

BEREA COLLEGE

MAGAZINE

1858-61.

BEREA COLLEGE, KENTUCKY

1. Open to all persons of good character.
2. Finely situated for reaching the "Mountain West."
3. The only collegiate institution in the State.
4. Training hundreds of competent teachers for the Christian States.
5. Offering collegiate courses which fit for positions of real leadership. Its graduates are fully prepared for the Northern schools.
6. Every student is a member of the Institution, and thus has much better teachers for general instruction.
7. The Institution furnishes for positions of from five to eight cents per week.
8. About one hundred students are admitted from the adjoining States.
9. Attended about 100 students during the year, divided between the sexes.
10. No other college in the State.

LASTING *Legacy*

SUMMER 2026

Volume 97

Number 1

Whitney Leggett, Editor, Director of Publications
Abbie Tanyhill Darst '03, Associate Vice President for Marketing and Communications
Amicheli Salyer, Art Director
Crystal Wylie '05, Director of Digital Multimedia Strategy
JoJo Wray '04, Content Contributor
Chad Berry Hon. '20, Vice President for Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Zach Coleman '29, Brooke Donley '26, Francisca Duarte '29, Whitney Leggett, Lyle Roelofs Hon. '21, Derek Shorkey '27

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

O'Neil Arnold '85, Moriah Avery '21, Brian Bilbro '26, Kalliah Hicks '27, Timothy Housa '27, Brooklynn Kenney, Maya Meads '27, Ehku Say '26, Eli Simpson '27, Zack Thompson, Sonam Tsering '27, Crystal Wylie '05

Historical photos contribution: Berea College Special Collections and Archives

CONTRIBUTING VIDEOGRAPHERS

Zack Thompson

CONTRIBUTING DESIGNERS

Brooklynn Kenney, Sayla Wilson '26

COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Cheryl L. Nixon, President
Shewanee Howard-Baptiste, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Chad Berry Hon. '20, Vice President for Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy
Frank Cirioni, Vice President of Student Life
Mary Robert Garrett, Dean of Faculty Development
Phillip Logsdon, Chief Information Officer
Barry Poynter '88, Vice President for Finance
Collis Robinson '13, Dean of Labor
Derrick Singleton, Vice President for Operations and Sustainability
Teri E. Thompson, Chief Strategy Officer
Judge B. Wilson II '78, General Counsel and Secretary

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPRINTS

If you have comments, questions or suggestions for the Berea College Magazine or would like information about reprinting any article appearing in the magazine, please contact:

Editor, Berea College Magazine
 Berea College
 CPO 2142
 Berea, KY 40404

AT YOUR SERVICE

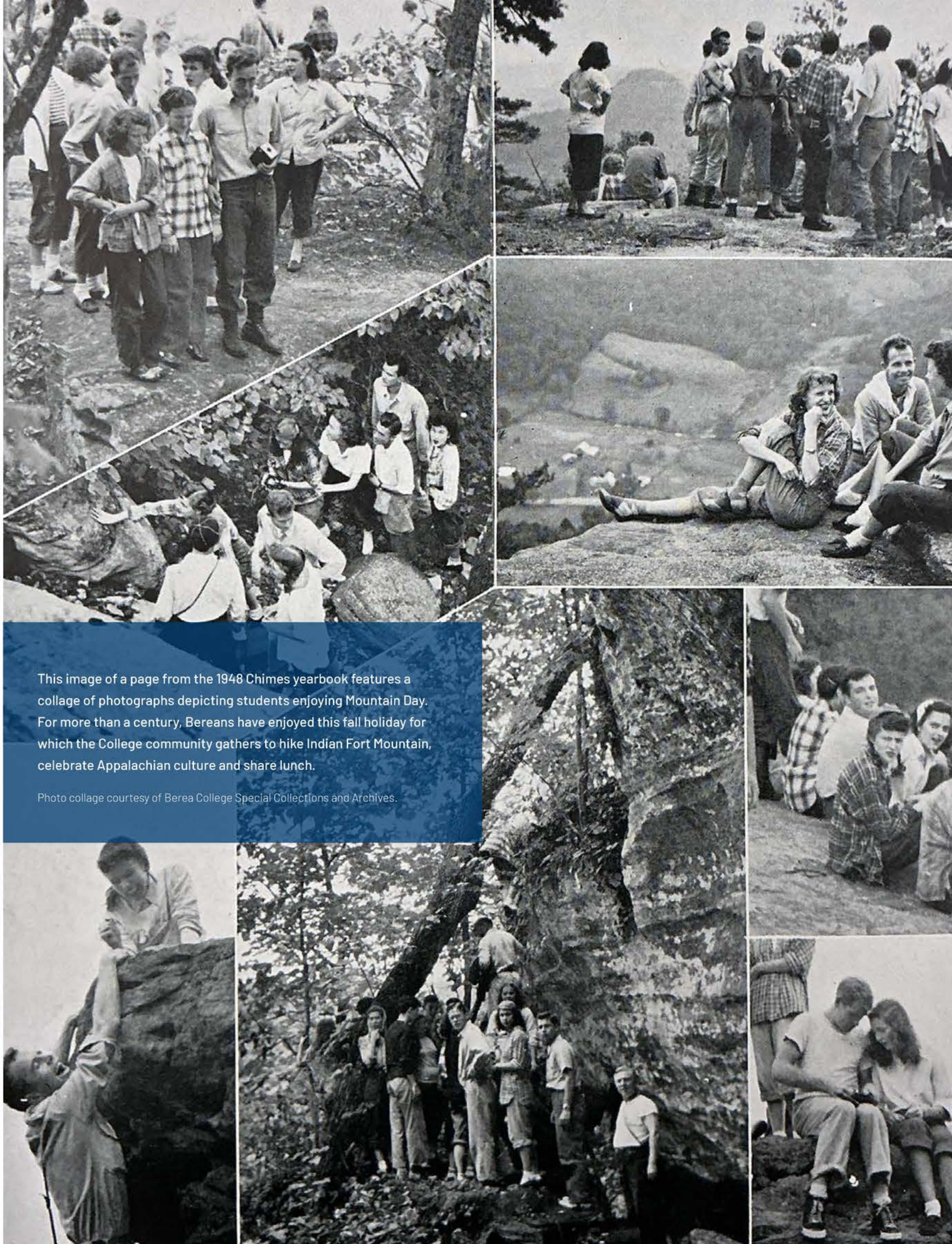
Web: www.berea.edu
 Mail: CPO 2142, Berea, KY 40404
 Phone: 1-800-457-9846
 Toll free: 1-866-804-0591
 Magazine: magazine.berea.edu
 Email: magazine@bera.edu

Berea College Magazine (ISSN 1539-7394) is published quarterly for Berea College alumni and friends by the Berea College Marketing & Communications Department. Periodicals postage at Berea, KY, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address corrections to the Berea College Office of Alumni Philanthropy, CPO 2203, Berea, KY 40404.

Berea College is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization under federal guidelines.

[f](https://www.facebook.com/beracollege) @beracollege [i](https://www.instagram.com/beracollege) @beracollege [X](https://www.x.com/beracollege) @beracollege



This image of a page from the 1948 Chimes yearbook features a collage of photographs depicting students enjoying Mountain Day. For more than a century, Bereans have enjoyed this fall holiday for which the College community gathers to hike Indian Fort Mountain, celebrate Appalachian culture and share lunch.

Photo collage courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 6 A Classroom in the Mountains**
 When a young Berea-trained teacher named Christine Vest journeyed into the hollows of what would become Shenandoah National Park, she brought education and possibility to children who had never set foot in a classroom. Her story, nearly erased from the park's history, lives on through the families she empowered and the enduring impact of the Hoover Mountain School.
- 10 Defying the Odds**
 Donald Caudill '80 went from being told he "wasn't college material" to building a life defined by scholarship, mentorship and unwavering generosity. While facing a life-altering diagnosis, Caudill doubled down on giving back, supporting programs like the Appalachian Male Initiative and championing student success at every turn.
- 14 Deep Water**
 From survival skills to scuba adventures around the world, the Gunkler Natatorium has become a place where students conquer fears, build confidence and break generational cycles through the power of learning to swim.
- 18 The Law of Connection**
 Three Berea alumni—Robert Lawson '60, William Davis '74 and Emily Puckett '07—built remarkable law careers shaped by the same transformative beginning: a Berea education that opened doors they once thought were closed. Their intertwined journeys show how mentorship, opportunity and the Berea connection continue to ripple across generations.
- 26 Through the Lens**
 O'Neil Arnold '85 went from a science-loving, first-year student to a photographer trusted with some of Berea's most iconic moments, all sparked by a labor position opportunity that changed his life. His mentorship reminds today's students that creativity, professionalism and seizing every chance can open doors far beyond campus.
- 30 Roots of Legacy**
 Martha Salter '51 and Ohlen Wilson '50 arrived at Berea with little more than determination, but the education and values they found shaped a multigenerational legacy of service, gratitude and healing. Their story—spanning love under a campus tree, decades of medical care and a family now filled with scholars and caregivers—shows how the Berea experience can echo far beyond a single lifetime.
- 34 Science in Motion**
 As the Foucault pendulum sweeps its steady arc through the MAC building, it mirrors the evolution of science at Berea. Decades of innovation, new faculty and shifting technologies have reshaped the science experience for generations of Bereans, all while the pendulum keeps time with the College's constant growth.

DEPARTMENTS

- 38 Retirees' Corner**
- 40 Class Notes**
- 42 In the News**
- 46 Passages**

ABOUT THE COVER

Blending 150 years of Mountain Day tradition, this cover, designed by Brooklynn Kenney, pairs a 1961 Chimes yearbook image with photos from the 2025 sunrise hike by Maya Meads '27 and Eli Simpson '27. Layered with an 1892 Berea advertisement, the scrapbook-inspired design celebrates enduring values, shared memories and connection across generations.

