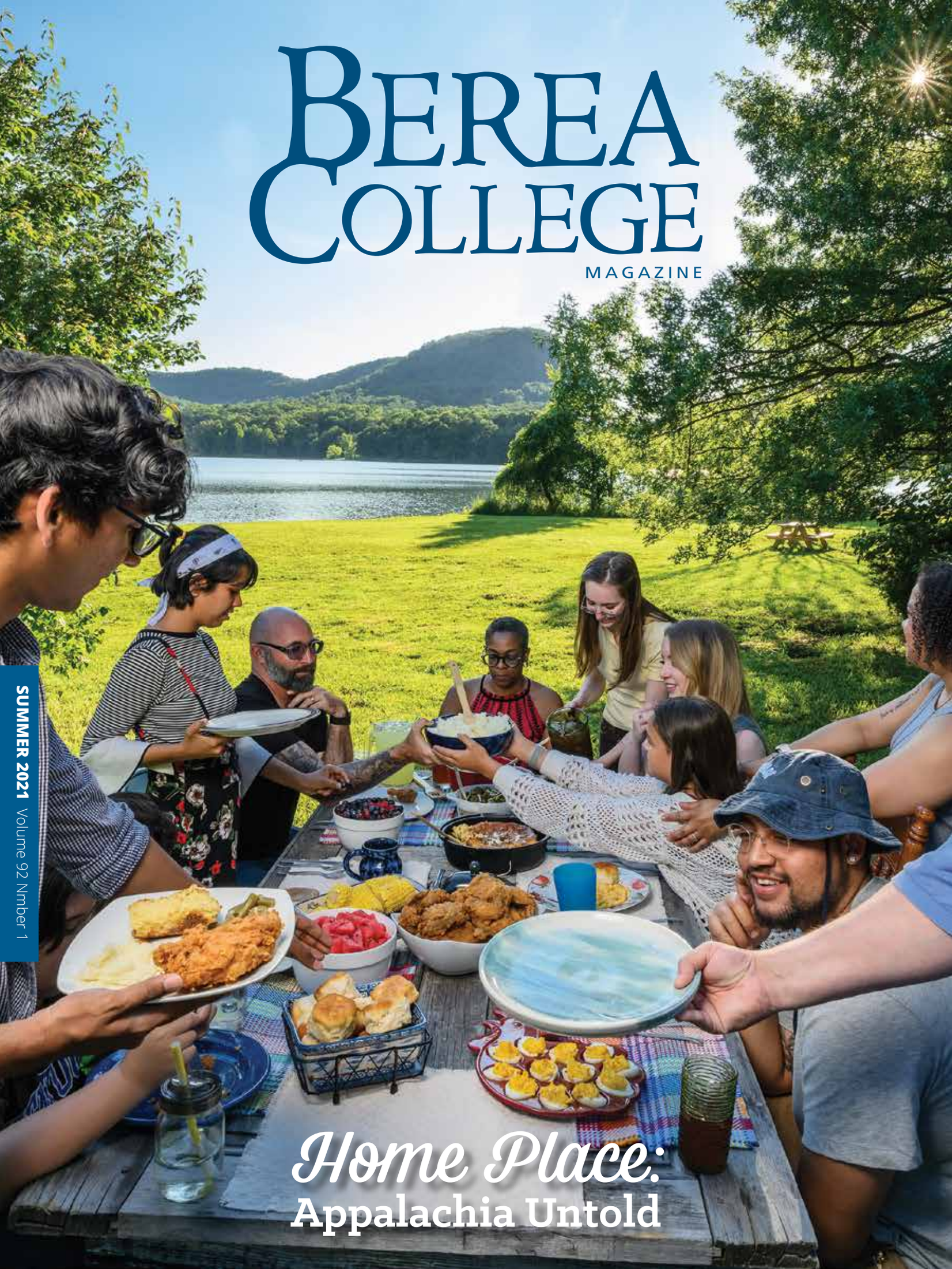
BEREA COLLEGE

MAGAZINE



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Appalachia Untold

BEREA COLLEGE MAGAZINE

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A Philanthropist's Heart

You might have noticed we've changed the name of our division from Alumni and College Relations to Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy.

Why? We wanted to be more inclusive of everyone who works in our division, such as those who bring you this informative and inspiring magazine. We also wanted our work to be more transparent to our generous alumni and friends. We think our new name accomplishes both goals.

Philanthropy seems the more fitting description of our work to perpetuate Berea College's mission well into the future. One definition of philanthropy is "voluntary action for the public good." The notion of public good is important because if something—in this case, higher education—isn't available to all members of our society, it becomes instead a private good. When you give to Berea, you support making a superior college education more accessible than it otherwise might be. That's the public good aspiration. That's about investing in lives of great promise.

Some folks assume wealth is a prerequisite for philanthropy, but that's not the case. The true philanthropist is one who puts supporting the public good ahead of one's own narrow financial interests. It is that generous spirit that is the true prerequisite for philanthropy whether or not one happens to be wealthy. I'm reminded of the parable of the widow's mite in the Christian gospels, in which a widow gives generously despite her poverty.

Here is an even more inspiring example. In 2013, the College began Berea Patrons, a student-led philanthropy group to educate students about how the College provides Tuition Promise Scholarships to all admitted students. Students become Patrons by donating a portion of their labor earnings back to the College each pay period. In so doing, they affirm that philanthropy is about generosity rather than wealth.

Now, more than 60 percent of enrolled students belong to Berea Patrons. To date, Berea Patrons are closing in on almost $175,000 of cumulative philanthropy, each patron giving anywhere from $1 to $10 back to Berea each pay period. For a first-year student, that average gift is a little over half an hour of pay per check given back. Again, the widow's mite example is relevant: she, like the Patrons, gave at a bigger fraction of income than other wealthier givers. These student philanthropists have funded almost 60 Tuition Promise Scholarships. That is generosity in action.

We are proud of just how many Berea students are philanthropists even before they graduate. We hope this is an inspiration for every alumnus and friend to consider in your own philanthropy. As Patrons proudly say, "I'm a philanthropist."

—Chad Berry
Vice President for Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy

To learn more, visit **https://bit.ly/Philanthropist-Heart** or scan this QR code with your smart device.

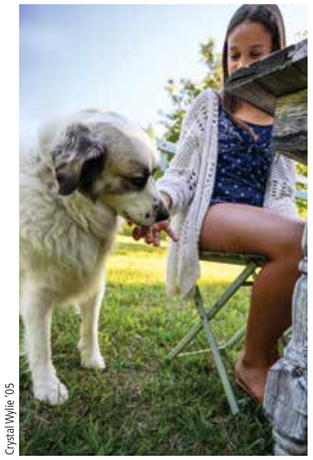
LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Berea Alumni and Friends,

I am not from Appalachia. But I am a product of Appalachia.

I always say I'm not really from anywhere. I grew up a military brat—both my parents served in the U.S. Air Force for most of my childhood. I lived in various states and another country, so there never was a place that felt like home—except Kentucky. My mom was born and raised in Kentucky, so it's where we traveled on holidays and summer breaks. My dad was born and raised in northeastern Pike County, Ky., in Belfry, just one mile from the West Virginia border.

So it didn't matter if we lived in the desert of New Mexico, the plains of Oklahoma or the tropics of coastal Japan; I grew up knowing how to make the perfect sweet tea, playing outside until you heard momma's whistle and rooting for Miss Kentucky in the televised Miss America pageants every year. I understood the importance of hard work and the value of education, though neither of my parents attended college. Their dreams and aspirations were big—even if not fully realized—and their expectations were high.



Crystal Wylie '05

There are numerous behind-the-scenes shots from our cover photo shoot at Owsley Fork Reservoir in Berea, Ky., that capture the essence of the Home Place. Nothing says home like a child feeding her dog under the table. Visit our website, **https://magazine.berea.edu**, for more behind-the-scenes photos and video.

Today, I've lived in Kentucky for more than half my life, and I married a Berea alumnus from wild and wonderful West Virginia. I've been surrounded by the beauty, diversity and uniqueness of Appalachia longer now than I was absent from it. And though I've observed a lot and assimilated some, there still is so much about this place and people that I learn every day.

In this issue of the *Berea College Magazine,* I hope you'll get a taste for the rich diversity that makes up this region, as students, alumni and faculty share their experiences and perspectives growing up and/or serving in Appalachia. We all know there are myths and off-putting stereotypes about Appalachia that have permeated mainstream culture. But, I hope this issue illustrates the marvelous concepts Loyal Jones describes in his book "Appalachian Values"—individualism, self-reliance and pride, neighborliness and hospitality, family solidarity, personalism, love of place, modesty and being one's self, sense of beauty and sense of humor. That's exactly what we tried to portray on the cover of the magazine: hospitality shared through a large family meal where people from all backgrounds are welcomed at the table, gathered in the picturesque beauty of the Appalachian landscape.

As you read stories from our students about their upbringing and connection to the region and stories from our alumni about their activism and service to the region they call home, I hope you are reminded of why Berea's mission in Appalachia is enduring and important. And I hope you learn something new about how Berea's eighth Great Commitment to serving Appalachia has impacted the region and the people since the College's founding.

Abbie Tanyhill Darst '03
Editor

Reclaiming the Island

By James Branscome '68

In the summer of 1968, following graduation from Berea College, I had a full scholarship to attend graduate school at Johns Hopkins University. A Ford Foundation staff member showed up on campus to recruit an Appalachian to be part of the Foundation's new leadership development program. Former Berea professor Bill Best '59 suggested to him I would be a good candidate. I dropped the idea of graduate school and became a Ford Foundation Fellow with a stipend for expenses to cover a year of learning about economic development.

In January 1969, I landed at the newly founded Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in Washington, D.C. To my astonishment, I was a bit of a celebrity because I was one of three or four people out of about 125 at the agency who was from the region, and quite a few of the staff knew the reputation of Berea College. I persuaded the agency to start a youth leadership development program and got busy increasing the number of Appalachians at the agency. I hired Betty Jean Hall '68, Garry Abrams '69 and Barbara Durr Fleming '68 full time and Jan Hill Reid '69 as an intern.

Jim Branscome holds the Dec. 12, 1971 issue of *New York Times Magazine*, in which his cover story on coal strip mining in Appalachia appeared. This article helped lead to federal regulations in 1972, and perpetuated Branscome's journalistic career.

We were a small infiltrating army of Bereans at an agency that had described Appalachia as "an island of poverty in a sea of affluence." We had some success in starting new programs around the region, but investing in people was not that popular in an agency geared to invest in "things" such as roads, vocational schools and a variety of other public works programs.

ARC has had some successes in Central Appalachia, the 60-county region that ARC identifies as the main coal-mining counties in four states. There now are better roads in the region. The agency provided funding for the redevelopment of Pikeville, Ky., and Grundy, Va., turning Pikeville into a celebrated growth center at one time and solving major flooding issues in both places.

I remember a statistic from my time at ARC: Central Appalachia residents had median income that was about 64 percent of the average income in the U.S. Today, Central Appalachia has median income of 62.2 percent of the nation, primarily because of the dramatic decline in coal production and partly because none of the war-on-poverty programs launched in the 1960s had a very dramatic long-lasting impact.

> We were a small infiltrating army of Bereans at an agency that had described Appalachia as 'an island of poverty in a sea of affluence.'
> – Jim Branscome

President Lyndon Johnson declared the War on Poverty at Tom Fletcher's home in Martin County, Ky. Fletcher, who was enrolled in a new job training program, learned to change spark plugs, he said, but never found a job. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman passed out the first food stamps in the U.S. in Mingo County, W. Va., keeping President John F. Kennedy's pledge to "do something" when he campaigned there for president. Mingo County has now lost a higher percentage of its population since 1970 than any other county in the U.S. Martin County remains one of the poorest in the country, as well.

While still a student at Berea, I met *New York Times* reporter Ben Franklin, who was profiling the College as part of a series on Appalachia. When the *Times* magazine editors in 1971 were looking for a story about coal strip mining in the mountains, Franklin suggested I write it. It became a cover story, was read into the Congressional Record by Sen. John Sherman Cooper and helped propel the movement for federal strip-mine legislation.

That same year, my wife, Sharen, whom I had met at ARC while she helped recruit nurses to the region, joined Mike Clark '67, who was in charge of the Appalachian Program at the Highlander Research and Education Center in east Tennessee. Clark and I co-founded the Southern Appalachian Leadership Training Program that ran for 25 years, training community leaders to start economic development projects and to effectively make government responsive to their needs. One of the projects we supported at Highlander was Betty Jean Hall's Coal Employment Project that won the right for women to work as highly paid coal miners.

So, half a century later, what policies and programs would I suggest to really help the Appalachian region? I'm now convinced the solution to poverty is money in people's pockets. What I have in mind is a universal basic income—"assured income" may be a better term—that is now being supported by policy wonks on both the right and left of national politics. There have been small demonstrations of assured-income programs, such as in Stockton, Calif., which showed that a level of support did not lead to freeloading, but instead enabled people to sufficiently improve their opportunities to get full-time jobs. We should do a national demonstration of basic income support in the 60 counties of Central Appalachia.

A base level of income would allow young people to remain in the region, "refugees" who have left the region to return, and it would allow everyone to raise their income level to the point that they can concentrate their attention on revitalizing the region. At a time when climate change is raising sea levels, western drought and fires are threatening the growth of half of the nation's fruits and vegetables in California, and the COVID-19 pandemic is demonstrating people can work from anywhere, it's time to think about what revitalizing and repopulating the mountains could do not only for Appalachia but also for rural areas across the nation.

In addition, we need to recognize that Appalachia, while poor, pays much higher rates for social services than the rest of the nation—40 percent higher across the region. Through RIPmedicaldebt.org, which buys medical debt for a penny on each dollar, Sharen and I started an Appalachian campaign to pay off the $240 million of available medical debt primarily in Appalachia's poorest counties. So far, $192 million of that debt has been relieved, people's credit records have been cleared and they are now freed to use credit again for income support.

While much of the national reporting on the region about how far behind we are economically still is negative, there are very exciting things happening in communities all over the region to get on a growth path. Recreation, revitalizing crop potential, alternative energy, broadband, restoring abandoned mine land with native trees and vegetation, and a host of other efforts are demonstrating mountaineers are pulling themselves up by their bootstraps. We need an income assurance program to put Appalachia on sound footing so we never again have to be called "an island of poverty in a sea of affluence."


Crystal Wylie '05

The oldest sweet tea recipe in print comes from a community cookbook called *Housekeeping in Old Virginia*, by Marion Cabell Tyree, published in 1879:
"After scalding the teapot, put into it one quart of boiling water and two teaspoonfuls green tea. If wanted for supper, do this at breakfast….Fill the goblets with ice, put two teaspoonfuls granulated sugar in each, and pour the tea over the ice and sugar. A squeeze of lemon will make this delicious and healthful...." —from **https://whatscookingamerica.net**

The Joy Underneath

By Jason Lee Miller

Every other summer, the blue and white Berea College bus winds its way over a narrow, mountainous road in eastern Kentucky, rock wall to the left, nothing but sky to the right, as the tires edge the cliffs and the passengers hold their breath. Soon, the coach will land along a ridge where riders exit, look out over Virginia, and understand that once upon a time you could see mountaintops from here. A man will meet them against the backdrop of a scarred landscape and tell them about the legacy of coal and mountaintop removal.