TRUSTEES AND COUNCILS

Cheryl L. Nixon, President

CHAIR OF THE BOARD
Samantha S. Earp '86

VICE CHAIR(S) OF THE BOARD
Vance Blade '82
William L. Robbins

BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2025-26
Vicki E. Allums '79
Celeste P. Armstrong '90
Joseph Bagnoli Jr. '88
Joseph John Bridy
Stephen Campbell
Dwayne Compton '01
Charles D. Crowe '70
Donna J. Dean '69
Adam Edelen
Donna M. Fick '86
Michael D. Flowers
Yolando Gallardo
Jodi D. Gentry '87
Scott M. Jenkins
Glenn R. Jennings '72
Shawn C.D. Johnson
Brenda W. Lane* '79
Talina Rose Mathews '89
Robert W. Phillips* '90
Sandy Reynolds* '69
Dennis R. Roop '69
Charles Ward Seabury II
David B. Sloan '72
Tyler S. Thompson '83

Megan Torres* '09
Rocky S. Tuan '72
Emmanuel A. Tuffuor '88
Stephanie B. Zeigler
* Alumni Trustee

HONORARY TRUSTEES
Charlotte F. Beason '70
Martin A. Coyle
M. Elizabeth Culbreth '64
William R. Gruver
Donna S. Hall
Nancy Lampton
Eugene Y. Lowe Jr.
Harold L. Moses '58
Betty H. Olinger '69
Douglas M. Orr
Thomas W. Phillips '65
Mim Pride
William Richardson
David Shelton '69
R. Elton White '65
Dawneda F. Williams
Robert T. Yahng '63

ALUMNI EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (AEC) 2025-26
Alonzo (Lonnie) Allen Jr. '84, President, Kentucky
Jarel Jackson '02, President-Elect, Tennessee
Mahjabeen Rafiuddin '97, Past-President, Florida
Dr. Cheryl Nixon, President of

Berea College
Dr. Chad Berry, Hon. '20, Vice President for Alumni, Communications and Philanthropy

AEC ALUMNI TRUSTEES
Sandy Reynolds
Brenda W. Lane '79
Robert W. Phillips '90
Megan Torres '09

AEC MEMBERS-AT-LARGE
Shawn Adkins '01, Ohio
Layla Lee Almssalkhi '15, North Carolina
Chaka Cummings '02, Kentucky
Kelland Garland '00, Kentucky
John Graham '85, Alabama
Adam Howard '93, Maine
LeDon Jones '99, Alabama
Sue Hairston Jones '72, Kentucky
Kevin Messer '86, Ohio
Sandra D. Moore '80, Kentucky
Ajay Nanda '91, New Jersey
Princess Nash '07, Alabama
Brandon Pollock '19, New York
Vestena Robbins '90, Kentucky
Rachel Rosolina '06, Indiana
Jo Bumgardner Salmon '77, Kentucky
Harry Tsiagbe '17, Virginia
Elyor Tukhtasinov '19, Georgia

Photo by Brooklynn Kenney



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Alumni and Friends,

It is an honor and privilege to write to you for the first time as the new editor of *Berea College Magazine*. While I am new to this role, I step into a story that stretches back generations, shaped by the people and purpose that define this institution. This issue, centered on “then and now,” invites us to reflect on that continuum: to consider what has changed, what has endured and how each moment builds on the last.

Working on my first issue of the magazine led me to reflect on my own “then and now” story—how early mentorship shaped my career aspirations and higher education refined my passions. I found myself thinking about how that continuum sometimes brings us back to the things we love at just the right time. For me, this new role feels full circle.

I began my career as a journalist, telling the stories of my home community in Winchester, Kentucky, and capturing history as it happened. I covered overcomers and achievers, the COVID-19 pandemic, landmark legislation, local government, the power of education and more. It was meaningful work, but ready for a new challenge, I transitioned into communications and marketing in the nonprofit and government sectors. Still, the heart of a storyteller never stops beating. The opportunity to work at Berea College brought together everything I was looking for: telling stories with purpose, supporting a mission I believe in and returning to my roots in editorial leadership. I’m both excited and humbled to be here.

I recently read a saying that resonated: “Between then and now is where transformation happens.” As someone new to this community—and not an alumna—I am struck by how much of Berea’s story exists in that in-between space, where tradition and progress meet.

This issue reflects how the past has shaped the present, how opportunity and perseverance lead to a brighter future and how our own stories can shape generations to come. You’ll read about individuals who defied the odds and refused to be defined by the opinions of others; about a campus that continues to evolve while remaining committed to serving students of great potential; and about the enduring connections that define what it means to be a Berean. You’ll also see how Berea prepares its graduates to be high achievers, role models and changemakers.

I’m thankful for the opportunity to be a small part of the Berea story and look forward to continuing to uplift it in future issues of the magazine. Please never hesitate to reach out with feedback, ideas, story suggestions or questions.

I’m grateful to step into this moment alongside you, where Berea’s past and present continue to shape what comes next.

Whitney Leggett

Whitney Leggett
Editor, Director of Publications

Read the stories and feel inspired.



The stories in these pages are living proof of what happens when talented students are given the opportunity to learn, lead and serve.

Help open that same door for future Bereans.



Scan the code to support Berea College's No-Tuition Commitment and make a lasting difference.

**BEREA
COLLEGE**
MARKETING &
COMMUNICATIONS

A Classroom in the Mountains

By Brooke Donley '26

While at her family home, Lisa Custalow, founder of The Children of Shenandoah, heard the stories of a teacher who came to the mountains of what is now Shenandoah National Park.

"I grew up hearing the story of Christine Vest from the descendants of the mountain people who attended," Custalow explained. "It is a part of the history of Shenandoah National Park that is often overlooked when people talk about the national park's creation."

Shenandoah National Park is just a few hours from Washington, D.C., and is known for its hiking trails, including part of the Appalachian Trail, and natural beauty, with forests and waterfalls. However, the area's history did not begin with the creation of the park itself.

Families once called this stretch of rural mountains home, and needing a reprieve from Washington, President Herbert Hoover decided to create Camp Rapidan in the area. His expectations for Camp Rapidan were a retreat away from the

problems of Washington, not a place where he would find one.

However, on one of Hoover's trips to the site, he met a young boy named Rae Burraker, who brought the president an opossum for his birthday. Upon having a conversation with the boy, Hoover realized this young man and his siblings had never been to school. With that knowledge, Camp Rapidan became not just a reprieve but also a mission field for education.

To educate the area children, a schoolhouse needed to be constructed, and a teacher had to be found. The teacher could not just be anyone, as many of these soon-to-be students had never been to school before. The Hoovers needed someone who was familiar with a rural community in the mountains and experienced with students in those communities. Mrs. Hoover found a student teacher from Berea College whom she thought fit all the requirements.

Christine Vest was originally from Yosemite, Kentucky, and she came to Berea with the intention of becoming

a teacher. When Vest received the offer to interview with the Hoovers in Washington, D.C., she was still a student at Berea College. She was training at the Berea College Training School teaching fifth and sixth grade when she was offered the position at the Hoover Mountain School.

Subsequently, Berea released Vest from her position, and she traveled to Camp Rapidan. Vest was chosen because of her experience working with students from remote areas in Kentucky and her extensive knowledge of this type of community. "Lou Henry Hoover trusted that Berea College would create a teacher that would be able to come into the Blue Ridge Mountains and teach students," explained Custalow.

The New York Times reported on Feb. 6, 1930, "With all the advantages that city children enjoy, in point of convenience, of comfort and of quality of teaching, as compared with rural children generally, many a person would wish to be a child again out on the frontier, especially under such a teacher as has been engaged to take charge of the little



Photos courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

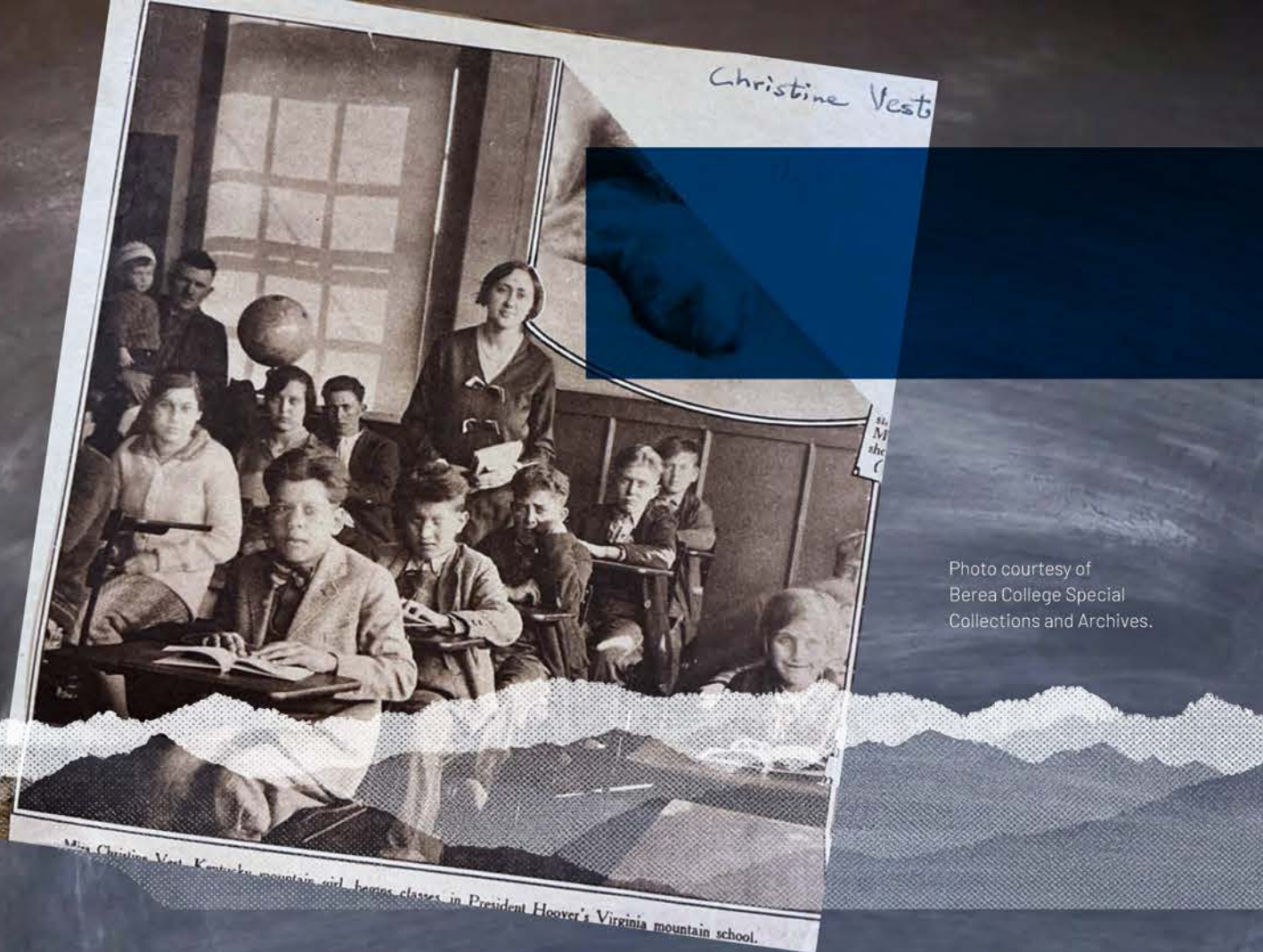


Photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

group of mountain children, till now unschooled, among the trees and birds and wild creatures. Miss Christine Vest herself was a mountain child, and though (thanks to that remarkable institution, Berea College, Kentucky) she got a college education, she went back among the mountains to teach, first in her own community, then in 'Mulberry Gap,' Tennessee, then out among the 'coves and hollows' in a county of 10,000 people without a railroad, then back to Berea to train other mountain teachers."

The community of Dark Hollow surrounding Camp Rapidan welcomed Vest with open arms and excitement as children and adults alike were able to receive an education from the Hoover Mountain School. It was a focal point for community growth and development.

According to "Hoover Heads," the blog of the Herbert Hoover Library and Museum published by the National Archives, "The President's Mountain School opened on Feb. 24,

1930, with 17 children in attendance, including Rae Burraker and five of his siblings." There was so much excitement that Vest did not begin teaching her material on opening day.

For four years, Vest lived at the school and taught the children many skills like reading, writing and math, which would prove to be important when their family lands were taken to create the national park.

"Miss Vest introduced them to the modern world beyond their remote mountain homes," according to the blog. "She taught them about cities and the commerce and industry found there. They learned about units of measurement, time and money, and how to order goods from the Sears catalog. Some of the girls learned to make or repair clothing with an electric sewing machine. Miss Vest took the students on field trips to the county fair, and even to Washington, D.C., where they had lunch at the White House. For most of the children, it was the first time they had traveled more than a few

miles from home or ridden in an automobile."

Vest taught at the school until 1933, when she married Lou K. Witcofski, one of the U.S. Marines assigned to protect the Rapidan retreat.

After Hoover left office, enrollment at the mountain school declined as residents in the surrounding area were displaced under a sweeping condemnation law, making way for the creation of Shenandoah National Park in 1935. Custalow is a descendant of the mountain people who inhabited the land that would become Shenandoah National Park.

"It's fair to say that we families have a conflicted relationship with the national park," she said. "It was our family land, but it is now something that belongs to the national government. That doesn't change what Christine Vest did here. She gave the mountain people something that they didn't have access to previously: education." ¹⁸

NOMINATE

STUDENTS TO BEREA COLLEGE

Have an even greater impact on students.

As a teacher and Berea alumnus in your community, share your Berea story with your students and introduce them to the opportunity for transformative education.

Pictured is Summer Simmons '05. She teaches Math at Madison Southern High School, Berea, Ky.

Photo by Crystal Wylie '05



Do you know high school students you'd like to nominate?

We want them to have a chance at Berea College, but we need your nomination today.

He is mindful of the step-up Berea gave him as he graduated with little student debt and made connections at Berea that helped him in his career.



Told he was not college material, Donald W. Caudill '80 earned an MBA and doctorate, built a successful career, became a published author, and now supports Berea students through philanthropy and mentorship.

Color photo by Etku Say '26, black-and-white photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

Defying the Odds

By Brooke Donley '26

Growing up in Southwest Virginia, Donald W. Caudill '80 was told by a guidance counselor that he was not college material.

With that in mind, Caudill took the technical path in high school. He enrolled in the business program, where he learned general business and typing skills. However, one of his other high school guidance counselors believed he could attend Berea College. This guidance counselor was a Berea alumna herself, and she even took Caudill and other students to visit Berea for the first time.

"I knew from the first time that I visited Berea that it was the place I was supposed to be," Caudill said, reflecting on that visit to Berea during the summer of 1976.

The following fall, Caudill arrived at Berea College with a special interest in starting his own business one day, so he chose to major in business.

Being placed on the technical track was not entirely detrimental to Caudill, as he gained skills in office management and typing quickly, which allowed him to land a job in

his first two years in the Career Development Office. He worked as an office assistant for the department and connected his fellow students to careers after graduation. Recently, at his home in Virginia, he found a booklet he had sent to local schools advocating for student teachers to have a place to work upon their graduation.

"I believe every single student listed in the booklet got a teaching job," Caudill noted.

Being told he was not college material stuck with Caudill after he graduated from Berea College and into his teaching career. He wanted to set a different example for the students he encountered. "I wanted Appalachian students, especially men, to know that they can go to college and achieve whatever they want," Caudill said. "Programs like the Appalachian Male Initiative (AMI) support students like I was when I entered Berea College. That is why I support AMI."

Caudill has generously donated to support many activities that AMI does to support their Appalachian male students. This initiative is sponsored by the Loyal Jones

Appalachian Center and works as a mentorship program for students to gain skills in job interviewing, writing and more.

As a graduate of the Business Department, Caudill also wants to support current business students. For the past 26 years, he has hosted the senior celebration, where the department recognizes its graduating seniors and provides a scholarship for an Appalachian male student. "It is a really nice time to connect with current students and hear their plans for after graduation."

While Caudill had aspired to open his own business after graduation, a door opened for him to attend graduate school at Morehead State University. One of his professors from Berea took the job of dean of the graduate school, was planning to begin teaching there and encouraged Caudill to apply for the Master of Business Administration (MBA) program. "It was an opportunity too good to pass up. I wasn't going to have to pay much of anything to get my Master of Business Administration."

Deciding to pursue a master's degree led to an opportunity for even higher education. Caudill went on to earn his doctorate at Virginia Tech. He also had many business ventures, including managing rental properties and a real estate investment company.

He then spent a career teaching undergraduate, MBA and doctoral marketing courses at several institutions. He spent the last 18 years of his career at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina.

Unfortunately, his time in the classroom was cut short by a Stage 3 esophageal cancer diagnosis that Caudill has been fighting since December 2022.

Despite the diagnosis, Caudill has remained active in his research and



Donald W. Caudill '80 signs a copy of his book, "The Success Pyramid," for a Berea College student during the senior celebration for the business department, which he has hosted annually for 26 years.

Color photo by Brian Bilbro '26, black-and-white photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

"I am forever indebted to Berea College. I wouldn't have made it as far in life without my Berea College degree."

— DONALD W. CAUDILL '80

writing about success. "There were days that I thought I was dying," he said. "It was hard to get up. I would think of something that I could do for my research and force myself to work."

His research has included writing multiple articles about business and a book about being successful: "The Success Pyramid: A Scientific Formula for Getting Everything You Desire," for which he spent several years researching the different ways people become successful. Caudill's contract with the publisher is a deal for two books, so he has plans for that as well. "The last book was more about presenting the research, but this one will focus on the practical ways of becoming successful."

"After learning I had one of the deadliest forms of cancer, my goals became more authentic, and my viewpoint of what success entailed changed," he said. "I had originally envisioned success as being rich or becoming famous. But, during the cancer treatments, I began to think more about leaving a legacy and helping as many people as possible achieve success. I realized that I had been blessed with personal and financial success and that more possessions would not make my life more meaningful. So, I began downsizing and ramped up my giving."

Being able to outlive his prognosis has made Caudill grateful for every opportunity that he has been given to surpass it. "I was given up to two

years with treatment to live when I was first diagnosed. That's 24 months, and it's now been over 41. I want to do as much as I can while I'm here."

Reflecting on his time at Berea, Caudill says there is still camaraderie between him and his classmates whenever they attend events together, even more than four decades after their graduation.

He is mindful of the step-up Berea gave him as he graduated with little student debt and made connections at Berea that helped him in his career. "I am forever indebted to Berea College. I wouldn't have made it as far in life without my Berea College degree." 📖

Opportunity.

"Our charitable gift annuity is a way to help students have the opportunity we had, and that's important to us."

— College sweethearts and lifelong supporters of Berea College, Bill '69 and Nancy Melton '72 enjoy the financial security of a charitable gift annuity and their continued support of deserving students.

Invest in a charitable gift annuity at Berea College and earn the return of a lifetime: **guaranteed payments for life** and **a legacy of providing a tuition-free college education** to high-achieving students of limited means.

- **Immediate or deferred payments**
- **Immediate tax reduction**
- **Fixed payments for life of the beneficiary.**

SAMPLE ONE LIFE RATES

AGE	RATE
55	4.8%
65	5.7%
75	7.0%
80	8.1%
90+	10.1%

Rates are set by Berea College and informed by the American Council on Gift Annuities.

Effective January 1, 2024



BEREA COLLEGE

Contact the office of Planned Philanthropy at GiftPlanning@berea.edu or **CALL (800) 457-9846**.

Berea.GiftLegacy.com



photo by Maya Meads '27

Deep Water

By Zach Coleman '29

In the 1930s, one of Oscar Gunkler's earliest assignments at Berea College was to administer swim screenings. In his memoir, "May I Say A Few Words?" Gunkler, the namesake for Berea College's natatorium, recalled witnessing a student hesitant to get in the water during one of these screenings. Once in the water, the student started flailing and struggling. With his student instructors frozen, Gunkler jumped into action.

"I handed my clipboard to the instructor nearest me, and clothes and all, dove into the pool," he wrote. "While pulling the man to the side of the pool, I said, 'What's the matter, son, can't you swim?' After several gulps of air, he said, 'Don't know. Never tried.' Needless to say, he quickly learned how to swim. As a matter of fact, after instruction and practice, he made the swimming team."

To this day, Gunkler Natatorium is loved by many for the pool it holds and dreaded by some for the anticipated required swim screening needed to graduate. On the surface, it may seem like a regular pool, but its deep waters contain a vast history.

In the early 1900s, there was a rise in drownings across the nation. Many colleges decided to make learning to swim a graduation requirement. As time went on, this requirement began to vanish, but it remains in some colleges today, such as MIT, Cornell and Berea.

When Gunkler arrived in Berea as the College's athletics director in 1930, not many athletic programs were offered, let alone swimming courses. The Seabury Center—called the Seabury Gymnasium at the time—was newly built, and Berea was one of the first institutions in Kentucky to have a full-fledged educational swimming facility. The Seabury Gymnasium gave Gunkler a place to encourage students to strengthen not only their bodies, but also their minds.

Gunkler introduced the College to soccer, dance and swimming. He saw the pool as a teaching setting and a stage. Gunkler taught survival swimming and advanced swimming and hosted aquacades, which are synchronized swimming performances. "Extensive training in swimming can be boring. I sought ways to alleviate this drudgery by putting on water shows," Gunkler further recalled in his memoir.

Today, Berea College's Seabury Gymnasium has transformed into a sports complex with multiple classrooms, a weight and cardio room and an even larger pool—dedicated to Gunkler in memoriam of his contributions as athletics director.