The group has just left Lynch, Ky., an old coal camp where they met with miners and heard their stories in the pews of the local church. From here they will descend to Big Stone Gap for the night and take in the local theater. And they will be tired. Yesterday was the Cowan Creek Community Center and the Pine Mountain Settlement School, where they learned country dancing. Tomorrow is Knoxville for an exploration of urban Appalachia and, after four days on the road, the tourists will return to Berea, exhausted and myth-busted.

This is a journey known as the Appalachian Tour, a rite of passage for new staff and faculty at Berea College dating back to at least the 1950s. The general idea is that if you are coming to work at Berea, you will need to know where many of your students are coming from.

As director of the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center, Dr. Chris Green leads this biennial event. He doesn't plan the trip—he "choreographs" it.

"I have to choreograph that by connections [to people]," he said. "I have to choreograph it by path, meaning where do we go earlier? Where do we go later? How do we make a circle of it?"

He also does a demographic analysis of where Berea College students are from in Appalachia and choreographs the tour to try to reach these places.

"There are many different Appalachias," Green said, referring to the diverse communities that exist within the 1,500-mile mountain range that is home to 28 million Americans across 13 states. Berea's Appalachian Tour focuses more locally, the central Appalachian region that includes eastern Kentucky, southern West Virginia, western Virginia and east Tennessee. Even within this more limited slice of the mountains there are diverse populations to encounter and diverse landscapes that are rural, urban and industrial.

The tour begins in Berea with a full-day seminar on the region that includes Appalachian speakers and literature. In the past this has included Appalachian writers like Kentucky Poet Laureate Crystal Wilkinson and novelist Silas House, with literature and lectures from both. In addition to the literary, the readings include topics like heritage, stereotypes, language and identity, and policies that affected the region.

It takes Green about six months to choreograph a triumph of logistical

Clockwise from bottom right: Amy Harmon '95, John Harmon '95, Julianna O'Brien and Molly Smith '15 pose for a selfie on the Berea College tour bus during the 2018 Appalachian Tour.

Director of Foundation Relations and Family Philanthropy Melissa Strobel (bottom left) and Assistant Professor of Family Studies Dr. Dee Hill-Zuganelli (third row, third from left in white shirt) join the group against a mountainous background on the 2016 Appalachian Tour.

Kelly Linville '01

The view from Black Mountain, Kentucky's highest peak, shows the scarred landscape left from mountaintop removal.

planning that covers four days on the road with every minute accounted for, the bus reserved, the people contacted and scheduled and the stops coinciding with events that are taking place. This is possible because of the willingness of the local experts to help—that in itself is a measure of their respect for Berea College's enduring connection to the region, President Lyle Roelofs said.

"It's a beautiful job to find a way to help people have an immersive experience," Green said. "They get to go to new places, have an adventure, have fun, learn a lot and bond."

Green notes that people who work in higher education tend to be travelers. They take their expertise to places around the nation and world, but they may not have much familiarity with where they end up.

"Berea is a little bit different," he said, "because staff and faculty choose to come to Berea for the opportunity but also the mission, which means they feel called to it."

But the fact remains that even people from the region may not have as much familiarity with the area as one might expect.

"Coming from the region, I don't think I've ever called myself Appalachian until I was taught that was the word for being from that area," said Maggie Smith '16. "It's just not something you talked about in high school. We just thought we were country."

Smith helped organize the tour as a student in 2014, while working at the Appalachian Center. She also was the lone student permitted to attend that year.

"The fact that Berea has a line item in their budget for people to go and learn firsthand about the region is really special," Smith said. "We can see images on a piece of paper, or on our screens, but until you're actually walking on the ground and experiencing people, one-to-one, in person, there's a different feeling about that. There's something about it that really sticks with you."

Experiencing the place in person changes people. Dr. Dee Hill-Zuganelli went on the tour just as he arrived in Berea in 2016, before assuming his duties as assistant professor of Family Studies. Though Hill-Zuganelli is originally from nearby Elizabethtown and spent a significant amount of time in Lexington, he knew very little about the region Berea College served.

"My experience of Appalachia was really limited to what I heard on the news and about problems affecting the communities there," he said. "What changed me was that I met people and learned about how important it is to resist narratives like that. People living in Appalachia have to contend with the changing landscape around the coal economy, they do have to contend with

mountaintop removal, and some communities are ravaged by opioid use. But I had to quit defining Appalachian people by those problems. You can't really appreciate what life is really like in Appalachia unless you actually get in it and see it and talk to people."

Melissa Strobel, director of Foundation Relations and Family Philanthropy, attended the same tour as Hill-Zuganelli. She came from New England in 2015 and admits she knew very little about Kentucky or the Appalachian region before moving to Berea.

"Understanding Appalachia feels like a prerequisite for doing your job well," she said. But "Appalachia wasn't something we learned about in school in Massachusetts."

She recounts that one stop along the way was at a man's front yard. The group disembarked from the bus there to listen to his story of losing his land to the building of a prison.

"It wasn't an outsider's tour," said Strobel. "It was an insider's tour. That's something I think only Berea could deliver. You can't do that on your own."

The idea that it's an insider's tour that is a prerequisite for doing your job well is echoed in the sentiments of Dr. Valeria Watkins, student support advisor for the Black Music Ensemble. As an advisor, Watkins says the experience of gaining knowledge about Appalachia has helped her in relation to Appalachian students who might be reluctant to open up.

Jason Lee Miller

The Berea College tour bus and Appalachian Tour attendees stop on the Virginia side of Black Mountain to learn about the legacy of mountaintop removal.

A group from the 2018 tour stands on the steps of the Southwest Virginia Museum. Loyal Jones Appalachian Center Director Dr. Chris Green (back right) "choreographs" the tour every even-numbered year.

"There's something about the Appalachian South where you just don't air dirty laundry in front of other people, especially someone that's not the same race as you," Watkins said. "So I found that I could talk about Appalachia in my experience and assist students in feeling comfortable, that I was not judging how they were raised but that I was here to help them process it. We start working on tough issues…abuse, poverty, racial bias, integrity. [The Appalachian Tour] had a profound impact on my work with all students, even those students who are not from Appalachia."

As a teacher, Dr. Hill-Zuganelli relates that the tour helped dispel common myths about the region, especially when it comes to its racial and cultural diversity. This has helped him relate to his students.

"You need to know where at least most of our students come from," he said. "You've got to go to the places because if you don't, all you really have is some pretty restricted narratives about what you hear about Appalachia. The reality is, our kids, when they come here, can tell you, one, it's not like that, and then two, that they recognize the limits of where they grew up. When you get to know students from the region, you get a sense of what they're bringing and the importance of getting this education that for a lot of Appalachians is not accessible."

Each of these tour attendees used the same phrase to describe it: "eye-opening." They learned about the realities, the myths, the struggle, and the successes in ways they had not anticipated. Abstract impressions from a distance were replaced by connections to real people and their stories and situations. And for each, the Appalachian Tour was essential for understanding the mission of Berea College and their roles within it.

"I want to help our staff and faculty to see they are working with a community," Dr. Green said. "We are partners with people in the region, and we have a lot to learn. At the same time, I get to have these joyful connections with people. It's always about the joy underneath it, too." B

GROW APPALACHIA

Grow Appalachia's Berea Kids Eat program has worked directly in Berea since 2016 to fight childhood hunger, increase healthy food access and support community food resiliency. To date, the program has served more than 400,000 meals to youth while supporting health and wellness initiatives and food security programming for low-income communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Berea Kids Eat partnered with local businesses to provide meals for local children who were no longer receiving regular meals at school.

Provided meals for
360 days
of the year, starting
March 21, 2020

421,756 meals
served to youth
ages 18 and under

5,800
locally sourced
meal kits
for entire
households

Invested over
$75,000
in local farm purchases
with 16 small producer,
independently owned farms
(including more than
4,000 lbs in Berea College
Farm products)

Prioritized supporting local businesses by partnering with three local restaurants (Subway, Native Bagel, Hitz BBQ), with more than
$175,000
in local restaurant
purchases

Assisted by
46
community
volunteers

0 cases of COVID-19 contracted

Grow Appalachia received a $30,000 grant from the Cigna Foundation to work in partnership with school systems and the surrounding communities to supplement existing programming for children to help close nutrition gaps both within and outside of the school environment. Learn more about this grant on page 42.

The Storytellers of Appalachia

By Daniela I. Pirela Manares '20

Eastern Kentucky saw a new day when Appalshop unveiled the largest net-metered renewable energy system in the area in June 2019. The solar panels were installed to address the growing energy costs that affect the community and are expected to save Appalshop itself $8,400 per year. Collaboration and communication to meet the needs of the community are at the core of Appalshop's mission, but the organization had not previously pursued a project so big and with so much potential for favorable community impact.

For more than 50 years, Appalshop has been dedicated to educating and empowering Appalachian communities by creating media that breaks stereotypes and tells the real stories of Appalachian people. What started as a small group creating films to counteract a pejorative narrative became an institution that includes theatre productions, radio, its own music labels, a literary journal and multiple workshops.

"We pursued the solar pavilion project to address a very specific community need," said Alex Gibson '08, Appalshop's executive director. He explained that the two-year project was conceived through the realization that there was a monopoly on utilities services in the area.

"In order to reach a decision, we did what we have done for more than 50 years at Appalshop, which is engaging in community-based dialogues to try and address problems," Gibson said. "And when enough conversations had been had, it was clear this was the [appropriate] solution."

Crystal Wylie '05

Alex Gibson '08 delivered Berea's 2018 mid-year commencement address. He earned his Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 2012. He also earned certificates in international comparative law from Queen Mary at the University of London, England and in Thai and Southeast Asian studies from Payap University in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

For Gibson and Appalshop, listening to the community's needs is the key for progress. "When I was a Bonner Scholar at Berea, we went to Mexico, and we wanted to do something—we had to come up with an idea," he said. "We wanted to do all these crazy things, and once we spoke to the community, they wanted a swimming pool."

After helping build the pool for the community in Mexico and seeing the tourism success that ensued, Gibson realized that good work starts simply. "What would some overeducated Bonner Scholars know about this?" he remembers thinking. "It's sharing with humility and listening. That is why at Appalshop we try not to be overbearing, controlling or blind—we can have an idea, but we are not attached to it—and letting that go for what the community wants is key to the impact of the work we do."

Gibson heard about Appalshop through Berea because, as he describes, "everything of value in my life came from Berea."

"Understand that Berea is unique and special," Gibson said about his college experience. "Everything is either connected to Berea, or pain, or pain that happened to me before Berea that shaped some angry feelings that Berea transformed into something more thoughtful."

After growing up with the loss of his parents, brother and grandparents, he switched schools to a predominantly Black high school in Mississippi. Before then, he came from a predominantly white school in Eastern Kentucky. He struggled to fit in at either.

In Mississippi, he connected with the only Mexican student in his school and spent each summer through the rest of high school traveling with him to missions in Mexico that focused on indigenous people. From that moment, Gibson found himself attracted to learning more about marginalized communities in the world.

"I love finding these little places in the world where folks are not as glamorous, where you get to see the way a country puts its life together, the way a culture is manifested and built," Gibson said.

Seeing how countries have different disputes and conflicts of their own and incorporating his time at Berea, Gibson was able to earn the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship to study identity making in countries such as India, Thailand and Venezuela.

"Like with Appalachians, I'm seeing this underdog, this consistent person who everybody is making fun of," Gibson said. "The jokes are all the same, which happen from New Yorkers to Appalachians, that they are backwards, ignorant, have too many kids, and on and on."

Gibson was attracted to Appalshop because of its commitment to narrative building. To him, identity is built on narrative, and Appalachia needs more art and stories from true Appalachian people.

> "In order to reach a decision, we did what we have done for more than 50 years at Appalshop, which is engaging in community-based dialogues to try and address problems."
> – Alex Gibson '08

"Storytellers are like any other most critical development," he observed. "The stories we consume are as important as the food we eat. And they have perhaps a stronger impact, because the stories you consume determine the foods you consume."

When asked what advice he would give to Appalachian students, Gibson highlighted the importance of having a free space for all kinds of dialogue.

For non-Appalachian students, he believes the best way to contribute to the community is to connect and speak with Appalachian people themselves. After all, he said, collective work is the definition of community work.

This renovated warehouse in downtown Whitesburg, Ky., is home to Appalshop. The multimedia arts organization operates a radio station, theater, public art gallery, record label, archive, filmmaking institute, reproductive justice program and community development program, along with an array of other initiatives.

Appalshop will also continue its work focusing on racial issues. Gibson points out that there is an invisible sector of people whose needs are not being met, which he categorizes in levels of "invisible visibility."

He explains that Black, Latinx and Asian Americans are some groups left sitting on the sidelines. An example he sees is the many Mexican restaurants in small towns where multiple Latin Americans work but are not engaging with the rest of the community. If they are not being reached out to, they will remain invisible.

It is here where Appalachia's storytellers come in.

"We have to highlight those experiences in that part of the identity of Appalachia and think about what that storytelling would look like—and hiring more people of color is our immediate focus," Gibson explained.

"The important thing for me is that the actions we take are meaningful and not just us hopping on a bandwagon," he continued.

Gibson believes anybody can create their own Appalshop for their area. "We will not have any change unless we get incredible organizing and really good stories that help us understand that a Southeast Asian, Latin American and an African all have the same interests at heart instead of bickering about the small little things that separate them."

100 Years of Educational Innovation

Mae Suramek '95

Long before bookmobiles or Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, Berea College librarians were steering covered wagons into rural mountain towns, bringing books to communities that lacked this precious resource. The wagons were outfitted with built-in wooden shelves, packed to the edges with hundreds of books and pulled by horses from the College farm.

The Berea book wagons, and later book cars, were one way that the College lived its commitment to serve the Appalachian region in the early 1900s. While Berea's library extension service ended in 1943, its spirit can be seen in the work of Partners for Education (PFE). For the past 25 years, PFE has helped create equitable educational opportunities in Appalachian Kentucky by implementing programs such as GEAR UP, Upward Bound and Promise Neighborhoods. Through this work, PFE staff built the capacity of schools and communities to support approximately 50,000 students each year. In 2020, the staff determined to enhance its impact by launching the Rural Library Network to recognize the important role libraries play in rural communities.

The inspiration for the network came from several places. Growing up in Crab Orchard, Ky., PFE Executive Director Dreama Gentry '89 knew firsthand just how valuable libraries were to rural communities. "Our closest public library was in Stanford—about 30 minutes away," she recalled. "In the summers, I was able to visit there while my grandma was with her mom at the nursing home visiting. It was a great place that was an amazing escape."

For most of her professional life, Gentry focused on building the capacity of school systems to support educational opportunity for rural students.

"A few years ago, I began thinking about how libraries are essential to rural education, and I remembered seeing a picture of the Berea book wagons," Gentry said. "I began to wonder what that work would look like today."