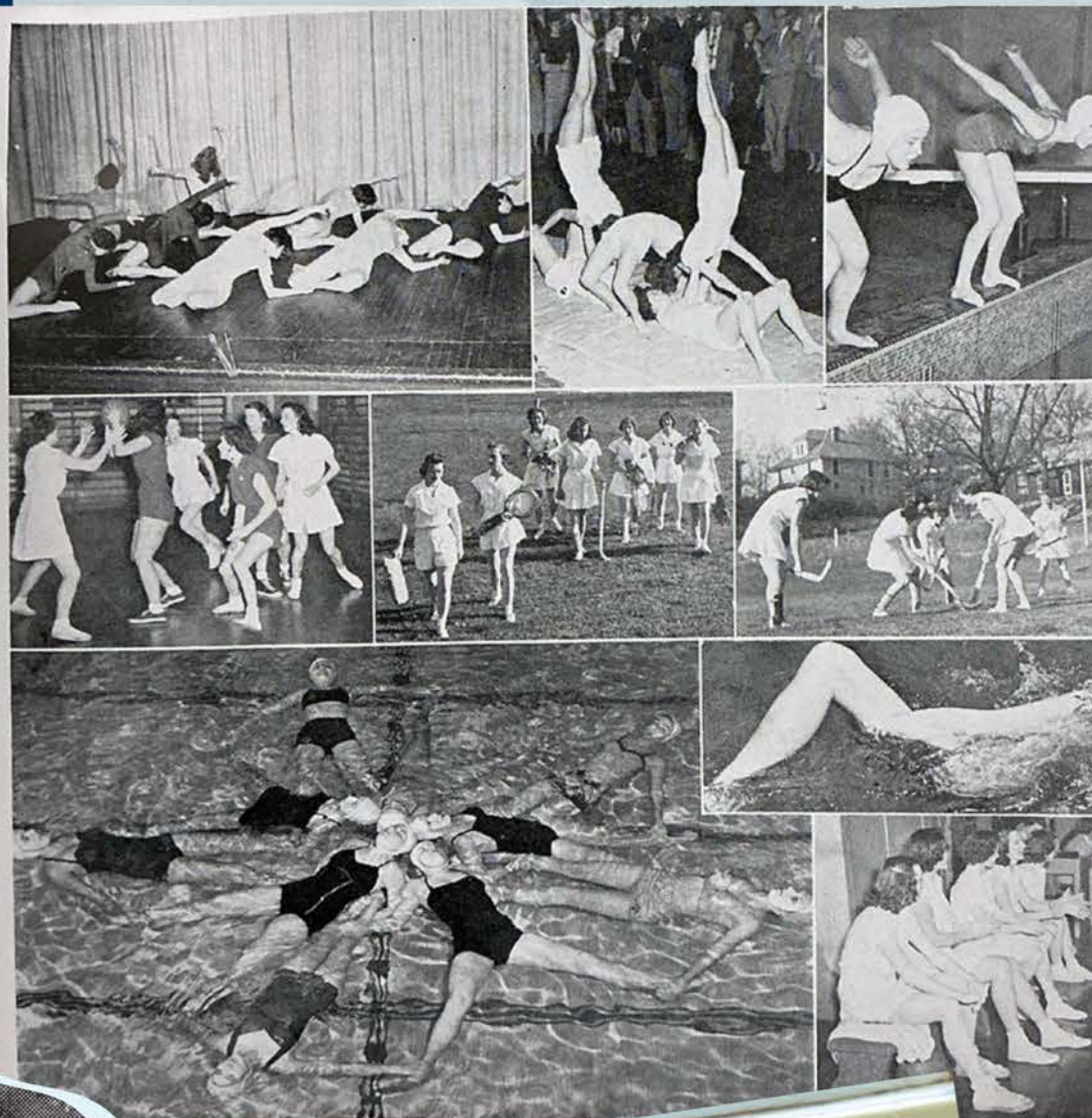
Thanks to Gunkler, students, past and present, have transformed their lives by learning how to move not only on land but in the water. The Seabury Center has enriched the lives of many by offering a place to learn how to swim and continues to do so to this day.

The swim requirement for students to graduate today has remained unchanged for the past 20 years, adhering to the Red Cross swim competency requirements. Every student must pass the swim screening to graduate, and if unable to do so, they can learn another essential skill to fulfill the requirement, such as CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

Berea College's swim competency requirement is not just a graduation requirement but an emphasis on the College's liberal arts model. Students are encouraged to learn new subjects and skills, and swimming opens many doors for them to explore activities they never thought they could. Berea College employs a variety of staff to prepare students with these skills today.

Arriving in 2024, Berea College Aquatics Director Sean Trinke has an extensive history in athletics, including mountain biking and coaching swim. Trinke believes, as many other aquatics faculty do, that swimming is a crucial skill. "You don't have to learn how to ride a bike, but when it comes to swimming, it's a survival skill," Trinke said. "Seventy percent of the Earth is water, so you might fall into it."

After taking survival swimming, some students choose to progress into more advanced classes. Professor of Engineering Technology



Color swimming photo by Moriah Avery '21 and historial plaque photo by Timothy Housa '27. Black-and-white photo of Oscar Gunkler and of photo collage image of a page from the 1951 Chimes Yearbook are courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.



Color swimming photo by Moriah Avery '21, wooden sign photo by Timothy Housa '27, and black-and-white photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

and Applied Design (ETAD) Gary Mahoney '82, who holds the Laban T. and LaVerna R. McClure Chair in Technology and Industrial Arts, also teaches scuba diving. Students who have passed the swim screening and taken the course have been able to travel the world to explore and survey the deep.

"I've had students that came to Berea College that couldn't swim at all that would take the beginning swim class and have signed up for [Scuba], gone to Honduras with us, and would dive 35 dives or so while we're down there," Mahoney said.

Trinque also recalled a student who went on to pursue greater swimming activities. After taking survival

swimming with Trinque, the student went on to take intermediate swimming, scuba diving with Mahoney, and then went on to scuba dive in the Bahamas. "Swimming has now changed this student's life," Trinque said.

Berea College aims to equip students for the future by breaking generational cycles. Swim Screening Coordinator and Health and Human Performance (HHP) Professor Melody Srsic has worked at Berea for 20 years, testing skills and teaching hundreds of students how to swim. As many swim faculty know first-hand, teaching these students has changed their future, and other people's futures immensely.

"I think here at Berea College, as part of our mission, the College very successfully breaks barriers and increases accessibility to our students who may not have had access to these experiences before," Srsic said. "We're very good at it, and thanks to the students who are willing to swim, we break cycles of generational fear in the family."

Students pass down what they have learned from survival swimming, teaching it to their friends and loved ones. "I often hear back from graduates who have become parents, say, 'My kids are also now in swimming lessons,'" Srsic recalled. "My kids will not become a drowning statistic. We all know how to swim." ■



From left, Swim Screening Coordinator and HHP Professor Melody Srsic, Aquatics Director Sean Trinque and former Dean of Curriculum Scott Steele help advance Berea College's commitment to swimming education.

Photo by Timothy Housa '27

Berea College's former Dean of Curriculum Scott Steele re-earned his certification, and will teach survival swimming in 2027. Steele has an extensive background in swimming, coming from Texas Christian University (TCU) as a Division I swimmer and coach. "I was a swim coach. I was [also a] competitive swimmer, but I've never taught swimming or survival swimming to adults," Steele said.

Steele believes, as many faculty do, that the swim requirement is an essential part of Berea College's liberal arts model. "We recently did a general education review, and swimming is really part of the general education," Steele said. "And at that time, the faculty agreed to keep it, to make it an expectation for our students."

For Steele, the most rewarding part of being a swimming coach is the impact of his work. "Teaching is rewarding," Steele said. "I've heard both from the instructors and from the students that students are very grateful that they had the opportunity to develop this skill that they can use their whole life, and they really enjoy it. So, when you're teaching something that someone really is appreciative of learning, I think that's very gratifying."

“Your gifts changed the whole trajectory of my life.”

Today, Anthony is Dr. Anthony Myrks-Brewer — educator, mentor, and Berea alumnus.



Support the Berea Fund and help today's students build futures they once only dreamed about.

BEREA COLLEGE

WWW.BEREA.COLLEGE/DONATE
PO Box 1855 • BEREA, KY 40403 • 800-457-9846





The Law of Connection

From left, William Davis '74, Robert Lawson '60 and Emily Puckett '07 gather outside the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law, where the Berea alumni recently reunited. Lawson's mentorship helped forge a professional relationship between Davis and Puckett as they pursued careers in law.

Photo by Crystal Wylie '05, and black-and-white photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

By Whitney Leggett

The Berea connection extends beyond the confines of campus and graduation years. Such is the case for three Berea alumni who connected over their shared affinity for the College as they pursued law careers: Robert Lawson '60, William Davis '74 and Emily Puckett '07.

Throughout his career as a lawyer and law professor, Lawson has

written code that set the standard for others in the field and impacted the lives of more than 6,000 students. Davis and Puckett are among those students and owe their own connection to Lawson.

Growing up as the son of a coal miner in the Whitman Creek community of Logan, West Virginia, Lawson thought he had no chance of going to college. His mom and aunt learned of Berea College, a place

where Appalachian students like Lawson could access higher education at no cost.

"It was a miracle, actually," Lawson said. "Berea ended up being the only way I could go to college."

Following in his older brother, Earl's, footsteps, Lawson came to Berea in 1956 to study economics and business. He met his wife, Rosemary, a couple of years later at an orientation event at the College.

While on campus, Lawson had several jobs. He worked in the business office, the grocery store, as a janitor, swim instructor and eventually as a teaching assistant for his German professor.

“Everything was special [about Berea]—my classes, the professors, the students,” he recalled. “It was a good place.”

Lawson excelled while at Berea. He earned good enough grades and enjoyed the college experience so much that he wanted to further his business education in graduate school. However, a scholarship opportunity would change the trajectory of his career.

Berea offered Lawson a full-tuition scholarship to Tulane University’s law school. He hadn’t considered a

career in law before, but the opportunity was too good to pass up, so he and Rosemary got married and moved to New Orleans.

Lawson quickly realized he wouldn’t want to practice law in Louisiana, though, and the couple moved back to Kentucky. Lawson started his second year of law school at the University of Kentucky (UK) College of Law.

“UK was a lot like Berea for me,” Lawson said. “The tuition was low. I got a job working in the library there, and we lived in an apartment building that was owned by the university that was low-cost.”

Lawson graduated from law school in 1963 at the top of his class and with two job offers from law firms in Lexington, Kentucky, and one for

American Electric Power Company in Roanoke, Virginia, which he took and worked for a couple of years before returning to Lexington and starting his own practice.

UK offered Lawson the opportunity to teach some courses and then hired him as a full-time professor. He joined the law school faculty at UK in 1966, teaching basic courses every law student had to take, so his classes were full, sometimes with up to 100 students per class.

“I enjoyed being around the students, being able to teach them things that I knew I had special experience with,” he said.

Early in his career, the Kentucky legislature asked Lawson to help draft the Kentucky Penal Code. He then wrote a book on Kentucky

criminal law and was asked to work with the Kentucky Supreme Court on several matters. He also wrote a handbook on Kentucky evidence law. The handbook was given to every trial judge in the state. Lawyers started wanting copies, too, and the book was eventually published in 1975.

“And it’s still being published today,” Lawson said proudly.

Lawson would eventually go on to serve as Dean of the UK law school

by the time I reached 11th grade, I had not changed my mind.”

However, growing up in the deep South during the Civil Rights Movement, Davis said he didn’t have any African American lawyers to look up to.

“The African American professionals in our neck of the woods were undertakers, pastors, a few schoolteachers and people who owned their own businesses, like small-town grocery stores,” he

out he had scored high enough on those tests to attend college.

There were obstacles, though. Davis’ family had a low income, and the school principal had already spoken with his mom, convincing her she would never afford to send her son to college. The principal had also instructed the school staff not to help Davis or any other Black students with anything related to college.

The guidance counselor, however, knew of Berea College and was convinced Davis would be a good fit. She offered to help him but swore him to secrecy.

“She said, ‘I got a place for you. You’re a good talker, and I think you’ll make a good lawyer. I’m going to help you, but you can’t tell anybody,’” Davis said. “She said everything had to be done in confidence. I couldn’t tell my mom, my friends, my teachers, anybody.”

Davis took home a pamphlet about Berea College and scoured it that night, learning that all students are from modest incomes and had to work and maintain high academic standards and, based on the picture on the front, there was snow.

“But the thing that really clinched it for me, besides the snow, was that I read that John G. Fee, a minister and abolitionist, started this college for Blacks and whites,” Davis said.

Meanwhile, the guidance counselor was securing letters from other teachers and the other necessary documents to get Davis into Berea. Davis kept that secret long enough to graduate high school. In fall 1971, he arrived at Berea College.

While at the College, he served on the student council and was senator for his dormitory. He worked as a bus boy at Boone Tavern, a janitor at the preschool and at the library shelving books. He managed to graduate in three years and was

The Berea connection extends beyond

the confines of campus and graduation years

twice, for a total of eight years. He taught at the school for 50 years and kept his office there until he decided to retire fully.

Lawson credits his success to his time at Berea College.

“I owe everything to Berea College,” Lawson said.

During his time at the law school, Lawson made it a point to be accessible to his students, and Berea College graduates would usually come by his office to introduce themselves as fellow alumni. That’s how he connected with Puckett and Davis, who, much like Lawson, found themselves at Berea when college had previously seemed out of the picture.

THE SECRET TO COLLEGE

It seemed like Davis always knew he wanted to be a lawyer, after trading his dreams of being a rocket scientist.

“I decided when I was in eighth grade, I wanted to be a lawyer,” Davis said. “It was locked in at age 13, and

recalled. “And they were not educated people. They were not people with master’s and doctorate degrees, which I didn’t know anything about.”

Davis had attended an all-Black school from kindergarten through seventh grade. During his eighth-grade year, he and four other students from Eastside Elementary School went to the predominantly white Dixon Junior High School as part of Martin Luther King Jr.’s desegregation program.

Davis’ mother didn’t want him to go, but he insisted, and eventually attended the predominantly white Talladega High School, where he participated in the Upward Bound program. Through the program, he took college-level classes and visited college campuses. Participants had access to take the PSAT, SAT, ACT and National Merit Scholarship tests. Thanks to the program, he aspired to go to college.

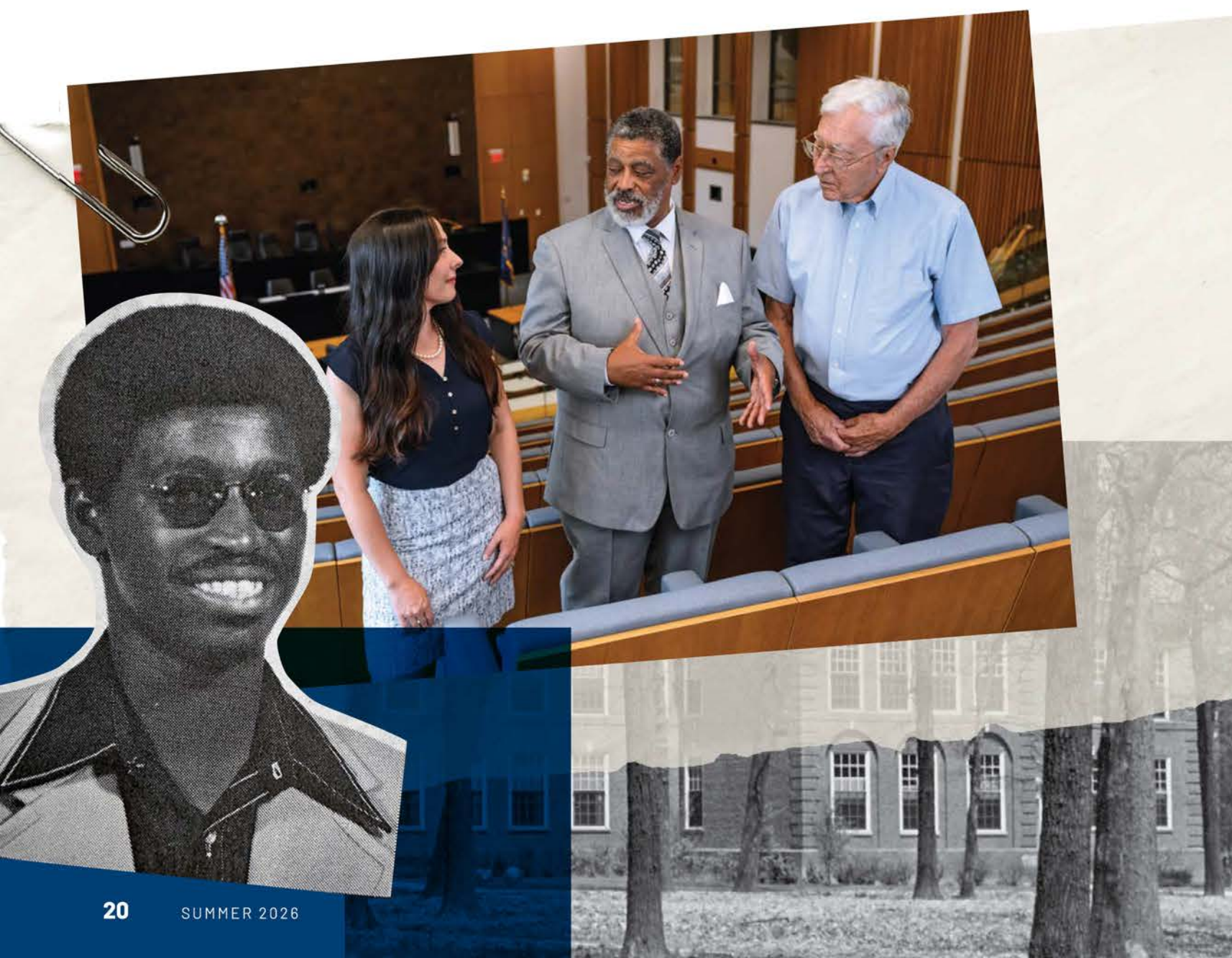
During his junior year of high school, he was called into the guidance counselor’s office. Worried he had been accused of something, Davis went in on the defensive, only to find

Berea alumni Emily Puckett ’07, William Davis ’74 and Robert Lawson ’60 reunited at the University of Kentucky J. David Rosenberg College of Law. Their connection, spanning nearly five decades of Berea graduates, reflects the College’s enduring tradition of mentorship. William Davis’ ’74 senior photo appeared in the 1975 edition of the Berea College Chimes yearbook.

Color photo by Zack Thompson, and black-and-white photos courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

SUMMER 2026

21





Emily Puckett '07 and her son, Benjamin, stand outside Berea College's Ecovillage, where Puckett and her husband, Kevin '06, lived as students when Benjamin was born. Now a senior at Berea College himself, Benjamin's journey reflects a full-circle moment for the family.

Photo by Brooklynn Kenney

accepted to UK law school, thanks to letters from professors who had also helped Lawson get into the school, he said.

After law school, Davis joined the U.S. Air Force. He attended military law school and worked with the Judge Advocate General's Corps, where he helped prosecute military crimes.

He went on to become a civil rights lawyer and has practiced in Kentucky for most of his five-decade career. He also taught courses at Kentucky State University and the Kentucky State Police Academy. Eventually, he worked as an assistant deputy attorney general and director of the uninsured employers fund in the Kentucky Attorney General's Office. He was the first African American in these positions in the history of the Kentucky Attorney General's Office. In 2024, he was inducted into the Kentucky Civil Rights Hall of Fame.

Davis attributes much of his success to his Berea experience.

"Berea tempered me and disciplined me," he said. "It had the structure that I needed."

Davis' work in civil rights law is what led to his connection with Puckett, and Lawson was the connector.

DISCOVERING HER FULL POTENTIAL

Puckett found herself in law school more than a decade after she graduated from Berea. In her second year at UK, Puckett was writing for the Kentucky Law Journal about Section 1983, which is a federal civil rights law allowing individuals to sue government officials who violate their constitutional rights. Puckett was particularly interested in relief for those who had been wrongfully convicted.

Needing to connect with others who had studied the law, and knowing he was a fellow Berean, she asked Lawson for help. He referred her to Davis, who helped her with the article.

Puckett came to Berea College from Lexington, Kentucky, where she admits she was a bit of a "troublemaker" as a teen. As she neared the end of high school, Puckett was considering either joining the U.S. Army or going to college. As one of 10 children, she knew her parents wouldn't be able to afford college. Her older sister, Natalie, attended Berea, and Puckett thought it would be a good option for her, too. She scheduled one interview with the Berea College admissions department and knew from then on, she would be a Berean.

"After that interview, I knew that I wasn't going to apply anywhere else,"

Puckett remembers. "And I got that acceptance letter. Berea was huge for me. It was the first place that saw and birthed the scholar in me."

Puckett said attending classes at Berea showed her what she was capable of. She learned to study, research and write. She had conversations about critical topics with people from all over the world. She worked in woodcraft, as a student chaplain and as a teaching assistant.

"Berea was a really positive experience for me," she said. "It woke me up to the idea that I could do this more. I could keep going to school. That there was that potential in me."

Puckett met her husband, Kevin '06, at Berea, and they had their first child, Benjamin, while they were both Berea students living at the Ecovillage. Benjamin is now a senior at Berea College.

When she graduated from Berea, she thought about law school, but the couple opted to build their family and let Kevin pursue his master's work. They now have six children, some biological and some adopted from foster care.

Over the years, she kept toying with the idea of going back to school. Having majored in communication studies at Berea, Puckett considered pursuing a master's degree in that

area but continued to feel a tug toward law school, partly because of an independent study she did involving adoption law while she was at Berea. She was also inspired to pursue law because of a childhood friend's experience with incarceration and helping him with his case, and her own experiences with child advocacy and the foster care system.

So, on a whim one Saturday morning, she took a free practice LSAT test.