Her experience building Partners for Education gave her a solid grounding in the challenges facing educational systems in the region. What she needed was expertise in how libraries could help support that work.

Fortunately, Gentry had a strong working relationship with fellow Berean Shane Garver '04, vice president of rural education for Save the Children. She first collaborated with Garver in 2011, when their organizations partnered on the very first Promise Neighborhood grant. Both organizations share a philosophy that lasting change must be place-based, with local leadership and with broad community involvement.

"Libraries are uniquely positioned to support place-based initiatives to improve community outcomes, Gentry explained. "In place-based initiatives, people who live and work together unite to address a challenge by finding the solutions that will work best for their communities."

Dreama Gentry '89

Shane Garver '04

Berea College Special Collections and Archives

Berea College book wagon making a stop to deliver books to an Appalachian family.

"We are national co-thought leaders in this work where ideas like the rural library network come to life, Garver added. "We figure out what we're good at and set aside our own agendas for the betterment of rural America."

Inspired by his hometown librarian, Garver recalls how Miss Pat saw potential in him and asked him to volunteer to read to younger kids, which helped him build his own sense of self and a desire to help others.

The Rural Library Network takes a two-pronged approach to supporting people working in rural libraries. First, there are monthly webinars and an annual online summit where rural librarians from across the country share best practices and learn from each other. Second, there is a year-long fellowship for 22 rural librarians that offers training and resources to increase third-grade reading outcomes in their communities. The fellowship focuses on third-grade reading because research has shown that children who read on or above grade level in third grade triple their chances of attending college.

While Gentry and Garver laid the foundation for the Rural Library Network, other Berea alumni are deeply involved with the work. Ashley Wagers '11 returned to her hometown to serve as director of the Jackson County Public Library. She is a member of the Rural Library Network and has been a speaker for the monthly webinar series. Wagers credits her Berea College education for broadening her world view.

"Berea College made me 50 percent of who I am," she said. "Berea taught me to ask questions, and that no matter who you are, your perspective is important."

Wagers believes the public library plays a vital role in bringing relevant and timely information, resources and programming to her community. She also is a firm believer that a library's success depends on its capacity to partner with other community organizations—the very foundation of the place-based model for the Rural Library Network. As a result, during her tenure in the past three years, the Jackson County library has housed a GED testing center, a Kentucky Skills U adult education course and a telehealth program for veterans. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the library created an online digital database, provided virtual cooking classes, offered online homeschool resources and organized drive-through distribution of books and food.

Berea College Special Collections and Archives

Children with books from the Berea College book wagon.

"During the shut-downs some businesses were considered essential," Wagers said, "but libraries were vital."

Wendy Johnston '89, PFE program manager with Rural Impact–Networks, grew up in southern West Virginia where she volunteered at her local library every summer. After graduating from Berea College, she completed a master's degree in library science and worked in many capacities in rural libraries in and around her home community. She returned to Berea last year to manage the Rural Library Fellowship. Johnston is passionate about Appalachian communities and the libraries that help fill important gaps for children and families.

"We can't be all things for all people, but we can be the important things for people who need them," Johnston said.

Johnston works with Dr. Regina Washington '93, the new director of Rural Impact–Networks. Washington, who has spent her career studying and addressing public health disparities, hopes to advance rural education by providing a larger platform to share ideas, lift up diversity of practices and systematically address disparities.

"Growing up in Martinsburg, W. Va., the library was a great equalizer for me," Johnston said. "My mom always instilled in me that 'education is the key,' and my public library provided me with resources and research essential for my school assignments."

Ensuring equitable access to educational opportunity has long been the motivating force behind the work of many Bereans. So, it's not surprising that 100 years after the book wagon project ended, a network of Berea alumni—working in national rural-focused organizations and leading local libraries in their own communities—is developing the creative vision to continue these efforts in the 21st century.

Listen to Dreama Gentry '89 talk more about PFE's Rural Library Network initiative at **https://bit.ly/PFELibraryNetwork**

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CRAFT GALLERY

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***Alysia Mora** is a Berea College graduate with a degree in Art History. She is currently the BereaCorps Retail Associate and manages the Log House Craft Gallery. For her, cooking is an art and a way to connect with her family, culture and history. It was something she took for granted when living at home, but as a college student, it soothed her homesickness. Cooking was also a way to create community. She loves to cook with friends and family. For her, community happens in the kitchen as well as at the dinner table. Her go-to recipes are variations of Puerto Rican food that everyone makes differently. The recipe here is one she learned from her family.*

HABICHUELAS GUISADAS (STEWED BEANS)

Ingredients:

- A bit of vegetable oil
- 2 cans drained, rinsed kidney beans.
- 1½ cups water
- 1 packet of Sazón
- 2-3 tablespoons Sofrito paste* (a mix of garlic, onion, cilantro, green bell pepper, roasted red peppers)
- Adobo
- Garlic powder
- Oregano
- Black pepper
- A handful of pimento-stuffed olives
- About ½ lb of potatoes peeled and cut into small chunks
- 8 oz can of tomato sauce

Directions:

Pour a bit of oil and the sofrito paste* in a large pot and sauteé over medium heat for a couple of minutes. Add the tomato sauce, beans, water, and Sazón. Season the water with the Adobo, garlic powder, oregano, and pepper. Taste the water and adjust to your liking. Add the potatoes and olives; bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes or until potatoes are cooked. Enjoy!

***Sofrito** is a base that goes in a lot of foods. Where I am in Kentucky, it can be hard to find ingredients like culantro (sawtooth coriander) and aji dulce or cubanelle peppers – which I would normally use. You can improvise with what you have. For example, I use roasted red peppers instead of aji dulce and double the amount of cilantro instead of using culantro. Put it all in a food processor and freeze the resulting paste in an ice cube tray for easy removal and later use.

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Remembering the Harlan Renaissance

By Jason Lee Miller

When the late Alex Haley, author of "Roots," took William Turner to the Museum of Appalachia in Norris, Tenn., a short distance from the Haley estate, both men were surprised to find no mention of African Americans there. The proprietors of the museum in 1988 might have consulted Turner, a native of the coal town Lynch, Ky., and co-editor of the now classic "Blacks in Appalachia" (1985) as an authority on the subject who could confirm, that yes, indeed, Black people live there, too.

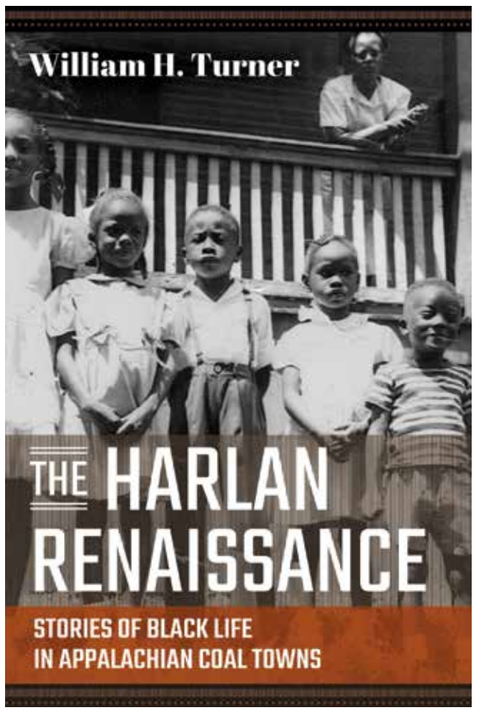
William H. Turner

The seeming invisibility of this population, as well as Haley's urging, inspired Turner to write a new book: "The Harlan Renaissance: Stories of Black Life in Appalachian Coal Towns."

In this book, Turner, retired distinguished professor of Appalachian Studies at Berea College, takes readers on a tour of the Black community living in "the Cadillac of coal towns" in the 1950s and '60s, where Turner was born and lived until he went off to college. It was a time and place that, in its heyday, was the "cultural and social epicenter" for Blacks in Appalachian Kentucky and Virginia.

In Harlan County's town of Lynch, named for a president of U.S. Steel, the company that founded it, readers are introduced to the clockwork regularity of the lives of Black coal miners and their families, whose existence was "up—just a tad—from slavery." Though living, learning and worshipping separately from the white population, they eked out a standard of living that mirrored the white mining families. They collected the same paychecks, shopped at the same company store and made the same daily "mantrips" into the mines, where darkness and danger erased any differences.

At the base of Black Mountain, Turner deftly guides the reader through various gathering places—the pool hall, the family kitchen, an old oak tree—and introduces characters with nicknames like "Punkin," "Junebug," "Shootdaddy" and "Railhead." Though much of the culture described is uniquely Appalachian, it carries a distinct sense of double-marginalization: the people reside within "subcategories and subgroups;" they are both Black and Appalachian, separated and isolated from the local whites, who themselves were separated and isolated from mainstream America.



William Turner's "The Harlan Renaissance" chronicles the lives of Black coal mining families living in Lynch, Ky., in the 1950s and 1960s.

In sum, "The Harlan Renaissance" chronicles a world of declension, and throughout the book there is a deep sense of loss as the author returns to the "home place" to find it a shadow of what it once was. Thankfully, through Turner's vivid memories, the Cadillac of coal towns comes back to life with all its colorful, vibrant community. It's a book only Turner could write, and without it, this slice of American culture would be lost forever.

The following are portions of a fuller interview with William Turner:

Q You published "Blacks in Appalachia" in 1985. What new light does "Harlan Renaissance" shine on this population?

The new light that shines may be reflected in something Alex Haley said, whom I met when Alex was on the board at Berea. He was introduced to me by John Stephenson, who was a president at Berea from '84 to '94. I sent Alex a copy of my book called "Blacks in Appalachia," and when I saw him a couple weeks later, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Bill, don't ever write any more BS like that again in your life. That's purely for some scholars somewhere sitting up in an ivory tower who like to look at graphs and footnotes. If you want people to know something about Appalachia, if you want everyday people to know something about it, write it in a language that your mother will understand and won't have to grab a dictionary or some Harvard-based encyclopedia to figure out what you're trying to say." So what I tried to do is have a new voice, a different voice in the book that spoke to everyday life issues of Black people in my hometown.

As a child, Turner attended Lynch Colored Public School. He describes the experience in his book as well as the loss of Black educators and Black educational content as the schools in Lynch were integrated.

Q You say in the book that the late Berea College President John B. Stephenson was, besides your own father, the most influential person in your life. What was your relationship with him and why was he so influential?

In 1966, I was 20 years old. I had, for practical purposes, never been outside Harlan County in my life. I didn't really have my eyes open to what was over that mountain there until I went to Lexington. When I went to register for my classes as a sociology major, I could literally follow the waft and smell of some pipe tobacco. They sent me to the office of this young professor named John Stephenson. I walked in there, and the next day I was smoking a pipe because I met this really cool professor who personified everything I thought a college professor should look like: the tweed jacket, the 1966 long hair, a beard. I took a class from John, and his wife Jane Ellen just literally adopted me. I started going in and out of their house for dinner a lot. John Stephenson was my muse. He was my enabler. He was the one who said, "Read this." He was the one who, once when I was full of rhetoric in a paper I wrote for him—at the bottom of that paper, John wrote, "Oh, this is great. I've been looking for some paper to put at the bottom of my bird cage." He wasn't one of those white liberals who would patronize a little Black kid from Harlan County and pat you on the head and say, "Well, that's about as good as you can do." But John always said, "You can do much better than this, man. You owe it to yourself to be more disciplined." So that's who he was to me. My father was the same way."

Q To quote from your book, "My life has spanned three generations of Black stuff becoming extinct." There is a sense of loss throughout this book. The loss of community, the loss of the old oak tree that the men gathered around, the loss associated with mountaintop removal, the loss of Black educational traditions because of integration. How have you coped with these losses, and what is your hope for the future?

One way I've coped with and have tried to pass on to my own children and grandchildren is to follow the advice of Mark Twain: don't let it make you mad, your losses. Don't sit around and seethe in self-loathing and anger. I think Mark Twain said, "Anger [is an acid that can do] more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything onto which it is poured." We always knew when you're living in an extraction zone like we did—and my father used to say, "You know, coal don't grow on trees like apples, buddy. Sooner or later, it's all gonna be gone." And it lasted about 100 years. You may remember in my book, I point out how when you come into the vestibule of our old church, First Baptist Church in Lynch, there was a little legend to the right, and every week they would change it because it had every member's name and how much they put in last Sunday. Every now and then I

would come to church and see somebody's name scratched out. You say to your father at 10 years old, "Why did they take Mr. Freeman's name down like that?" "Oh, they moved the other day." That was a constant refrain in my upbringing. My story, my loss, wasn't a solitary dance. Thousands and thousands of people experienced the same thing that I did. They'll come back home [in May] for grandma's grave on Memorial Day, which we used to call Decoration Day. They'll come back just to put some plastic roses on that grave up the side of the mountain. Even though I live 1,500 miles from Harlan County, there's 15 to 20 other people I know from Harlan County, from Pike County, from Letcher County, Bell County, who live right here in metropolitan Houston. So those networks are another way we manage that loss. Mama's gone, Daddy's gone, the kudzu has taken over where we used to play football, but you still have this heart filled with memories. And of course, the older you get, your memories are almost like food. If you don't keep these memories, you die.

Q You say that Blacks in Appalachian coal camps were up "just a tad" from slavery. What do you mean?

Booker T. Washington, who had grown up in Charleston, W. Va., his autobiography was called "Up from Slavery." So I kind of use that as a springboard for thinking [about] African Americans coming in droves into the coal camps of [Appalachia]. My grandparents had been sharecroppers, you know. My grandmother had been born in Georgia in 1896, my granddad around the same time. They worked as sharecroppers—man that was just spelled a little bit differently than slavery. So even though people were emancipated from slavery in 1863, 1865, you're still another 35 years [from] 1900, when they got out of that peonage, out of that servitude, Reconstruction and Jim Crow, and they got up out of there into the mountains of the South. Central Appalachia was a powerless kind of domestic equivalent of colonialism because everything was owned by somebody who didn't live there. It was owned in Pittsburgh and on Wall Street. You live in a company house. You drink company water. You see by company lights and the company appoints the preacher that tells you everything that's right. That's the world of a coal camp. It was a totally controlled community.

Q If there is one essential message for readers of "Harlan Renaissance," what would it be?

It would be what compassion, what care, what neighborly support these people gave each other that took them through the crucible of isolation in those towns. The fact that in the generation of my grandparents, it was not uncommon for people to have no schooling at all. But you can see also toward the end of my book where I look at the intergenerational mobility that took place. I look at the sons and daughters of my brothers and sisters, and I see one who graduated from Stanford, and I see another one who got a graduate degree at Clemson, and I see another one has a degree from the Patterson School of Diplomacy, and I see another one who did a postdoc at Duke, and I see one who went to MIT. And all these people, my daddy was their granddad. The message would be that our story is quite universal. We always knew there were people across the mountain who lived somewhere that had better houses than us and they had a better car than us, and they had a better view, if you will, than us, but they're not better than us. And there was this big ole world—just keep going over that mountain—you'll go over the mountain and say, "Daggone! I came over this mountain and there's another mountain!" And you go over that one and, oh, man, there's another mountain, east, west, north, south, a mountain. There's always something that's a challenge.