"I had never studied, and I didn't know anything about the test," Puckett said. "But I got a score high enough to get into UK just on that cold run. I started to think, 'Gosh, I could really do this.'"

She was ready to reach her full potential and told her husband, "I want to go to law school, and I want them to pay for it."

It worked out. She took and passed the LSAT and applied to all the law schools in Kentucky. UK offered her the best package: a full ride plus a stipend.

"I thought, 'What a gift I could give to those who love me—to reach my full potential and allow them to rest in that knowledge, not that I had all this potential and could be this or that but that I actually did it,'" she said. During her second year of law

school, Puckett worked as an extern for the Kentucky Innocence Project. Simultaneously working on her article for the Kentucky Law Journal, she picked a topic related to that. She started writing about Section 1983, which she described as having a "glitch in the system" preventing relief for those who had been wrongfully convicted.

She visited Lawson at his UK office, and he connected her with Davis, who had argued some significant cases involving Section 1983.

"[Davis] knew exactly what I was talking about when it came to that thorny area of the law that doesn't really work like it's supposed to work," she said. "So, he helped me with my article, reviewing it, giving suggestions and providing me with resources."

The first page of Puckett's law journal entry includes a "thank you" for Davis' time and attention, something Puckett attributes to that special Berea connection.

"All I needed to say was that I was a Berea grad, and that was it. He was going to do whatever he could to help me," she said. "That meant a lot, especially as a first-generation law student. It was helpful to have those connections."

Puckett, much like Lawson and Davis, said Berea prepared her for law school and to have a different perspective on life.

"The way Berea teaches you to look at things holistically has made me a better attorney," she said. "And the emphasis on perspective—being able to take yourself out of yourself and put yourself into someone else's perspective has been invaluable."

Puckett went on to graduate in the top 8 percent of her law school class in 2024, more than 15 years after graduating from Berea and despite having six children at home. She earned a two-year federal clerkship for a U.S. district judge, drafting opinions and orders. She aspires to work in appeals, where she wants to have influence in interpreting and clarifying laws.

She describes her time at Berea as a gift that she just keeps unwrapping throughout her life.

"I've rediscovered several times what's different about what I had," she said. "The fact that Berea takes a student's lack of resources, lack of whatever else, and is able to turn it into an asset is what makes it such a special place." ■



William Davis '74 overcame barriers to pursue his dream of becoming a lawyer, from navigating school desegregation in Alabama to building a distinguished career in civil rights law. In an exclusive video interview, Davis shares more of his remarkable journey and reflects on the Berea experience that helped shape his life and career.

Video by Zack Thompson



PLAY VIDEO
Scan QR code or go to the link below.
bit.ly/the-law-of-connection

Building a Legacy



One Longtime Berea College employee, Deloris Reed, shares the touching story of a cherished broom crafted by her late father that, after years apart, unexpectedly found its way back home, reconnecting her family to generations of Berea College history.

Photo by Crystal Wylie '05

READ FULL STORY ONLINE

Scan the QR code or go to the link below.

bit.ly/Legacy-Rediscovered



Completed in 1903 as the Men's Industrial Building, Edwards Hall served generations of Berea College students and programs—from residence halls and classrooms to Foundation School, the first Black Cultural Center and philanthropy offices. Though demolished in 2023 due to structural concerns, its legacy lives on in the new Legacy Hall, which incorporates design elements from Edwards while creating innovative spaces for learning, connection and the future of Berea College.

Photo by Sonam Tsering '27, and black-and-white photo courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.



Through the Lens

By Whitney Leggett

O'Neil Arnold '85 counts himself as "one of the lucky ones."

"If you had told me as a Berea College student that I could see the things I see or do the things I've done, I would have been really happy," Arnold told a captivated group of current Berea College students during a mentorship visit this spring.

"This is me when I was you," he said, pointing at a photo of him from the dark room in the old Edwards Building.

Arnold shared with 10 Berea College students who make up the multimedia team about his career as a photographer—a path he hadn't initially considered growing up in Norton, Virginia.

He learned about Berea College from a recruiter who visited his high school. His guidance counselor considered him a good candidate for the school, so Arnold visited Berea on a weekend trip. That included a visit to the observatory and the telescope. A self-proclaimed "science geek," Arnold said that visit "sealed the deal."

"I came from a family with a modest income," Arnold shared. "Coming to Berea College was a big, big part of being able to afford college."

He came to Berea as a physics major, aspiring to be an astronomer. Science just made sense to him. The heavy math requirements for the major didn't make as much sense to him, though, he recalled.

As a first-year student, he worked in food services and took on a secondary position as a photographer with the campus News Bureau. He showed promise, and Ann Ford, the News Bureau director at the time, offered him a primary student position. His labor position helped him tap into his creative side—photography was something that came naturally to him.

Arnold began to feel conflicted about his future.

"I had heard a couple of presentations from newspaper photographers on the ability to use photography as a communication tool, and that just lit a fire in me," he said. "I had never thought of photography as a communications tool. I looked at some of the pictures that they showed, and I just fell in love with that concept. So, I was torn as a science student with a keen interest in science. But there was this tug at my heart toward using photography as a communication tool."

Arnold had some prior experience in photography. He worked for his high school newspaper and had shadowed the photographer at his hometown newspaper. He learned to process film as a teenager because he enjoyed photographing the night sky and wanted to get the perfect process on his colors and contrast.

He eventually became chief photographer for the Bureau and remembers the sense of pride and

A collection of photographs traces O'Neil Arnold's '85 journey from Berea student to accomplished photojournalist. Featured are Arnold in the Edwards Building darkroom, his senior portrait and a recent visit with Multimedia students, where he reflected on a News Bureau labor position that launched his photography career.

Photo 1: by Ehku Say '26, photos 2 and 4: by Crystal Wylie '05, photo 3: by Zack Thompson, and black-and-white photos courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

responsibility he felt about the role. It was something he took seriously, and he encouraged the students today to do the same. Arnold stressed the importance of professionalism as a student photographer and a representative of the College. The student photographers' work reflects the College, he said.

"You can take really meaningful photos at Berea," he said.

He recalled important photography assignments while on campus,

University. He initially worked as a designer for a magazine in Louisville, where he made enough connections to start a career as a freelance photographer.

"I'm that odd alum whose career came out of their labor position and not exactly from their academic studies," he said.

He reflects on and uses his Berea experiences still today, as he has had the privilege to photograph "delicate situations," where he's needed to sign non-disclosure agreements or

but in how he viewed the world. Classes like "Issues and Values" were impressive to him and offered a new perspective.

"I think you have to look at it from the liberal arts perspective," he said. "It teaches you how to think, and it opens your mind. You're focused on the whole person. I think Berea's really good at that."

Arnold's mentorship meeting with students opened a new perspective for them, too. Timothy '27 is a communications major at Berea also

"I think you have to look at it from the liberal arts perspective....It teaches you how to think, and it opens your mind. You're focused on the whole person. I think Berea's really good at that."

— O'NEIL ARNOLD '85

including photographing Berea College Trustee Alex Haley, the renowned author of "Roots" and "The Autobiography of Malcolm X." He had the opportunity to engage with photographers from Parade Magazine while they visited campus. He was also the one to develop the films of the photographs used to announce Berea's new president, John B. Stephenson, in 1984.

"Mrs. Ford told me to plan to be in the dark room for seven to eight hours," Arnold said. "They showed me a 5x7 print of a man and told me to the go to the darkroom and recreate 50 copies. It was 'top secret.' They didn't tell me who it was or why. I was honored that they trusted me to do that."

While at Berea, Arnold landed an internship one town over with The Richmond Register. This experience secured his decision about pursuing a career in photography, and he went on to earn a master's degree in photojournalism from the Ohio State

is the only photographer allowed in the room.

Fresh off a weekend photographing the 152nd Kentucky Derby, Arnold acknowledged that without Berea, and without the Labor program, he may not be where he is today.

"Every minute counts at Berea," he told the students. "Take advantage of the opportunities given to you and don't let them pass you by."

He encouraged the students to explore their strengths and be proud of their work.

"There are so many directions you can go with photography," he said. "Use this time to reflect on your interests and passions. You'll know in your heart where you need to go. You'll have this feeling of satisfaction with your work."

For Arnold, the Berea experience opened him to a new world of opportunities, not only in his career

focusing on minors in digital media, film production and business. The workshop reminded him of the importance of his work.

"I love how he mentioned that being a photographer in the multimedia office is more than just the craft itself," he said. "It's also an opportunity to represent Berea College and be part of something bigger in a creative way. It is such a beautiful job that I'm grateful for, and hearing that from another person's perspective was very refreshing."

Timothy believes that, like Arnold, his Labor position will prepare him for his future endeavors. He aspires to move to New York City and work in the multimedia space.

"My labor position has been an opportunity for me to have my dream job on campus and see what I can be after I graduate," he said. "I'm getting a great taste of it and building my experience as much as possible." ■

Some traditions change lives.

Since 1965, Elizabeth Culbreth '64 has faithfully supported Berea College students year after year. The Elizabeth Culbreth Society recognizes donors whose consecutive annual gifts sustain Berea's promise for future generations.

Thank you
for believing in Berea students year after year.



WWW.BEREA.COLLEGE/DONATE

PO BOX 1855 • BEREA, KY 40403 • 800-457-9846

Color photo by Brooklynn Kenney. Black and white photo Courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

BEREA
COLLEGE



Roots of Legacy

By Francisca Duarte '29

Decades after Berea College graduates Martha Salter '51 and Ohlen Wilson '50 completed their time on campus, their legacy of dedicated service to others continues through their children and grandchildren—something to which their son and daughter, Sharon Dowdy and Rudy Wilson, can testify.

Martha enrolled in the nursing program at Berea, while Ohlen enrolled in the biology (pre-med) program.

Years before attending Berea, Ohlen's sister had pneumonia, and died of complications from the illness. "I think he felt a little bit of responsibility toward that death, even though it wasn't his fault. He also knew that medicine would be able to save her at that time," Rudy said.

Berea's nursing program, however, was different in the postwar period from the one most Bereans know today. Sharon said her mother often described how nurses had to reuse equipment after sterilizing, since most tools were not disposable.

A collage of family and archival photographs celebrates the enduring Berea College legacy of Martha Salter '51 and Ohlen Wilson '50. Featured are images from the Chimes yearbook, including Martha portraying a patient during a nursing lesson, alongside a family photograph of the couple revisiting the campus tree where they met.

Color photo by Zack Thompson, and black-and-white photos courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

Nurses were responsible for preparing medications themselves, often mixing them from powder, unlike today when medications are

typically provided ready to use by the pharmacy.