ALUMNI INSIGHT

Jim Branscome '68 also interviewed author William Turner about "Harlan Renaissance: Stories of Black Life in Appalachian Coal Towns," for the online news source *The Daily Yonder.* Read more details about the book at **http://ow.ly/kV4W50FeWvX**

Turner (right) sits for a photo with Loyal Jones, one of the foremost scholars of Appalachian Studies. Jones wrote the Foreword for "The Harlan Renaissance."

Appalachia Untold

By Abbie Tanyhill Darst '03

In 1870, Henry was born into a humble and hardworking family in Madison County, Ky. He came to Berea College in 1889 and after nearly 10 years he earned two teaching certifications, all while working to help pay off his family's farm. Henry used his teaching degree to educate students for 21 years in both Clark and Madison counties, and he founded and led a teaching institute for 20 years. He went on to serve as an agricultural extension agent, organizing farmer and homemaker clubs in Madison County. Henry's most lasting legacy, however, may be his poetry and writings. One of his books of poems was so popular it went through four printings in 1914, 1924, 1947 and 1988. Henry is considered one of the most intellectually and creatively gifted to be born and live in Madison County. At a time when a college education was a rarity for anyone, Henry's life, accomplishments and contributions to Appalachia are impressive.

Now imagine Henry is Black.

Henry Allen Laine was born the son of enslaved parents. As a teacher, he contributed to the cultural life of the county's Black population in numerous ways. In 1910, he founded the Madison Colored Teachers Institute and he was the county's first Black agricultural extension agent. He was responsible for organizing a chautauqua for the county's Black residents, bringing nationally known speakers to Madison County such as George Washington Carver and W.E.B. Du Bois.

As an educator, agriculturalist, poet and author, "Madison County: 200 Years in Retrospect," noted that no Black leader had more impact on the county in the first half of the 20th century than Laine. And in 2003, he was inducted into the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Stories like Laine's often are unknown, overlooked or untold in the recounting of Appalachian history—stories of African American or Indigenous heritage, influence and contribution to the region that have had rippling effects for generations. Laine's story mingles with so many others, like brothers Green and JDM Russell, from Logan County, Ky., who both became prominent educators. Green Russell graduated from Berea College in 1885. He was the first licensed African American teacher in Lexington, Ky., and was president of Kentucky State Industrial College for Colored Persons, now known as Kentucky State University. Professor JDM Russell served as principal of Richmond High School in Richmond, Ky., when the 10-room building opened its doors in 1900.

Berea College Special Collections and Archives

Henry Allen Laine graduated from Berea College in 1899. He was the first African American agricultural extension agent in Madison County and founded the Madison County Colored Teachers Institute.

Fannie Belle Miller 1888 and Frank L. Williams 1889 met at Berea College and later married before settling in St. Louis and serving as teachers, business owners and civic leaders. The Millers helped raise money to build a YMCA for Black people in St. Louis and provided new homes by building a 21-unit apartment building, according to the website Early History of Black Berea, maintained by Dr. Jackie Burnside '74. And Mary Eliza Merritt 1902 was the first African American to be licensed as a registered nurse in Kentucky. She became superintendent of Red Cross Hospital for 34 years before turning it over to the city of Louisville in 1945.

Bringing back history

In her class, Black and Indigenous People in Appalachia, Dr. Jessica Klanderud stresses the importance of African Americans and Indigenous people in Appalachia, where many default to the idea of an all- or mostly white region of communities.

"One thing I felt strongly about when taking the class over is that we do not pay enough attention to the diversity that always has been present in the region," said Klanderud, director of Berea's Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education.

However, minority stories and contributions to the region were not captured and passed along in history. Very little has been written about many of them and it is a challenge to find what was written in the past. For some, their stories have only been told by word of mouth. Over time, many African American families also left rural areas following jobs and hopes of better futures and

Jason Klanderud/Altair Media Design

Jessica Klanderud joined Berea in 2019 as the director of the Carter G. Woodson Center for Interracial Education.

settled in larger cities like Pittsburgh, Detroit and Columbus, said Klanderud, who is from Pittsburgh.

"The family connections they had in rural areas and coal towns, they brought that with them to the cities," she explained. "It's not different from the holler to the city, except it's not mountains and rivers making people groups any more, but the family construction that they brought into the city. People don't think of Pittsburgh as being in Appalachia, but it's the biggest city in Appalachia."

The missing voices in Appalachian history are more than just Black voices, but those of indigenous and Latinx people as well.

"The Shawnee and Cherokee were here first," Klanderud explained, "and they were agriculturalists long before anyone came over the mountains.

And when we talk about Europeans coming in to Appalachia," she continued, "we always talk about the British, but the colonial empire was first Spanish—Latinx populations have been in Appalachia since the early colonial days. So that idea that Latinx populations are new in Appalachia is also not true. That is a mind-blowing moment for many students."

Laying the groundwork

Offering courses like Black and Indigenous People in Appalachia that broaden the perspective of students and challenge their thinking is core to the liberal arts education Berea College has always offered all its students. Klanderud stresses how just as important as educating Blacks and whites together was to the College's foundation, providing a liberal arts education to Black people was paramount.

"Most schools training Black students, especially those that were not historically Black colleges, could only do a trades or vocational education," she said. "But Berea allowed them to study music and art and math in an integrated setting. Other schools were on a lower level and their vocation studies were more like getting a GED—students were only getting that specific training. Berea, however, was investing in people in a different way."

That difference can be seen in the numerous graduates Berea produced who went on to change the world as doctors, authors, educators, lawyers, entrepreneurs through today as artists, professors, judges, poets, veterans, ministers and more.

Brittany Lakes

This mural honoring Mary Eliza Merritt, 1902 graduate of Berea College's nursing program, was unveiled in the Old Town Artisan Village area of Berea in August 2020. Merritt was the first African American to be licensed as a registered nurse in Kentucky.

To learn more about notable Kentucky African Americans, visit **https://nkaa.uky.edu**. You can also find a reading list and streaming videos from the Black and Indigenous People in Appalachia course at **https://libraryguides.berea.edu/BlackIndigenousAppalachia**.

The Value of Labor

By Kim Kobersmith

Work has been a hallmark of the Berea College experience since its founding. In the beginning, all members of the school community—staff, faculty and students—worked together to form a self-sufficient and thrifty enterprise. They farmed, cooked, cleaned and built, a necessity for funding education for students in need of opportunity. Without knowing it, they were also laying the groundwork for the role of labor as part of a unique learning experience at Berea College.

The labor experience enables students to apply their classroom learning to the many practical skills so essential to life. Today, all students at Berea are required to work, and this year, the College marked 100 years of celebrating Berea's Labor Day, which honors work well done through the Labor Program.

Berea has a strong ethos that all labor is important. As expressed in the fourth Great Commitment, the College works "to promote learning and serving in community through the Student Labor Program, honoring the dignity and utility of all work, mental and manual, and taking pride in work well done."

"Berea is not satisfied with students just doing the work and collecting a small paycheck," said Rosanna Napoleón '13, training and learning assessment specialist. "We strive to make every position meaningful and connected to the mission of the College."

In fact, during President Lyle Roelofs' first two years as president, he traveled the country meeting various alumni groups and asked them what they considered the most significant part of their learning experience at Berea—about 80 percent identified some part of their work experience.

Brittany Lakes

Members of the Labor Program staff stand next to the newly completed mural honoring work well done for the College's Labor Day centennial celebration. L to R: Stella Welsh, student labor specialist; Armando Buenrostro, systems administrator; Sylvia Asante, dean of Labor; Johauna Gosney, student payments manager; Brittany Ash, labor coordinator; and Rosanna Napoleón, training and learning assessment specialist (not pictured Genae Knowles, labor program training associate).

Think of any necessary task on campus, and chances are pretty good a student worker has completed it. Today, the Labor Program has more than 1,500 jobs available on campus in more than 130 different departments. Students' labor assignments are guided by their skills, interests, areas of study and personalities. The aim is for students to have ownership in their work through real responsibility.

Some positions are in offices across campus. While students perform basic clerical tasks like answering the phones, taking messages and responding to mail correspondence, most do more: facilitate trainings with the Labor Department, host some of the famous presenters for convocations, or create summer dance-offs as part of Student Life.

Some students choose more academic-focused labor positions. They might work as a chemistry research assistant, a consultant with their peers in the Writing Resources center, or as the editor of *The Pinnacle*, the student newspaper.

Other students balance their mental school work with a labor position involving manual work—working with their hands— but with their minds also fully engaged. They serve as apprentice weavers in Student Craft, as the poultry manager at the College Farm, as janitorial staff with Student Life or as bakers in the Farm Store.

Positions at community service-oriented organizations are central to the Labor Program mission. One of these is Berea Kids Eat, a community U.S. Department of Agriculture child nutrition program dedicated to increasing household food security and building community food resiliency. Another is the New Opportunity School for Women, which empowers Appalachian women to improve their financial, educational and personal circumstances.

New, off-campus, summer labor experiences expand the geographical reach of the Labor Program, giving students the opportunity to find a position in a specific discipline. Students have already worked at an equine therapy training program, with a University of Kentucky archaeology professor, and for a nonprofit agency serving refugee children.

In celebrating Labor Day centennial, the Labor Program commemorates a century of recognizing service that connects students to work. "It is impossible to see 100 years into the future," said Sylvia Asante, dean of Labor, "but the students will continue to be on the cutting edge and to want to give back."

To better prepare students for future work and careers, the department is focused on strengthening trainings and resources. It is involving visiting experts and professional alumni to share a broader perspective. The intent is that students will make connections in a range of fields and build a bridge to post-college employment opportunities.

Asante sees an even greater role for technology in the future. They are collaborating with the computer science department to develop a database with a comprehensive evaluation system providing labor supervisors with the tools to give students effective feedback, and focusing on the myriad nuances of mastering work skills.

One thing is certain: the school will retain the bedrock role of labor in a Berea College education.

"I didn't understand the value of the Labor Program until I left college for the workplace," Napoleón recalled. "I have worked in education, at a nonprofit and in manufacturing, and Berea has prepared me for all of those areas with high-level skills I learned in the Labor Program. Many alumni, including myself, say that the Labor Program was their most significant experience in college."


Jay Buckles

Student ceramist Zoe '20 enjoys spinning pottery in the College's Visitor Center and Shoppe.


Jennifer Lance '20

Apprentice forester Abbie '22 works with horse, Willow, at the Forestry Outreach Center.


Crystal Wylie '05

A LABOR OF YUM

The Berea College Farm Store unveiled a surprise for the Labor Day Centennial—a new, made-from-scratch cookie created by students Lisa '21, a dietitian major, and Treasure '23, a Spanish major. The two currently work in the Farm Store and jumped at the chance to create this one-of-a-kind recipe. The best way to describe this lemon and blueberry cookie, filled with locally grown products, is refreshing and a true testament to our student workforce. Learn more and find the recipe at **https://bit.ly/Labor-Farm-Cookie**

My Appalachia: Student Experiece Stories

Five Berea students share their experience growing up in Appalachia and their journey to and through Berea College. Whether aspiring to be a chemist, a writer or an activist, each student's connection to the region they call home has put them on a unique course toward success.

Crystal Wylie '05

Erika '23

Who Says You Can't Go Home?

By Cora Allison '22

An unfortunate message perpetuated about Appalachia is the "get-out" narrative: the encouragement for young people to get an education and go elsewhere to find better prospects and a more promising place to live. Like many others, Erika '23 was prepared to do just that when she left home for Berea College in 2019. She never anticipated changing her mind and wanting to return.

Erika grew up in Lee County, Va., near a cluster of very similar small towns. Although she lived in a mostly white, conservative environment, Erika found herself often straying from the popular opinions and perspectives of those around her. "I always wanted more," she said. "I guess I got myself through it because I always knew I would end up in a more diverse area."

In her senior year of high school, Erika's art teacher recommended she apply to Berea due to her family's financial circumstances. After learning more about the College's mission and opportunity, she knew that's where she wanted to be. Although she was waitlisted the first time around, she was determined to pursue her goal. In the interim, Erika attended community college and immediately set up an appointment with the transfer counselor. Back home, there was little support of her goals.

"Education isn't really encouraged," Erika shared. "It's more expected for you to find some kind of trade work or small job in the town and stay there. It's hard to do anything outside of that or get out of town because we're in pretty poor counties."

Despite Erika's setbacks, she kept her eye on the prize and diligently worked a full-time job and pursued her studies. Meanwhile, the Appalachian Service Project (ASP), whose mission is to inspire hope and service through volunteer home repair and replacement in central Appalachia, came to work on her house in Lee County. It was through ASP that she encountered a series of serendipitous events that led her to Berea.

"I was talking about Berea, and one of the guys on the work crew said he knew someone who went there," Erika said. "I got in touch with a woman from the Philippines who ended up paying for me to [re]take my ACT test."

Erika's ACT scores were higher the second time around, and soon after, she was accepted into Berea College. Unsure of what to study, she later felt inspired to major in Child and Family Studies. "I'm hoping to be a social worker, and to help kids get into good, safe, secure homes full of love," she said. "That's such an issue back home."

She feels as though her labor position at the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center completely changed her perspective regarding Lee County. She learned about Black Appalachian history, a topic that had not gotten much coverage in school back home, and began to realize there was a gap in education and understanding in the region as a whole.

"There's this stigma against Appalachia like we all look and talk the same, "Erika said, "but Appalachia is actually really diverse."

While she isn't sure of where she will end up after school, she says she can see herself back in Appalachia advocating for the parts of her community that are overlooked.

"I've always wanted to leave," Erika said, "but there's so much here that can be better. I want to be part of that."

Tyler Rocquemore '22

Erika wrote an article for the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center publication, "The Gravy Infusion," in which she talked about discovering the diverse history of her hometown. "I see the beauty in the broken roads that we journey on," she said. "I never want to stop learning about others and being curious. I challenge all of us to keep seeking out new knowledge, especially among the people in our own communities."

Micah '22

Valuing Place

By Evan Harrell

To Micah '22, Appalachia means home. It means family. It also means hard work, and that is a value he carries with him throughout all he does. "There's a real work ethic that people tend to believe in," he said, "working hard to get what you want."

Micah grew up in the heart of central Appalachia, near the historic Cumberland Gap on the land once inhabited by Shawnee and Cherokee peoples, where Daniel Boone blazed his historic trail. He spent his time split between Bell County, Ky., and Claiborne County, Tenn. Growing up there, however, he says he did not fully comprehend the rich history and culture of the area.

In his first semester at Berea College, Micah joined the Appalachian Male Initiative (AMI) and took a course on the history and culture of the region with Appalachian Studies professor Dr. Bobby Starnes.

"The Appalachian Cultures class I got put in my first semester, I learned so much that I didn't know about the history of Appalachia and the kind of people who first were here and everything," Micah said. "Bobby Starnes—she just absolutely knows so much that she was able to pass on a lot of knowledge to us."

Along with the knowledge the students gain in the program, the AMI is meaningful because it provides a safe space for Appalachian males to be themselves.

"Having a group that you fit into, people to look up to and people to talk to is important," Micah said.

Unfortunately, Micah says, misconceptions about issues like poverty and lack of education lead to some misunderstandings in the way non-Appalachians perceive people from this region.

"Some people think that Appalachian people are just lazy…or they don't do anything, and that's why they're poor," he said. "And they don't really look deeper at the reasons why. I've seen a real value for education from Appalachian people. A lot of times the resources aren't there, but I think the value is there."

When he graduates in Spring 2022, Micah plans to attend physical therapy school. Whether he returns to Appalachia or moves elsewhere depends, he said, on available opportunities.

Tyler Rocquemore '22

Health and human performance major, Micah '22, grew up splitting time between Middlesboro, Ky., and Claiborne County, Tenn., but says he didn't fully embrace the richness of his Appalachian roots until he joined the Appalachian Male Initiative as a first-year student at Berea.

In the meantime, through the AMI, Berea continues to recruit and retain more hardworking young men from Appalachia like Micah.

ABOUT THE APPALACHIAN MALE INITIATIVE

The Appalachian Male Initiative (AMI) launched in Fall 2016 and has since served approximately 135 students through 10 sections of the course. The program began with the intent to improve retention rates among Appalachian males, who typically had higher dropout rates compared to other students.

"[Retention] is obviously one of our primary goals," said Rick Childers, AMI advocate and mentor, "but if you want to get to the root of that issue it takes a lot of foundational work of addressing the stereotypes they've heard about who they are and where they are from by teaching them the region's rich history and culture."

Students are enrolled in an Appalachian Studies course taught by Dr. Bobby Starnes. Her method of teaching engages the class in a blend of Appalachian history, historical artifacts, and critical thinking and writing exercises. Students also have the chance to bond with each other through hiking trips, canoeing, cooking and making traditional Appalachian crafts.

Not every Appalachian male who enrolls at Berea is selected for the program. Rather, the AMI works with Berea's Admissions office to identify students who may benefit from the community that the program offers. Childers says an average of 30 students participate each year.

"This program gives students who might otherwise not feel comfortable coming to a college campus for the first time a community to surround themselves with," Childers explains. "It's a group of people who they can express themselves to without any fear of judgment or criticism."

The AMI is currently conducting research and interviews of current and past participants to determine the success of the program and areas for development.

A-Nya '23

Advocating for a Strong Place

By Kim Kobersmith

Even though A-Nya '23 grew up in Dunbar, W. Va., for most of her life she didn't really see herself as Appalachian.

"I felt dissociated from the stereotypical image of Appalachians as white and rural," she said. "I didn't see people that looked like me."

A-Nya's sense of identity changed in high school, when she found connection in some of the regional movements for youth empowerment and leadership. A youth fellowship with Rise Up West Virginia first ignited her activism. She was introduced to mind-opening concepts like how power is communicated through physical positioning and how to empower others. "I fell in love," she states unequivocally.

As part of the fellowship, A-Nya led a community project and experienced unusual success as a new organizer. She coordinated a forum with political candidates focused on the opioid crisis. The event incorporated interviews and questions from the audience as well as opportunities to experience what it is like to be a convicted drug felon through role-playing scenarios.

One particular concern, that drug felons weren't eligible to receive food stamps after completing their sentences while other felons are, caught the attention of a state lawmaker. Within a year, West Virginia law was amended to correct that injustice.

"It is really cool that thousands of people can feed their kids because of something I did," A-Nya said.

A-Nya went on to join the STAY Project and Black Appalachians Young and Rising, West Virginia organizations run by young people advocating for engaged and inclusive communities throughout Appalachia. She serves on the steering committees for both organizations.

"Both are autonomously run by people under 30 years old," she said. "They gave me space to explore and an understanding that people of color have been here for a long time."

One of the things that impressed A-Nya during her visit to Berea College was how activism was highlighted. "It seemed a place that could be a vector for enhancing my organizing skills," she said.

As a student, A-Nya has delved into the complexities and realities of the region through involvement at the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center. She recommended one of her fellow advocates as a guest speaker for Dinner on the Grounds. Jennifer Wells of the former West Virginia Healthy Kids and Family Coalition, a social justice advocacy organization, spoke on the importance of healing and care in rural community organizing.

While working at the Appalachian Center, A-Nya was encouraged by director Chris Green to attend the Appalachian Love Fest in Harlan County. She purchased a diverse collection of new regional music for the Center, including punk.

"At Berea, my ideas are really valued," she said. "It means a lot that an adult, an academic, validated my non-stereotypical view of Appalachia."

Another thing at Berea that helped her embrace her place in the region was a class on Black and Indigenous Appalachians, a course that explores the contributions and livelihood of those often forgotten or dismissed from typical Appalachian storytelling. You can read more about these untold stories on page 22.

As A-Nya looks to the future, she has plans for her degree as a psychology major and peace and social justice minor. She wants to continue this kind of change-making at a nonprofit organization or as a psychological researcher.

"I want to be in the social justice space," she said. "I have worked with leaders who show they care about this region and actively fight to better it. I used to see Appalachia through a lens of struggle and hardship. Now there is an added layer of fight and spirit. It is a strong place."

A-Nya is passionate about her West Virginia community and fighting for equity and social justice. She has worked with various groups and lawmakers to help create engaged and inclusive communities. She brings that same spirit to bear in her work with Berea's Appalachian Center, where she says she feels her diverse ideas and contributions are truly valued.

Frances '22

Putting in the Work

By Jason Lee Miller

Frances aspires to be a journalist despite her shyness. The rising senior will be editor of the student newspaper and hopes to attend graduate school to sharpen her journalism skills.

When Frances '22 looks out the window of her Fancy Gap, Va., home, there's not much to see.

"There are more cows living on my road than people," she said. "It's just cow fields on both sides."

The English major has been studying at home for the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. She lives with her father, who's retired. Though remote, Frances has been able to continue with her labor assignment, writing for *The Pinnacle*, Berea's student newspaper. It's a challenge, not only because she is so far from campus, but also because Frances is an introvert. Asking people for interviews means overcoming her shyness.

"It's something I have to push myself to do," Frances said. "I've gotten better at doing that because it's something I have to do just about every week. It's usually easier for me to email people, but sometimes my higher-ups push me to make phone calls. That's even more difficult for me. I have to work out what I want to say ahead of time."

Frances has had to work her way up to campus journalist, beginning in the dining hall her first year, then switching to retail in the Log House Craft Gallery her sophomore year. Next year, she moves up to editor.

"I discovered I have a knack for writing, and I want to do more of it," she said. "When I first started working for the paper, I didn't really have any experience with journalistic writing. It's something I wanted to develop more. As I continued to write articles, I discovered I really enjoyed doing it. I like being able to convey important information to people."

Frances had never had a job before coming to Berea, but now she knows what her future looks like. She plans to apply to a graduate school known for its journalism program, a school like Northwestern or New York University. Wherever she lands, Frances hopes it's a large city with a public transportation system since she has a fear of driving.

If in New York, she will be returning to her family's roots. Her parents were drawn to Virginia from the metropolis because of the low cost of living. Though born in Virginia, Frances has always felt a little like a stranger in her hometown.

"I've lived here my whole life," she said. "But I didn't grow up with a lot of the customs that Appalachian families have. I don't really sound like I'm from around here, and people in school used to always think I moved here."

Frances will be the first in her family to finish college, a fact she says makes her feel proud.

"I wish that more people knew about Berea because it's just a really good opportunity for some people," she said. "It's a good quality college education. You have to put a lot of work in. It's difficult, but it's just a great chance. I'm not sure I would have been able to go to college otherwise."

Garett '21

Telling a New Story

By Kim Kobersmith

A conversation with Berea College senior, Garett, is sprinkled with stories: stories about family and place, stories that serve to connect people.

Garett grew up in Pine Knot, Ky., near the Tennessee border. The name of the town, he tells, came from horse-riding days, when travelers would stay the night in the local hotel. In the interest of saving money, the proprietor would put pine knots in the buckets of horse feed to deceive the clientele into thinking they were full.

Garett is not the first in his family to graduate from Berea. His grandfather originally began at Alice Lloyd College. Family lore says that while tinkering in the chemistry lab (allegedly making gunpowder), he had an accident and blew up the lab. He somehow convinced Berea to accept him anyway.

Garett's stories reinforce his ties to Appalachia, and to his own home and family. He was raised on a small homestead farm, with cattle, goats, chickens and a garden to provide for their needs. His experiences on his farm gave him a sense of the dignity of hard work.

"The men in my family have been through a lot and never quit," he said. "They have worked as miners, carpenters, electricians and in industrial maintenance, and they can fix anything."

Garett is also inspired by his great uncle, who, after attending the Foundation School and completing a mathematics degree at Berea, went on to earn a Ph.D. and become internationally known in agricultural economics. "You can't count anybody out because of where they are from," Garett said. "There are smart people, successful people, hardworking people in Appalachia. You have to get past the stereotypes."

Since arriving on campus, Berea's Appalachian Male Initiative has been an important community for Garett. Aimed at one of the groups on campus with the highest drop-out rates, the program eases the transition to college. Students take a dedicated first-semester class together to build a support system and access resources.

Class projects elevate Appalachian history and culture. In one class, Garett remembers making cornbread from scratch. It entailed grinding the corn, building a fire and cooking the bread in a Dutch oven.

Director Rick Childers keeps participants connected throughout college with events and the opportunity to mentor new students. While Garett began college with a successful mindset, he says, "I know others who were not confident in their abilities, and the Initiative helped them a lot."

Garett doesn't know many people from Appalachia in the sciences and says people back home are surprised to learn he is a chemistry major. He graduated in May and is considering work in environmental clean-up or in industrial agriculture pursuing safer pesticides. He knows he wants a Ph.D. and, ultimately, to be a professor.

Meanwhile, Garett will take a gap year to decide on a graduate program. He and his dad are planning a summer through-hike of the Sheltowee Trace, a 330-mile-long trail through the heart of Appalachian Kentucky. No doubt there will be plenty of new stories to tell.

Tyler Rocquemore '22

Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Garett graduated from Berea this past May. The chemistry major from Pine Knot, Ky., plans to pursue a doctoral degree and eventually become a professor.

For the ♥ of Appalachia

By Abbie Tanyhill Darst '03

For the past 53 years, Dr. Bobby Starnes has been dedicated to empowering every person with whom she works—students, fellow educators and community members—employing relationship building and inclusive dialogue to support their development as participative critical thinkers, lifelong learners and co-creators. That passion earned Dr. Starnes the Appalachian Studies Association's Cratis D. Williams/James S. Brown Service Award for her exemplary contributions to Appalachia and Appalachian studies.


Dr. Bobby Starnes

Jalen Prater '21

Dr. Starnes has served at Berea College since 2006, first in the Education Studies department, serving as chair from 2007 to 2015. She then moved to the Appalachian Studies department, where she has become a tireless mentor for white male students from distressed Appalachian counties. Many of these students have difficulty finding their feet at Berea, said Chris Green, director of the Berea's Loyal Jones Appalachian Center.

This work is part of Berea College's Male Initiative program that seeks to increase the engagement and quality of the educational experience for first-year male students in various populations. In addition to Starnes' work with Appalachian students, there are parallel efforts supporting African American and Latinx male students.

"I've often told Bobby how during that first year of working with her it was like I was one of our AMI students taking the class myself," said Rick Childers '16, an Appalachian Male Initiative program mentor. "Although I'm from the region and graduated from Berea, I didn't realize what was missing from my understanding of the place I called home. Bobby is able to use the history of our region to help our students make the cognitive leap from Appalachia as merely a place where they've grown up into how this place and its people have shaped their communities, their families, and the deeply held personal values that steer the course of their lives."

Originally from Knott County, Ky., Starnes' family migrated to Dayton, Ohio, when she was 6 years old. After graduating from Wright State University and teaching elementary school for four years, Starnes founded the Oxford School, a K-8 school in Oxford, Ohio, and served as its director for a decade. The school operated as a true learning community where Starnes emphasized the importance of teaching and learning in the context of student relationships.

In 1986, she brought Appalachia to Harvard. In addition to starting a movie series dedicated to Appalachian topics, she edited issues of *Harvard Review of Education* and served as book editor, regularly writing and publishing reviews of Appalachian scholarship while completing her graduate degree. At Harvard, she united her own experience as an Appalachian immigrant with studies of multicultural education. In 1987, she conducted research in Cincinnati regarding what public school teachers believed about Appalachian students and how they interacted with and educated them. Her work transformed the way the Urban Appalachian Coalition (UAC) understood how teachers thought about and taught their Appalachian students.

In 1994, Starnes became president of Foxfire, which at that time was a national school reform organization in Georgia focused on community-based education. At Foxfire, she traveled the nation supporting teachers in creating place-based materials relevant to the lives of their students. From there, Starnes taught Chippewa and Cree children on Rocky Boy's Reservation in Montana. During her time on the reservation, she published "What We Don't Know Can Hurt Them: White Teachers, Indian Children." Between 1998 and 2006, Starnes continued her educational work, primarily serving culturally-diverse populations with teaching, consulting and providing professional educational development to Native Americans, with urban schools in West Philadelphia and Asheville and with rural schools in Appalachia and across the Black Belt.

"Bobby and I discussed how teachers like me, who are white and teaching in places removed from native communities, had few resources and limited background knowledge to implement what was then a new state mandate called Indian Education for All," recalled Wendy Warren, Berea's Forestry Outreach Center coordinator and long-time friend of Starnes. "So we decided to do something about it. As a result, Full Circle Curriculum and Materials was born. We knew we were capable of creating classroom-friendly materials, but we also knew the content had to be guided by representatives from tribal nations who would decide how they wanted their own stories told.

> "Bobby is able to use the history of our region to help students make the cognitive leap from Appalachia as merely a place where they've grown up into how this place and its people have shaped their communities, their families, and the deeply held personal values that steer the course of their lives. – Rick Childers '16

"Based on her Appalachian values, when Bobby takes the lead in any group, its members are involved in co-constructing a shared community," Warren continued.

"All that Bobby does and has done is characterized by meeting her students where they are so that they can eventually take the lead in discovering and building who they are and want to be," Green added.

Today, Starnes has honed her classes in Appalachian Studies to her core work as an educator. "In class, students come to discern and clarify their own values and history alongside other students as they discover their interconnection and difference," Green said.

This coming year, Starnes will take a sabbatical and plans to work on a book manuscript tentatively called, "Learning to Act White: Appalachians' Stories of Assimilation and Resistance in Higher Education." Her goal is to show educators how to create positive learning environments for Appalachian students, the challenges they face as they experience pressures to conform and assimilate in higher education or the stereotype threats that silence their voices in classrooms.