An aspect of the Berea community that always remained the same in the eyes of their parents was the famous Boone Tavern Hotel, one of the most recognizable landmarks of Berea. Boone Tavern has been both a hotel and restaurant since 1909. The hotel features signature white columns, airy verandas and 63 guestrooms with furniture crafted by Berea students. Martha used to work as a server in the tavern during her Berea years. "We would always go there for the alumni reunions. They were always glad to go back there. They said it really didn't change because it was still good," Sharon said.

Spending time on campus at Sunday socials after church, Martha and Ohlen began their love story. "They met on dates at a tree in front of their dorm. They said that their first kiss was under that tree, and there is a picture taken at the same tree on an alumni visit," Sharon explains, adding that they were married in the well-known Danforth Chapel.

From there, they began building not only a marriage but also the foundation for the generations that followed. After graduation, Martha worked as a nurse in Richmond, Virginia, while Ohlen attended medical school at Virginia Medical College. Decades later, all five of their children have earned graduate degrees, and across the family, there are 13 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Among them are five medical doctors, three Ph.D.s, nurses, a nurse practitioner, a physical therapist and a music educator.

As Sharon reflects, much of their family's successes trace back to Berea College. "That was their beginnings," she said.

Nevertheless, education was not their parents' only legacy. Their children highlight the values Martha and Ohlen exhibited and followed. After a successful career of serving others in his community, Ohlen returned to his hometown, Galax, Virginia, to "give back to the people there." He established a free clinic through First Baptist Church for those who could not afford medical care. The clinic served many in the community for years and was later named in honor of Ohlen for his years of service. He supported programs like Medicines for All and God's Appalachian Partnership and served on the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

A basic value that was shown in the lives of Martha and Ohlen was the foundation of gratitude. "They were thankful they attended Berea College and always paid it forward in their service to others," Rudy added. "We kind of look back to Berea as a significant part of the molding and development of their character. They were an excellent model for all of us to follow," Sharon explained.

Ohlen passed away on Nov. 8, 2025, and Martha died 53 days later, on Dec. 31. "Their granddaughter, Katy, said their grandmother didn't want to spend another year without her husband," Sharon remembers.

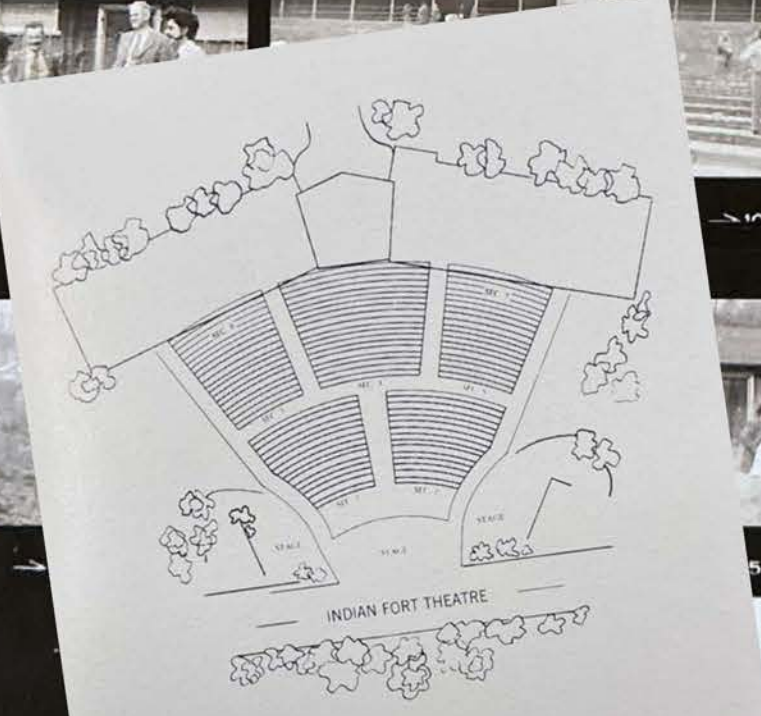
Alongside that memory, Sharon holds close words from her parents that she will never forget. After her mother began using a wheelchair and struggled with the loss of her independence, she often questioned her purpose. "I remember my mother saying, 'This is hard because you don't have any control.' My mother said, 'What am I doing here? What's my purpose here?' And my dad said to her, 'Your purpose is just to make others feel good about themselves and to encourage them; love them.' That's what he said. All you have to do is love them." ■



Then and Now

Since its opening in 1955 as part of Berea College's centennial celebration, Indian Fort Theater has brought stories to life beneath the Pinnacles, beginning with Paul Green's "Wilderness Road." Today, the historic amphitheater is finding new purpose, most recently hosting Kentucky Shakespeare's "The Tempest" through a partnership between Berea College and the City of Berea—connecting the site's rich past with a vibrant future.

Color photos by Kalilah Hicks '27, and black-and-white photos depicting construction courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.

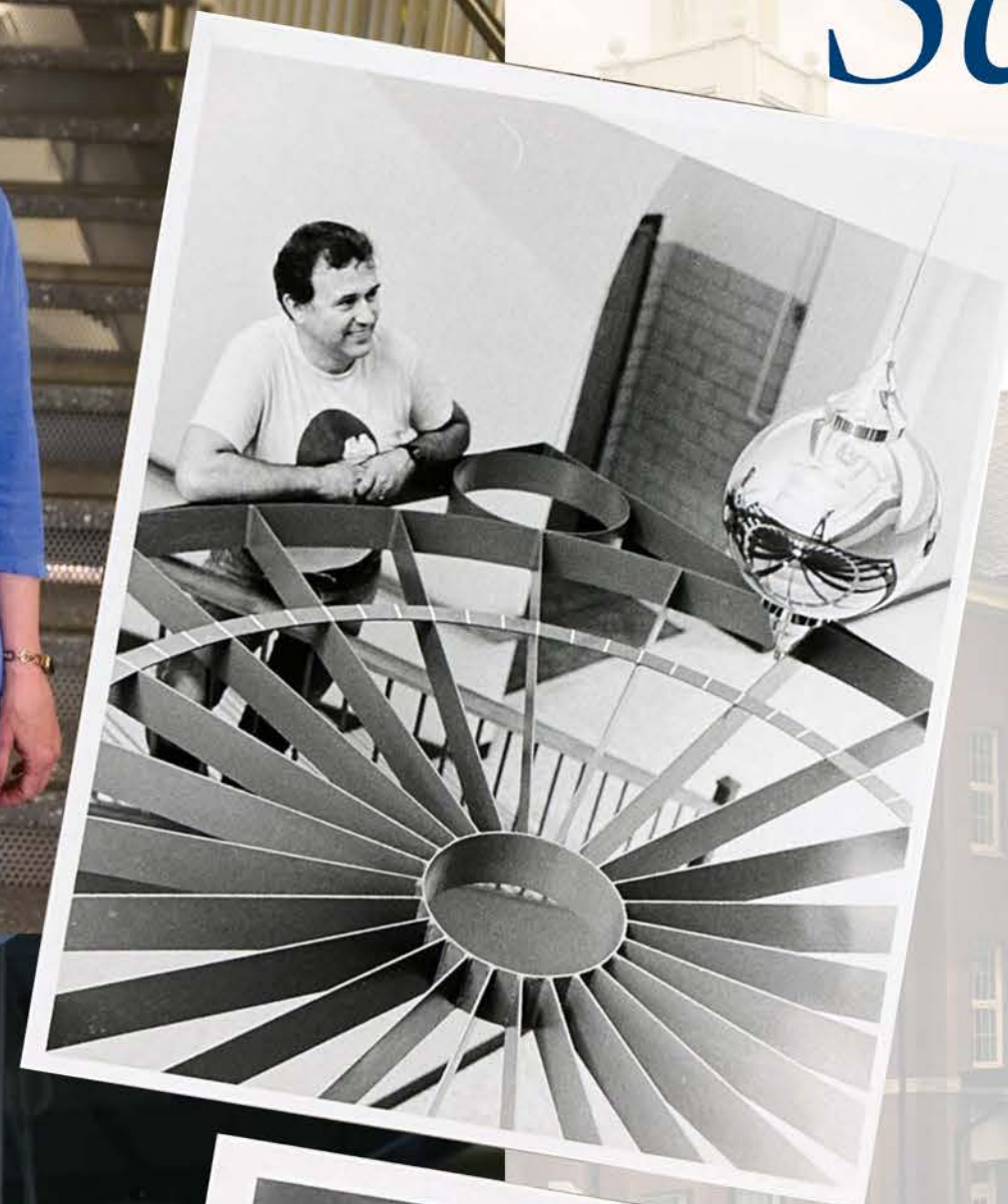


Science in Motion

By Derek Shorkey '27

Biology professor Dr. Megan Hoffman beside the Foucault pendulum in Berea College's Margaret A. Cargill Natural Sciences and Health Building, a fixture that has linked generations of science students on campus. Having witnessed the transition from Hall Science to the MAC building, Hoffman reflects on how advances in technology, facilities and scientific discovery have transformed science education at Berea while the pendulum continues its steady swing through time.

Color photos by Crystal Wylie '05, and black-and-white photos courtesy of Berea College Special Collections and Archives.



Swinging slowly and silently, the pendulum in the Margaret A. Cargill Natural Sciences and Health (MAC) Building cuts through the air, carving a path through the sand beneath. As it swings, it serves as a metaphorical reminder of a journey we all take over time, one of learning and of growth. At Berea College, this change through time is echoed in the evolution of its programs.

"I still have a brick from the old science building. It's right there," Dr. Megan Hoffman, professor of biology at Berea College, said as she pointed to the windowsill in her office.

The old brick sits idly, with a little potted plant on top of it, soaking up the sun shining through the glass. A bee whizzes around on the other side of the pane.

The old science building, Hall Science, was constructed in the 1920s, renovated in the 1980s and replaced in 2018. Hoffman vividly described the old building as a beautiful piece of architecture at the center of campus on the Quad, where the Communication, Media and Information Technology building (CMIT) stands today—from the hardwood used in its

construction, to a colorful stained-glass window and even the distinct lack of air conditioning.

The building also had a pendulum.

The specific type of pendulum used in both Hall Science and the MAC building, a Foucault pendulum, demonstrates the rotation of the Earth. As it swings, it creates a line in the sand beneath it. The Earth rotates around it, allowing the pendulum to create more lines in the sand until it arrives at the same line it started in—all without having rotated on its own. The pendulum serves as a representation of days passing by. On Berea's campus, this can be felt as the College evolves through the years, with new buildings, new programs and classes and new ways to experience Berea.

By the time Hoffman arrived on campus in 1994, Hall Science was struggling to keep up with technology. As vital modern systems like air conditioning and computing systems were placed around the building piecemeal, classroom by classroom, it became clear the hall might be unworkable.