The Cratis D. Williams Service Award was instituted in 1993. It is named for Cratis Williams, who helped pioneer the field of Appalachian studies with his interdisciplinary approach to understanding the cultural life and history of the region. In 2000, the award was renamed to also honor James S. Brown '37, who devoted a career to understanding community life in eastern Kentucky. Brown's pioneering studies of the region's society, demography and migration provided a solid foundation for the field of Appalachian studies.


Crystal Wylie '05

Spoonbread, which is more like a cornbread souffle with bread-pudding consistency, dates back to the 1700s when local settlers adapted the Native American tradition. In Berea, that tradition continues at the Historic Boone Tavern Hotel and Restaurant every lunch and dinner, which starts with a serving of the famous dish. Just behind the dish are Berea Student Craft place mats designed by Isabella '22 from Homewood, Ala. The brand new design is called The Bell Patch. These all sit atop a table crafted by alumnus Charlie Thomas '02.

A Fruitful Legacy

By Cora Allison '22

When Margaret Cox '72 thought about her future as a child, it didn't involve owning a strawberry farm. However, it would turn out that she would find her way back home and do just that.

Cox grew up in Grant, Ala., the oldest of six children. Despite coming from a large family, she said her parents never let their finances stand in the way of their aspirations. "We didn't have much money, but our parents had all kinds of ambition for us."

Cox attended Kate Duncan Smith, a unique high school funded by the Daughters of the American Revolution. She took a special interest in her science courses, where she excelled, catching the eye of her teacher, Kenneth Burns. Burns and his wife, being Berea graduates, recommended that Cox consider Berea, too. Burns helped her get an application and a college catalog, and, soon after, she was on her way to Berea.

In the fall of 1968, Cox arrived on the Berea College campus, elated to be on her next adventure. She found the distance from her family difficult at the age of 17, but it was quickly overshadowed by the excitement of the novel setting and new friends. She shared that it was a balanced experience of diversity and familiarity. "I had a great deal in common with my immediate friends," Cox said, "but it was nice to be around people from different countries and states, too."

Although still interested in the sciences, she was undecided about what to study. Cox found herself fascinated by the courses offered in the English department. "I loved to read, I loved to write, and I loved anything literary. It just seemed like the perfect fit."

While Cox made her way through the English program, she worked in a variety of labor positions on campus, including the development office in correspondence with donors, and perhaps most interestingly, in the Candy Kitchen. It opened on campus in 1931 and became wildly popular and well known even among wealthy New Yorkers and celebrities. Although it closed in 1970, Cox remembers it fondly. "We decorated tea sugars for tea time at hotels and bed and breakfasts, made wedding cakes and beaten biscuits. The biscuits were my favorite."

Margaret Cox (left) handles much of the Maggie Valley berry farm business end while her husband, David, who's retired from the USDA, heads up the farming.

Maggie Valley Berry Patch and Gardens strawberries are endorsed by Sweet Grown Alabama, a non-profit foundation that enhances marketing opportunities for Alabama farmers.

Cox had originally pursued English with hopes of becoming a teacher, but after graduation, English teaching positions were slim pickings. "There were virtually no teaching positions available," she said. While she was able to secure a short-term teaching job for a year, she knew she would have to alter the course of her career.

Cox ended up working for the Social Service Agency of Alabama, primarily serving disabled, elderly and youth communities. She helped elderly individuals navigate resources for financial aid and provided support for those in less-than-ideal environments. After working in the division for 28 years, she was promoted to supervisor of the office for the last decade of her career.

But the excitement was only beginning. After retiring, Cox met her husband, bought a small parcel of land in her hometown, temporarily moved to Arkansas while her husband finished out his career, and then moved back to Grant. There, she found that some of the other owners of adjoining properties had either passed away or were looking to sell. In what now seems like serendipity, Cox went ahead and bought the additional properties.

What to do next? "We decided that if we were going to buy the property, we needed to find a way to make it profitable," she said.

Her husband had a vision for a strawberry patch, but Cox admits she was not onboard at first. "When he mentioned it, all I could see was buckets of strawberries sitting in the kitchen, and what in the world was I going to do with them?"

With some reluctance, she agreed to go forward with the idea, and following years of hard work and love, they are now owners of a very successful enterprise, Maggie Valley Berry Patch and Gardens. What began as a small berry patch with about 5,000 strawberry plants is now a full-fledged farm with 85,000 plants and a very loyal clientele. "People come in from about 50 or 60 miles away for the strawberries," Cox said.

COVID-19 certainly posed a threat to the business of their farm, but through sanitization, social-distancing and mask-wearing, the farm continued to thrive. Cox shared that she and her husband are able to maintain connections with customers as they return year after year.

Margaret Cox sells buckets of fresh strawberries from her Maggie Valley Berry Patch and Gardens in Grant, Ala.

The Maggie Valley Berry Patch and Gardens, although famous for its delicious strawberries, also sells blueberries, pecans, jams, salad dressings and homemade ice cream. The farm provides an immersion experience, complete with antique farm relics and a pick-it-yourself option in the berry patches. "We try to make it a more fun experience than picking up a box of berries at Publix," Cox said.

Grant, Ala., is located in a rural area, and Cox says she thinks the farm also serves as a learning opportunity for her Appalachian community. "There is a lack of education for healthful options for food," she said. "We like to do tours of the strawberry and blueberry patches for kids and walk them through the process."

After 11 years of farming, Cox reflects on the impact her childhood and upbringing has had on her relationship with her business. "I chose to come back here because this is where my roots are. The core values of respect for family, respect for your country and respect for God were ingrained in me from the very beginning."

Although Cox is now 70 years old, she doesn't have plans of retiring anytime soon. "We aren't ready for the rocking chair yet," she said. "We enjoy serving our community."

Crystal Wylie '05

When strawberry season ends, Margaret's berry patch switches to selling blueberries to local community members and visitors from surrounding areas.

Sesquicentennial: Growing Gardens, Good Food and Graduates

What began as a garden on a couple of acres in 1871 has expanded to a 500-acre farm with beef cattle, hogs, poultry, field crops, horticulture crops and honeybees. This year marks the Berea College Farm's sesquicentennial, 150 years of operating one of the oldest continuously operated educational farms in the nation.

"In a lot of ways, the history of the Berea College Farm mirrors the history of agriculture in the United States," said Sarah Hall, chair of Berea's Agriculture and Natural Resources department. "So when it started, its roots were to feed the College—to feed the students who were here. What we are doing today is getting back to those original early roots, where it was about feeding the people who are on campus and the local community."

The practical roots of the farm in the 19th century soon grew into a demonstration of the latest farming techniques for farmers in the central Appalachian region. The College recognized the farm's potential impact on more than just student labor and livelihood; it could contribute importantly to student learning as well.

In 1920, Berea established an academic program for agriculture and natural resources, and the farm became the laboratory for the academic program, a place to apply information learned in the classroom and test new theories.

"Probably the highest piece of my academic career was tying the classroom and the farm together," recalled Andrew Oles '05, farm director.

In the 1990s, students pushed the College farm to transition to certified organic crop production. As a result, the farm now stresses not just what it produces, but how it produces—humanely and sustainably.

"It fulfills one of the Great Commitments, plain and simple living or sustainability, as we call it now," Oles said. "Here, we are modeling that for our campus community and our region. That piece is going to become more and more prevalent on an academic basis, but also on a community basis, where people are going to need access to healthy food choices."

Providing access to healthy food has long been part of the farm's mission—for the College's dining services, College enterprises, the local market and the Historic Boone Tavern Hotel and Restaurant. In 2013, Berea opened the College Farm Store, where raw produce and meats are processed into value-added products. It's also a restaurant staffed by students, where the local community can purchase farm-to-fork meals. The local community also benefits from the farm through the Berea Kids Eat initiative, a program of the College's Grow Appalachia initiative that provides organic vegetables and meat to a feeding program for school-aged children.

In 150 years, the Berea College Farm has grown from that small garden to a complex, integrated program, growing food resources for the College and community in a sustainable way, while also contributing to the learning experiences of graduates imbued with practical, hands-on knowledge to lead agricultural and sustainability efforts across the country. One can only imagine what the next 150 years will bring for the Berea College Farm.

Crystal Wylie '05

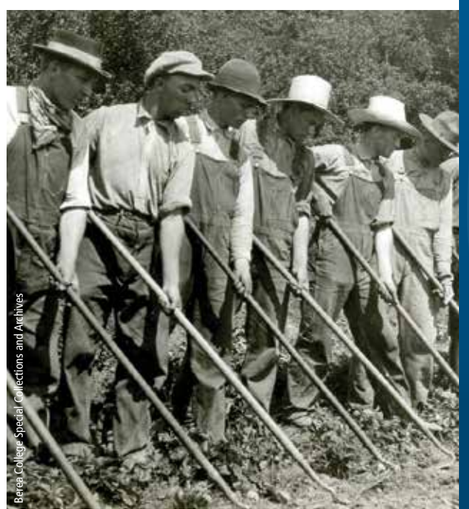
The College farm team manages 80-100 head of cattle entirely on pasture to produce grass-finished beef.

FINDING A LIFE-LONG CAREER

After earning a degree in agriculture, alumnus Mike Woodard '89 went on to earn an MS in horticulture science from West Virginia University. With his education and experience on the Berea College farm, Woodard now uses his expertise as a greenhouse manager at the Lilly Greenhouses and Plant Growth Facility at Purdue University. He offers as much practical help as he can to more than 40 faculty members from agricultural and biological engineering, agronomy, biology and botany and plant pathology who conduct research using Purdue's facilities. Read more about Woodard at **https://bit.ly/Woodard-Purdue**

Crystal Wylie '05

Berea College Farms manager Bob Harned teaches students on the College farm. The farm has been a working laboratory for the agriculture and natural resources academic program for more than 100 years.



Berea College Special Collections and Archives

Berea College students preparing the College gardens for planting. Date unknown.

Covering the Road Less Traveled

By Jason Lee Miller

Sometimes a labor assignment can lead to a lifelong passion. For Tim Marema ’85, it also led to the creation of a rural news website that is read “from the county courthouse to the White House.”

Marema, vice president of the Center for Rural Strategies (CRS), has roots in Jackson County, Ky. He describes his childhood home as the kind of place with “cattle at the back door, [and a] cornfield at the front.” Marema and family moved to nearby Berea when his parents found work at Berea College, which he would later attend.

“When I moved to Berea,” he said, “I thought I had moved to New York City. I had never seen that much sidewalk in one place.”

In college, Marema majored in history and was assigned to work for the *Berea Citizen*, the local newspaper, which was, at the time, owned by the College.

“I learned on the job,” he said. “I had other labor assignments, but that was my favorite. It was fundamental in helping me understand what a small-town paper means to the community, how you’re accountable to the community, how you have to cover it as news, but you’re also somebody who lives there.”

The budding journalist continued his education at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where Marema edited the daily newspaper, the *Chapel Hill Herald*. He loved being in the newsroom there, but Marema’s heart belonged to rural America, and he began to feel that his skills would be of better service to a community with fewer resources. So he put his journalism experience to work at Appalshop, a media organization in Whitesburg, Ky., that Marema describes as a place that helps people tell their own stories and raise awareness about issues in their communities. (For more on Appalshop and its current initiatives, see page 12.)

Tim Marema ‘85, vice president of the Center for Rural Strategies, edits *The Daily Yonder,* an online publication dedicated to national rural issues.

“In Appalachia, we’re very used to other people telling our stories for us and defining us on their terms, and Appalshop was all about Appalachia defining itself,” Marema said.

There he met Dee Davis, Appalshop’s executive film producer, and Marty Newell, a founding member of the organization. The three of them thought they could take what they had learned at Appalshop and apply it to a broader market.

“We were interested in taking [our] ideas out to a national level and working with rural communities and focusing communications on the policies that define how rural communities get resources at the federal and state levels,” Marema said. “So we created the Center for Rural Strategies.”

With Davis as president and Newell as chief operating officer, the trio set out to help rural communities tell their own stories. In 2007, the CRS launched *The Daily Yonder*, a news website dedicated to rural journalism that Marema edits from his home in Norris, Tenn. As large city newspapers scaled back their rural coverage to save money, *The Daily Yonder* filled an important gap in rural news coverage.

“The whole journalism shift has really affected rural areas,” Marema said. “We were the first to feel it because Lexington and Louisville, for example, pulled all their news staff out of the outlying bureaus.”

The Daily Yonder employs writers of various kinds, from freelancers to interns to the nonprofessional. A farmer in Missouri writes about the politics of agriculture and the impact of farm policies. A fire and rescue volunteer in Wisconsin has her own column, writing about the challenges of a small volunteer fire department. Other content is produced by writers interested in rural topics, policy experts, nonprofit organizations that specialize in rural issues, and academics with expertise in economics and community development.

“[The editors] don’t try to have a deep policy understanding on every topic,” Marema said. “We find people in groups we trust, who we know are working directly in communities. We listen, and they help guide us.”

The site, funded by grants, foundations and individual donor drives similar to National Public Radio, has been an immense success, pulling in about 600,000 readers last year, including policymakers and large, national newspapers looking for information about rural America. Looking at data with a rural lens helps identify issues and stories much earlier than the broader, national media.

“We were weeks ahead of the national media reporting on how the late summer and early fall coronavirus surge was a rural phenomenon,” Marema said. “I got calls from people at the Centers for Disease Control saying, ‘Your coverage of rural coronavirus issues is the best out there.’”

Another story born of data analysis revealed that servicemen and women who died in war theaters like Iraq and Afghanistan were disproportionately rural. Marema hopes his efforts at *The Daily Yonder* present a more comprehensive, more accurate and more compassionate view of rural America.

> My work is national now, but the reason I care about rural places and understand anything about them comes from my own background in Appalachia. Berea helped me understand how being from Appalachia is an asset, and that has made all the difference.
> – Tim Marema ‘85

“Our goal, to the extent possible, would be to help represent what’s going on in a rural county on terms that would resonate with the people who live there, not on the terms of how it would look in Washington or New York,” he said.

On a more personal level, another goal for Marema is simply to make a difference by doing something he feels is important and that wouldn’t be done if he weren’t doing it. The sentiment of making a difference in Appalachia in particular leads him back to his time at Berea.

“My work is national now,” he said, “but the reason I care about rural places and understand anything about them comes from my own background in Appalachia. Berea helped me understand how being from Appalachia is an asset, and that has made all the difference.”

Crystal Wylie ’05

“Corn was the very heart of southern Appalachian agriculture. Throughout the 19th and well into the 20th century, corn and corn leaves served as the primary source of nutrition for southern Appalachian farm families and their livestock. The crop required little cultivation…and could be grown in rocky soils and on steep hillsides.” —University of Tennessee Knoxville Library, Agricultural database

Berea Welcomes New Associate Provost

Dr. Eileen McKiernan-González accepted the position of associate provost, effective Aug. 1. She is a highly regarded member of the campus community and brings great vision and leadership to the position.

"Dr. McKiernan-González brings deep commitment to the liberal arts, global fluency, and to all of Berea's mission and identity," President Lyle Roelofs said.

Dr. McKiernan-González came to Berea in 2003 after earning her Ph.D. in art history from the University of Texas at Austin. She currently serves as the Bradford and Christine Miller Mishler Art Chair, professor of art history and art history department chair.

McKiernan-González joins Provost Scott Steele, who took over as interim provost last summer and accepted full appointment by President Roelofs in mid-May.

Jalen Prater '21

Magazine Staff Earns National Awards

Members of the Berea College Marketing and Communications staff received national recognition for their work with the *Berea College Magazine*. In the 2021 CASE Circle of Excellence Awards, senior writer, Jason Lee Miller, and director of web design and development, Charlie Campbell, both earned bronze-level awards for their work.

Miller's writing feature, "Monkey Dumplins," appeared in the Summer 2020 issue of the magazine and focused on a scrappy group of volunteers in Clay County, Ky., who banded together to revitalize their town through local theater and other efforts.

"This story provided a refreshing and original take on the often-derided and/or sympathized plight of the Appalachian people," one CASE award judge said of Miller's piece. "This is an excellent demonstration of how to tell a story about your school's context in an uplifting way, without glossing over struggles or challenges."

Campbell's distinctive design of the 2019-20 President's Report on Philanthropy, titled "One Blood" won him the third-place national finish for multi-page publication design. In light of current events happening in the country, the magazine staff shifted the focus of the report to strongly identify with Berea's Great Commitment to the kinship of all people. Campbell made this shift come to life. One judge called the report a "very strong piece, boldly conceived, with serious, deliberate intent. Striking cover design."

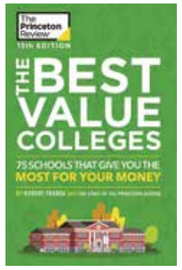
Both entries can be viewed at **https://magazine.berea.edu/issue-archives** or by scanning this QR code with your smart device and selecting the respective magazine cover.

Berea Named a "Best Value" College by the Princeton Review

Berea College, widely known for its no-tuition policy, is one of the nation's best colleges for students seeking a superb education with great career preparation at an affordable price, according to *The Princeton Review*.

The newly-published 2021 edition of *The Princeton Review's* annual guide, *The Best Value Colleges,* recommends colleges considered the nation's best for academics, affordability and career prospects.

As the cost of higher education continues to rise at most schools, Berea College's no-tuition model continues to attract national attention, such as in recent features in the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Atlantic* and on "CBS This Morning." Every student at Berea is provided with a Tuition Promise Scholarship, which means no student's family pays for tuition. That cost is covered by endowment earnings, grants and contributions from generous donors.



Nurturing Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities and a Healthier Future

Grow Appalachia, a strategic Initiative of Berea College, has received a $30,000 grant from the Cigna Foundation to work in partnership with school systems and the surrounding communities to supplement existing programming for children to help close nutrition gaps both within and outside of the school environment. The gift is part of the grant program Healthier Kids For Our Future®, a five-year, $25 million global initiative focused on improving the health and well-being of children made possible by Cigna and the Cigna Foundation.

Grow Appalachia's Berea Kids Eat program has worked directly in Berea since 2016 to fight childhood hunger, increase healthy food access and support community food security. To date, the program has served more than 400,000 meals to youth while supporting health and wellness initiatives and food security programming for low-income communities.

"We're really excited that Cigna has helped to fully braid together all the goals of Berea Kids Eat, which is not just about reducing food insecurity but also increasing healthy food access by building food skills at the household level for the future," said Martina Leforce '07, coordinator of Berea Kids Eat.

Crystal Wylie '05

A Statement from Pres. Roelofs on the Verdict in the Derek Chauvin Trial

(released April 20, 2021)

Dear Bereans,

During the past year, the Berea College community has held a number of peaceful demonstrations focused on racial justice in the wake of the police-involved deaths of Breonna Taylor in Louisville and George Floyd in Minneapolis. Today, a jury found former police officer Derek Chauvin guilty on all three counts in the death of Mr. Floyd. For many members of our community, this verdict brings a sigh of relief. It shows that the legal system works as it is designed to work, and that there can—and should—be accountability when members of law enforcement break the law.

In the preamble to our Great Commitments, Bereans call for peace with justice. In my view, today's verdict represents a measure of justice for the family of Mr. Floyd and for those communities that have been denied justice for so long.

Even though we are still far from the ideal of full justice from which true peace can follow, it seems right to honor peace as we respond to this outcome. It is the Berea way to be peaceful in our interactions with others. Justice prevailed today, and let us resolve to continue the struggle to ensure that everyone—regardless of their race, gender identity, faith or political perspective—is treated fairly and justly. Let us show impartial love and a real commitment to peace at this important moment.

—Lyle Roelofs, President

What's Hot on Social

15.8K reach

STOP AAPI HATE DEMONSTRATION

We are incredibly proud of our students, staff and broader community for their continued activism. Unfortunately, brutality and discrimination against Asian American Pacific Islander communities has risen during the COVID-19 pandemic, fueled by a dark history that is not often discussed.

We continue to live by our motto, "God has made of one blood all peoples of the earth" (Acts 17:26) by standing in solidarity with #AAPI communities. **#StopAsianHate #HateisaVirus #RacismisaVirus #StopAAPIHate #OneBlood**
(posted 3/27/21)

5.7K impressions

PRIDE MONTH SERIES

"When I speak in passing it is to say 'I see you and I am here.' I once was where you now are, a student on this campus. I didn't know many faculty/staff who were part of the "community" and that lack of connection/understanding was real. So when I speak to you in passing it is to say 'I see you.' 'I, too, am Black.' 'I am a trans.' 'I am your Ally.' 'I am your Advocate.' 'I am your Biggest Fan.' 'I am your community.' 'You are not alone.' Sawubona."

…

This year, we asked members of the Berea College community to partner with us on a photo collection that allows students, faculty and staff to amplify their voices during Pride Month. Participants chose their color, attire, poses and the final image. **#BereaProud #Pride**
(posted 6/11/21)

3.7K impressions

BEREA ALUM ON SESAME STREET

#BereaAlum Chris Hayes '06 has been part of @sesamestreet for years and is now the puppeteer for Elijah, who helps his son, Wes, and Elmo explore the topic of race. **#BereaProud #OneBlood #comingtogether #education**
(posted 4/14/21)

The Berea College Alumni Association enjoys hearing from Bereans from all over the world. The "Class Notes" section of *Berea College Magazine* reports verifiable news you wish to share with your alumni friends and associates: careers, weddings, retirements, births, and other items of importance to our alumni. Please include your class year and name used while attending Berea. Notes may be edited for style and length. While we will make every effort to put your information into the next issue of BCM, some delays may occur. We appreciate your understanding.

Submit class notes and photographs at www.berea.edu/alumni/classnote

1949

Mary Alice Meharg retired after 52 years as a children's service supervisor with the Los Angeles Department of Children and Family Services. On April 21, she and Queen Elizabeth both turned 95.

1952

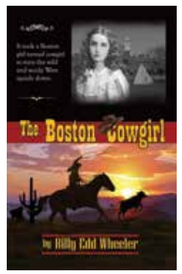
Mary Musser Nash, avid knitter, knits hats for homeless people in her home county of Washington, Va. Read more: **http://ow.ly/xnNx50EGGGt**.

1954

Gordon Hamilton said he is doing well but misses attending meetings and social gatherings because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1955

Billy Edd Wheeler authored a book titled "The Boston Cowgirl." The book is available on Amazon. You can read more about Billy Edd here: **http://billyeddwheeler.com**.



1956

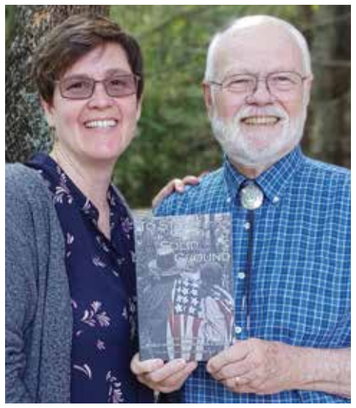
Cecelia Burnell McKinney published her second book of memoirs in 2020. Both books are available on Amazon.

Rubynelle Waldrop Thyne writes: "I was incensed reading W.J. Cash's 'Mind of the South.' Though gaining better understanding since then, I felt it shamed mill workers, and I determined to show in writing that mill hill people could be dignified and fulfilled. Finally, I've written my novel, 'That Look: A Cotton Mill Village Romance.' It is available on Amazon."

1958

Mary Nell Mahler writes: "All is well in Oregon. Vaccine received."

Dr. G. Keith Parker and **Leslie Parker Borhaug '90** authored "To Stand on Solid Ground: A Civil War Novel Based on Real People and Events." The book was recognized as a 2021 Distinguished Favorite in the Military category by Independent Press Award. It won the Award of Excellence and the Lighthouse Award in 2020 from the North Carolina Society of Historians.



1959

Dr. Bill Best recently published a new political satire titled "Lil Donnie." Read more: **http://ow.ly/CDt850EGGRp**

Mable Lewis Starling and her husband, James, celebrated their 61st anniversary on April 21. She met him while at Berea through a mutual friend whose husband was stationed with him in the Army at Fort Knox, Ky.

1960

Vernon Gordon and his wife, Norma, are growing old and remain warm, happy and content!

Margaret Simmons now lives in State College, Pa., and would be able to host students visiting for the advanced programs offered there, when we can travel safely.

1961

Ival Secrest shared that after 51 years of living in Sierra Vista, Ariz., they are moving to Eugene, Ore., to be near a daughter as they advance in age. Eugene will be their base as they revert to what is known as full-time RVing for a few years that will include coming back to Sierra Vista in the winter. They can be contacted via email at **ivals@outlook.com**.

1963

Peggy Creed Shouse retired from her full-time job as an elementary school librarian in 2006. She continued to work part-time for the public library until two years ago. About a year and a half ago she discovered acrylic fluid art and has completed 150 abstract paintings in the past year.

1966

Dr. John E. Fleming has dedicated his life to preserving African American history. He shared his thoughts about his experiences in recognition of Black History Month. Read more: **http://ow.ly/BPDw50EGGVJ**

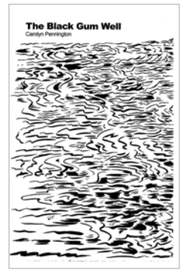
Fleming also recently was honored with a Phifer family gift to the N.C. School of Science & Mathematics. Read more: **http://ow.ly/spkd50EGH45**

BIRTH: a daughter, Ada Harper Pederson Zalewski to Kristin Pederson and Peter Zalewski on Nov. 3, 2020 in Brooklyn, N.Y. Ada's grandmother is **Lucy Pederson**.

1970

Darrell Myers is retired, spending a lot of time reading the Bible and listening to Bob Dylan on the stereo.

Carolyn Coffey Pennington authored "The Black Gum Well," which has been released by Dorrance Publishing Co., Inc. of Pittsburgh, Pa. The cover of the novel is an illustration by her son J.T. (Todd) Dockery and **Ron Dockery**. The book is available for purchase on Amazon and Barnes and Noble. Carolyn can be reached at 285 Moores Creek School Rd., Annville, KY 40402. Phones: (606) 364-3881 and (606) 493-5519.



1971

Paul Phillips leads the Elgin Children's Foundation as the general counsel, working in 30 counties in Appalachia. He was recognized in 2020 as a Legendary Partner by the Children's Advocacy Centers of Kentucky and with the Champion of Appalachia Award by Christian Appalachian Project. Phillips lives in Oneida, Tenn.

1972

Linda Joyce Thornsberry Elliott authored the children's book "Billy Bob's Bean Patch." The book teaches children about the uniqueness of everyone's purpose. Read more: **http://ow.ly/6RmA50EGHig**

Elliot also published another illustrated book titled "Doctor Cow." The book encourages children to follow their dreams. Read more: **http://ow.ly/fIjG50EGHun**.

1976

James Mounce writes: "Hello to classes '72 through '76. Hope all of you are doing well. I was blessed with a grandson in 2017. Hunter is perfect, but I lost my son-in-law to a motorcycle accident in 2019 and lost my wife Sheri to COVID in 2020. Stay healthy and love your family daily."

1977

Bill and **Rhoda Marcum Clement** are "caving" in the desert of Ojo Caliente, N.M. Since you cannot take pictures in the cave (or even wear shoes) you may see what the inside of the cave looks like by Googling "Ra Paulette's sandstone caves."

1978

Bonnie Campbell was trained as a studio potter in the Ceramic Apprenticeship Program while attending Berea. A book designer and art director for more than 25 years at Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, the University of North Carolina Press, and the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University, she now runs her own design business—Blue Egg Studio. **bcampbelldesign.com**.

1979

Carla Bailey retired in July after 36 years as interlibrary loan librarian at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va. She said when she started the job, it was a few written requests in a shoebox. When she retired, they were processing 10,000 requests a year. She realized shortly after she started her student aide job at Hutchins Library that she wasn't destined to be a teacher but to be a librarian. "God bless Sarah Firor and Phyllis Hughes!" she wrote. Bailey and husband, Patrick, have moved to Chambersburg, Pa., near a dear classmate, **Diane Morrow '78**.

Ron Hartmiller has been retired for eight years and working hard at two part-time jobs. His spare time is spent with his three kids and amazing granddaughter. He will have been married 40 years this summer.

1980

Maria Stephens retired from the East Baton Rouge Parish School System in July 2020. Stephens worked as a school psychologist for 36 years.

1981

Lisa Hayes Magee and her husband, Erich Magee, celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary on May 25. They live in the small town of Pittsboro, N.C., where they play music in their spare time. Lisa retired after 35 years with IBM in May 2020 and was elected the Chatham County Democratic Party Pittsboro precinct chair on March 13. Erich retired from IBM in February. Lisa may be contacted at **lisamageester@gmail.com**.

1983

Mary Elizabeth Nelon has traveled the world in her nursing career, serving a variety of clients in a multitude of settings. Nelon is finally settling down in Asheville, N.C. She can be reached at 15 Park Avenue, 28803; (828) 305-2405 and would love to hear from you. Her one "regret" is never joining the U.S. Air Force, although she served our precious veterans in a veteran's medical center and ongoing in the community. She loves our USA! Nelon would like to thank her father Claude Nelon '44 for encouraging her to attend Berea College. She would like to thank her mother Helen Ganey Nelon for encouraging her to study nursing. And she thanks them both for encouraging her bachelor of science in nursing degree and her higher education. "Go Berea College! Go Berea's BS Nursing program!"

1984

Alonzo Allen reflects on his past and how his parents and his education at Berea College helped shaped his path in the industrial arts, education and community action. Read more: **http://ow.ly/U5kG50EGHxM**

Rev. Anita Grunwald Bernhardt became the general presbyter/executive of the Presbytery of Lake Erie on Feb. 1, with responsibility for 57 congregations in northwest Pennsylvania and New York.

1985

Dee Wathome writes: "Hello friends. I'm sure you all will agree with me that life is a journey that most of us never anticipated when we graduated in 1985. I'm sure each of us has something to smile about. For some of us, it is the wonderful offspring God has blessed us with. For others, this may include various achievements. I'm humbled to share that I have taken to writing and soon some of my publications will be available on

Amazon. Please check out my book 'Days of Elijah.' Do not hesitate to ask any questions you may have. I can be reached at **deemwathome@gmail.com**. I'm currently living in my home country of Kenya. Blessings and best wishes!"

Vanessa Armstrong has accepted a position as the director of financial integrity in the Circuit Executive's Office for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. This position is the first of its kind in the federal judiciary. Previously, Armstrong served the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Kentucky for more than 24 years. She will provide services in the areas of internal controls, financial process improvement, audit preparation and training. "It's my dream job," she said.

1990

Leslie Parker Borhaug '90 and **Dr. G. Keith Parker '58** authored "To Stand on Solid Ground: A Civil War Novel Based on Real People and Events." The book was recognized as a 2021 Distinguished Favorite in the Military category by Independent Press Award. It won the Award of Excellence and the Lighthouse Award in 2020 from the N.C. Society of Historians. See photo under 1958.

1991

Lydia Claunch Moore and **Monty Moore '92** reside in Somerset, Ky., and both practice as registered nurses. Their daughter, Milli Ruth, plays soccer at Asbury University.

Dr. Rebecca Seipelt-Thiemann, Middle Tennessee State University professor, speaks about adapting to teaching biology and technology changes amid the pandemic. Read more: **http://ow.ly/cxHN50EGHA9**

1992

Paul March is completing his teaching certification now, after taking 30 years to attain his baccalaureate degree. After more than 28 years in a career with the Ohio State Patrol, he'll finally be able to retire and start teaching in the fall. March says, "It's been quite the journey! Thanks Berea!"

1993

Chris Powers, Ph.D., was appointed as vice president for recruitment and admission at Mount St. Joseph University in Ohio. Read more: **http://ow.ly/qnFZ50EGHVy**

1994

Jeremy Heidt was appointed by Nashville Mayor John Cooper to the city's 21-member Affordable Housing Task Force on Jan. 1. The group of industry experts will focus on the city's urgent housing needs, and its recommendations will inform the mayor's 2022 fiscal year budget plan.

As director of industry and governmental affairs for the Tennessee Housing Development Agency (THDA), Heidt serves as the primary point of contact for the Tennessee legislature, the state's nine U.S. representatives and Tennessee's two U.S. senators. He also works with public housing entities, private developers and financing entities involved in Housing Tax Credit developments. In 2020, he worked with the state legislature to raise the THDA's debt limit to $4 billion.

Alicia Deaton Morlatt became the executive director of the Clermont Metropolitan Housing Authority in June 2020.

1996

Celebrating 25 years at Homecoming 2021.

1997

Dr. Comfort Enah uses mobile apps to improve health and address major health problems. Read more: **http://ow.ly/c2w750EGIey**

1999

Nathan Carrick is living in Florida now for nearly 20 years and can't imagine being anywhere else. He's thankful to be working and happy.

Joe Dinwiddie received a patent for a 3-D stone arch puzzle he designed. He has also developed K-12 lesson plans for Appalachian handcrafts, music and folk dancing since 2004, when he began doing artist residencies in schools. His focus has been exploring cultural diversity in Appalachia by exploration of its arts and crafts. Scottish author, artist and sculptor David F. Wilson, interviewed Dinwiddie for his podcast, DUST. Amongst other topics, they discussed Berea College, the stone wall in Old Town which Dinwiddie helped build, vocational education, Kentucky, bluegrass, Appalachia and other topics. His first mention of Berea appears at 23:00. Listen here: **http://ow.ly/q5Xo50EGIs3**

2001

Celebrating 20 years at Homecoming 2021.

2003

BIRTH: a daughter, Elizabeth Kathleen Sulfridge, born to **Katy Jones Sulfridge** and **Luke Sulfridge** of Vincent, Ohio. She has one brother, Blair Sulfridge.

BIRTH: a daughter, Margaret Vanilla Wiggins, born to **Rebecca Jean Wiltberger Wiggins '07** and **Stephen Wiggins** on Feb. 22, 2021. Margaret is named for her two maternal great-grandmothers, Margaret Kilbourne and Vanilla White, strong women who loved their families and their communities and who were deeply committed to justice and faithfulness in all they did.

2005

Damon D'Juan Harding is a lead educator teaching three middle school English classes for part of the day, and the remainder of the day he is in an administrators' (principal) role, where he evaluates teachers and teaches educators how to teach students of diverse populations—specifically students of other languages. In addition, he is finishing a doctoral program in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis on language, literacy and culture. He says he can't wait to catch up with the rest of the class of 2005.

DeJuana Thompson, founder of Woke Vote, was named the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute interim president and CEO. Read more: **http://ow.ly/hVDQ50EGIt2**

2006

Celebrating 15 years at Homecoming 2021.

Patty Schreckengost Lee was promoted to chief advancement officer of Community Matters Cincinnati. Her partnership with the urban, historically-Appalachian neighborhood of Lower Price Hill has led to new investment in resident leadership, social enterprise businesses, affordable housing and other resources to build a more thriving and just community.

Dr. Aishe Sarshad is one of 60 researchers in a new book that will arouse children's curiosity for research. Read more: **http://ow.ly/Ftvc50EGIuO**

2007

Keena Mullins, co-founder of Revolt Energy in West Virginia, shares how clean energy could lift West Virginia out of poverty. Read more: **http://ow.ly/isl650ELemy**

Jessa Turner and husband, Nathan Turner, go solar at HomeGrown HideAways, their farm, campground and event space in Berea, Ky. Read more: **http://ow.ly/bsVT50EGIxy**

2009

Terri Daugherty was announced as a member of the law firm Leitner, Williams, Dooley & Napolitan on Feb. 8. Read more: **http://ow.ly/3PfR50EGIBb**

Catherine Nicole Turner graduated in December 2020 from Fordham University with a master's degree in social work. Turner passed the state of Connecticut licensure board to be a licensed master in social work.

2010

Jessica Gardner graduated from the University of Louisville in December 2020. She earned a master's degree in human resources and organization development with a concentration in workplace learning and performance. She currently resides in Louisville and works for U of L as program coordinator for the Department of Surgery's Vascular Fellowship.

2011

Celebrating 10 years at Homecoming 2021.

Melissa Benson received a graduate certificate in educational research methods from the University of Kentucky.

2012

Holly Korb Rabnott graduated from Eastern Kentucky University on Dec. 11, 2020, in a virtual ceremony, with her master of arts degree in student personnel services in higher education. She plans to pursue a career in academic advising. She is forever grateful for the advisors she had while a student at Berea and was inspired by them to become an advisor herself. She currently resides in Berea with her husband, Justin.

2015

Nathaniel M. Fouch graduated with his J.D. from the University of St. Thomas School of Law in May 2020 and was admitted to the Minnesota Bar in October 2020.

BIRTH: a son, Oscar Michael Fouch, to **Nathaniel M. Fouch** and wife, Theresa, on April 3, 2021 in Minneapolis.

Storey Ryder Burden Free shared a painting Katherine Sniadowski Croce painted this year featuring their quintet of close friends at Berea (Storey Free, **Destinee Tyson '16**, Tori Fleury, Tori Bowman, and Kate Sniadowski Croce). Free said nearly a decade after meeting freshman year at Berea College, they are all still keeping up nearly daily and still a group of amazing, supportive best friends.

2016

Celebrating 5 years at Homecoming 2021.

Jonathan Dazo, ceramist and owner of Dazo's Clay Studio, talks about the importance of the Empty Bowls fundraiser and why he chooses to donate bowls along with other local potters. Read more: **http://ow.ly/6ZDf50EGIGV**

2018

Jessica Bartoe discusses her artwork, which is on display at Stuart's Opera House in Nelsonville, Ohio, and reflects on her time at Berea College as an art major. Read more: **http://ow.ly/ShzO50EGII5**

Tremain-Ajena Jones had plans to become a nurse. A scholarship from the National Center for Women & Information Technology changed everything. Now she enjoys the tech career of her dreams. Read more: **http://ow.ly/hCWu50EGIIw**

2019

Emmanuel Acheampong co-founded roboMUA, an artificial intelligence beauty platform aimed to help women find the right shade of makeup, especially women of color. Read more: **http://ow.ly/LvXV50EGILv**

Corbin Flege and **Caleb Flege '20** graduated from officer candidate school. Here they pose alongside their family and their recruiter, Lori Cook Lawson.

Noah Creigh Hughes joined the Northern Michigan University Athletics Department as athletics communications director in February. Hughes joined the Wildcat program following a year-long stint at Union College (Ky.), where he served as the assistant director of sports communications. His responsibilities with the Bulldogs included primary coverage of men's and women's soccer, cycling, men's and women's golf, women's basketball, men's and women's swimming and diving, baseball, and men's and women's tennis. Prior to his role as assistant director of sports communications, Hughes worked as a graduate assistant for the Bulldogs and the Appalachian Athletic Conference, which is part of the NAIA. Other stops include nearly three years at Berea College in the sports information department as well as an internship at Western Kentucky University. He also has a background in statistics and graphic design.

2021

Celebrating its first reunion at Homecoming 2021.

PASSAGES

Staff & Faculty

Mary Beth Adams Bevins '69
Seabury Center (1977-2009)
March 17, 2021

Bert Gabbard
Facilities (1961-1997)
March 2, 2021

1940s

Phyllis Douglass Abbott '41
March 1, 2021

Mary Helen Roberts Moore Acad '38, '42
April 3, 2021

Ruth Wilson Caldwell '43
Oct. 30, 2020

Dr. William R. Ledford '47
Jan. 3, 2021

Helen Barnes Connelly '48
Feb. 21, 2021

Dr. John D. Haun '48
Aug. 8, 2020

Ora Lee Beck Skeen Acad '43, '49
Feb. 16, 2021

1950s

Elizabeth Casto Frye '50
Jan. 8, 2021

Dr. Shirley Baker Meece KH '50
March 28, 2021

Sue Evelyn Storm Vidro '50
March 17, 2018

Kathryn Henderson White Acad '50
June 12, 2018

Charles W. LeMaster '51
Nov. 22, 2020

Odell Carlton Miller '51
Jan 13, 2021

Sakiko Miyashiro '51
Obituary Unavailable

Wayne T. Tipton Fd '51
Nov. 23, 2020

Doris Parrish Hazlewood '52
Feb. 25, 2021

Fay Ramey Miller '52
Feb. 16, 2021

Dr. Donald Lloyd Crawford '53
Dec. 19, 2020

Christine Gross Hampton '54
Nov. 28, 2020

Guinevere Crase Ison '54
Dec. 25, 2020

Doris Mullins Southerlin '54
Jan. 13, 2021

Betty Ledford Stiles Fd '49, '54
Feb. 13, 2019

Frieda Meade Wierda '54
March 6, 2021

Betty Kimbler Hill Fd '55
Obituary Unavailable

Russ Lloyd Sammons '55
March 19, 2021

Bernice B. Beavin '56
March 25, 2021

Dr. Hwei-Hsien "HH" Cheng '56
Jan. 24, 2021

Michaela Gabbard Cox Fd '56
Feb. 19, 2021

JoAnn Overton Dawson '56
March 20, 2021

Thelma Splawn Judd '56
March 26, 2021

Maj. Gallie Moore Jr., USA Ret. '56
Dec. 7, 2020

Renee Dow Toy '56
Nov. 13, 2020

Ernie J. Holt '57
March 18, 2021

Bertha Frazier Hurst '57
March 17, 2021

Dr. Hershel G. Sawyer '57
March 10, 2021

Donald E. Kilbourne '58
Feb. 6, 2021

Joyce Hyder O'Keefe Fd '54, '58
Jan. 24, 2021

Dr. J. Ray Israel '59
Feb. 15, 2021

1960s

Yvonne Cantrell '60
March 16, 2021

Lucille Napier Creech Fd '60
March 9, 2021

W. Ben Culbertson '60
Jan. 30, 2021

Kenneth Ray Bray '61
Jan. 8, 2021

Charles L. Flanary '61
Aug. 30, 2020

Dorothy Chandler Nieter '61
Feb. 7, 2021

Joe E. Wright '61
Dec. 4, 2020

Brenda Nichols Bloom '62
March 13, 2021

Joan Barbara Curtis '62
March 21, 2021

John Frederick Carnes '63
Nov. 21, 2020

Robert Ray McCormick '63
Nov. 19, 2020

Sylvia Phelps Jones '65
Nov. 20, 2020

Vernon L. Mechalske '65
Nov. 29, 2020

Frances Smith Moore '65
March 12, 2021

Janalee Justice Felty '66
Feb. 25, 2021

Anthony Clay Small Fd '66
Feb. 18, 2021

Bonnie Hicks Walters '68
Jan. 28, 2021

Mary Beth Adams Bevins '69
March 17, 2021

Christine Conway Collier Fd '65, '69
Obituary Unavailable

1970s

Ottis J. Reed '70
Nov. 18, 2020

Samuel M. Horne '71
Dec. 30, 2020

Jeff S. Burr Fd '68, '72
Feb. 27, 2021

Douglas Wayne Stamm '72
Jan. 21, 2021

Kenneth Artrip '74
May 6, 2020

Jereial B. Fletcher '76
March 8, 2021

Betty Wannamaker Lokuji '76
Feb. 14, 2020

Charla Godfrey '77
Feb. 27, 2021

William Hazen Presley '77
Jan. 3. 2021

1980s

Lowell Furman Fowler '87
June 17, 2020

1990s

Charles P. Pearson '93
Feb. 20, 2021

2000s

Lisa Newberry Brennan '00
Feb. 4. 2021

2010s

Morgan P. Graves '16
March 6, 2021

Read full obituaries on our website at **https://magazine.berea.edu**

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Lyle D. Roelofs
President

Recently, we asked a group of alumni and friends for their thoughts on our proposal to remove donor listings from the President's Report on Philanthropy and shift to a new kind of piece—one that shares more stories of the impact your gifts make on Berea College students. The overwhelming response is in support of this change, and we are grateful for your feedback. Below are some examples of the feedback we received.

"Absolutely DO please replace the long list of donors with more dynamic material featuring examples of the benefits that redound from donor contributions, emphasizing, as much as possible, the amazing accomplishments and aspirations of Berea students."

"I appreciate Berea's sensitivity to the challenges of privacy created by the vast technological advances we are faced with daily."

"I am proud to support an organization that educates young people. I am even prouder to support an organization that is efficient at that. I do not need to see my name in print to feel proud. I much prefer to see what my donation had achieved."

"My heart is filled with pride simply knowing that any donation I make to Berea will ease the financial burden for the students. I enjoy reading the success stories from students who have found Berea when a college education seemed like a hopeless dream for them."

"I agree, for all the reasons you mentioned, that it would be more cost effective to implement this change. My giving is not for recognition but rather an attempt to express my gratitude for the major impact Berea has had on my life. It is also a small way of extending a helping hand to others who may be in need."

With your support, we will remove the Honor Roll and bring you a President's Report on Philanthropy that shares stories, not only of our fantastic donors, but of the students they are generously helping to educate. We can't thank you enough, both for your response and for all you do for Berea's talented students. We look forward to sharing more stories of the success you make possible.

Warm regards,

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