"Finally, they put air conditioning in the last lab. They were like airplane engines," she recalled. "There was a



Biology professor Dr. Megan Hoffman works with students in Hall Science (top) and in the Margaret A. Cargill Natural Sciences and Health Building (bottom). Spanning more than three decades at Berea College, Hoffman's teaching career reflects the evolution of the College's science facilities and programs, from the aging classrooms and labs of Hall Science to the modern, technology-rich learning spaces of the MAC building.

Top photo taken in 2006 by O'Neil Arnold '85.

Bottom photo taken in 2026 by Crystal Wylie '05.

aspect of the science program that has changed. Hoffman said advancements in technology and breakthroughs in various fields have incentivized the science departments at Berea to change and grow their programs. "In the 30 years I've been here, everything in the field has changed so much," Hoffman said. "It's completely different. We've been adjusting our classes over the years to meet this change."

As experienced professors retire, new professors are hired, bringing in a fresh understanding of their fields in science and helping the science departments at Berea evolve and adapt to new discoveries. All the while, the pendulum continues to swing in the MAC building, as it had in Hall Science. As Hoffman reflected on her time in Hall Science, she also made clear the improvements the MAC building made.

The MAC building has two layers of its interior: an outer layer of classrooms and offices, and an inner layer with glass walls showcasing labs and larger classrooms. The glass walls make it possible to see in action the practical applications of the sciences Berea offers.

"I love being able to see my biology students in their other classes," Hoffman said. "Seeing students at the lab bench and reading the board to see what they're working on; that was part of what we wanted to do with this new building: to see science as science is."

With the movement of the pendulum, days turn into years on Berea College's campus. Change is natural. Eventually, things change in some way through time. This is clear with Berea's campus: new buildings bring new opportunities for growth, learning and new experiences. [B](#)

giant support in the middle of the room, so I couldn't see everybody while I was teaching. It was bizarre. Technology outpaced the building."

Hall Science also had a telescope—an amenity that was moved off-campus during the transition to the MAC building. An amenity that remained, however, is the planetarium.

The College had a state-of-the-art planetarium in the 1980s, a projector that used slides. Nowadays, the Yahng Discovery Center in the MAC building runs a planetarium that's more modern and digital.

The transition from Hall Science to the MAC building is not the only



A 2001 photo features students sitting in the Hall Science lobby in front of a stained-glass window that is now displayed on the ground floor of the new Margaret A. Cargill Health and Natural Sciences Building. The stained-glass piece can be seen in the background of the photo on page 34.

Photo by Berea College Public Relations Archives

Keeping Busy in Retirement

(With the Help of Friends) By Lyle Roelofs Hon. '21

Good and well-intentioned friends and acquaintances look at you and think, "There's a formerly very busy person. They probably miss being so busy. Maybe I should suggest something to eliminate some of that annoying downtime."

For example, a friend, an ardent fisherman, asked me if I enjoyed fishing. He probably could not imagine life at this point without quite a lot of fishing. To me there is nothing wrong with fishing, and when offered a recently caught walleye or grouper (preferably cleaned), I am delighted to cook and eat it. I don't mind the act of catching a fish. It's rather exciting. It's the long periods of boredom in between that I don't care for. I even buy a Michigan fishing license every year because my grandchildren like me to sit in the boat and bait their hooks. But when my friend asked, I had to say, "Not really."

Another friend nominated me to become treasurer of the Wexford County Democratic Committee, whose meetings Laurie and I have attended since moving to Michigan upon retirement. The friend admitted that no one else had been willing to do the job in the last couple of years, which did put me on my guard. But having managed (or been part of the management of) the funds of several organizations over the years, I thought I could probably handle this and help an organization I

want to support. I agreed to take on the role. It is, in fact, not very hard to keep track of the little bit of money the Wexford Dems have, plus I am good at Excel. More importantly, by reason of that position, I get to be involved with all the leaders of the party locally, giving me some influence that I hope I am applying beneficially.

However, money in politics is not like the regular money that you and I receive and spend without telling anyone else about it. The Michigan State Bureau of Elections (MSBoE), to which all county treasurers are responsible, is keenly aware that money can also be used to influence the behavior of elected officials and tries to control it.

Every donation to the county committee that will be used to support a candidate for office or a ballot issue must be tracked and reported in excruciating detail. That's a lot of information to keep track of, so complex software platforms have been devised for the reporting thereof, and treasurers are expected to learn all their functions and quirks and who to ask when you get stuck. Mistakes and missed reporting deadlines can result in large fines to your committee.

Because citizens are entitled to know where the money that is flowing to politicians comes



Dr. Lyle D. Roelofs Hon. '21 served as the ninth president of Berea College, leading the institution from 2012 until his retirement in 2023. Seen here paddleboarding with his dog, Nellie, Roelofs has been keeping busy in retirement by volunteering for his local Democratic Committee and staying physically active.

Photo submitted

from, that information becomes a matter of public record.

Furthermore, your employer, if organized as a corporation, is also entitled by Supreme Court decision to participate in American politics with all the rights of any human citizen, except voting themselves. The MSBoE, however, does not like it if your employer might be directing some of your political donations. Therefore, they also require treasurers to report who employs each donor so they can look for suspicious patterns and catch those nasty companies trying to leverage their influence with politicians by forcing their employees to donate as well. It sure would be easier if all donors were retired!

This is challenging. But I'm not quitting. I don't like to quit, and having gotten into it, there is some satisfaction in doing a complicated and necessary job (mostly) correctly, particularly when no one else will do it.

But honestly, there may be more to it than that. I certainly don't miss being extremely busy but having had the privilege of devoting heart and soul into some very admirable institutions, including an amazing little school in Kentucky, I am not done wanting to make a difference.

And, in case you're interested, I'm still friends with both the fisherman and the nominator.

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.

1959



Dr. Harold Branam has published a series of scathing, satirical op-eds in West Virginia's Charleston Gazette-Mail critiquing the state's Republican-dominated politics, with titles like "Your government, working for you" and "Kitty litter and West Virginia politics." Most can be accessed online at "Op-eds by Harold Branam," including one in West Virginia Watch titled "West Virginia ways of life: The neo-trailer style in a time of late capitalism and climate change." Before retiring as professor and chairman of English, he was an assistant editor of the first International Encyclopedia of Communications (Annenberg School, Penn/Oxford UP, 1989) and published hundreds of articles in literary reference books, plus poetry in little magazines. Besides op-eds, he is now working on a poetry collection, writing fiction and seeking museum homes for artworks by his late wife, prominent artist Sandy Branam.

1967

Essie Knuckle published her bestselling book, "My Children's Minds Will Not Be the Devil's Workshop" in September 2025. Read more: <https://bit.ly/4fwc7Ci>

1982



Donna Chatham Whitis was inducted into the Walden Hall of Honor for teaching.

1984

Gary Chapman has been announced as a 2026 recipient of the Alabama Arts Impact Award by The Alabama State Council on the Arts, the state's official arts agency. This award honors individuals who have made unique and meaningful contributions to arts and creativity in Alabama and is the state's highest arts honor. Chapman and six other recipients were honored at the Celebration of Alabama Arts on May 14, 2026, at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival in Montgomery, Ala. Read more: <https://bit.ly/4wDUQxf>

1992



Mary Pletha Cartwright Erwing would like to announce her upcoming wedding (renewing) in August 2026.

1994

Donald Sutton was recognized in April for 20 years of service to the federal government. He currently works at the Army National Guard Bureau in Arlington, Va., and serves as the deputy chief of education services and GI bill programs manager for the Army National Guard. During his tenure at the Guard Bureau, he has helped more than one million National Guard Soldiers use their GI Bill benefits to pursue higher education. Don and **Cynthia Grey Sutton '96** celebrated their 32nd wedding anniversary in March. Cynthia currently teaches choir and guitar at Graham Park Middle School in Triangle, Va. Her choirs recently received a superior ranking at the district assessment.

1995



Melinda Wofford has amassed many roles within her community over the years, such as assistant director of motor vehicle licensing at the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet and becoming the first African American councilwoman for the city of Burgin in Mercer County, Ky., in November 2022. She is currently serving a second term and seeking re-election.

Sean Hennessey, an artist, curator and arts administrator, has joined the board of ReVision Arts, a Seattle-based inclusive organization that brings together people of all abilities to celebrate art with a focus on artists with all types of disabling conditions and other artists who consider themselves underrepresented. Hennessey was invited to the board through his work in relief sculptures made in glass that are accessible to touch, allowing the sight-impaired to interact with the sculpture. Sean lives with his wife, Jessica, and their son, Atlas, in Seattle.

1996

Christel Pressley has retired from the Fayette County Clerk's Office in Lexington, Ky., after 25 years and has moved to Florida. Recently, she became the site coordinator at Lincoln Memorial University - Orange Park College of Veterinary Medicine for the inaugural class.

2002



Gina Fugate defended her dissertation entitled "Barriers and Breakthroughs: Empowering Voices on Accessibility, Identity, and Equity in K-12 Computer Science." Fugate graduated from the University of Florida with an Ed.D. in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in computer science education on April 30.

2005

Jennifer Kilkus completed a doctoral degree in clinical psychology. She has worked in

many hospital systems in the United States and now works in Ireland as an expert in the psychological care of people with cancer. She is excited to be publishing a book in her field of expertise: psychosocial oncology. Her overall goal is to ensure as many people with cancer can be made aware of this book as possible. Read more: <https://bit.ly/3RaWTb>.

2010



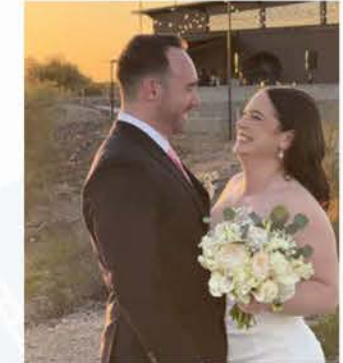
BIRTH: a daughter, Sage Alexandria Calicker, was born to **Donovan Calicker** and his wife, Dr. Shari Calicker.

2011



MARRIED: **Priscilla Henken** to **Brian Thomas** on March 14. They celebrated with family and friends including several other Berea graduates. In true Pi Day fashion, there was pizza and mini pies.

2013



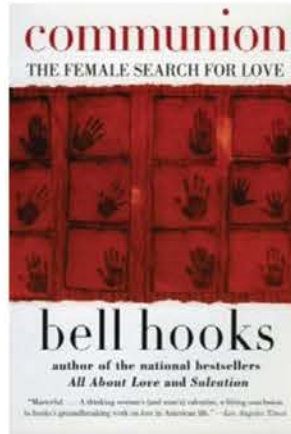
MARRIED: **Lara Zavalza-Neeson** married her husband, Jacob, in 2025 and welcomed their baby girl in April 2026. The new family will be relocating to Phoenix, Ariz., in summer 2026 and hope to connect with any alumni out west.



SUBMIT CLASS NOTES

To submit class notes and photographs, scan this QR code or go to: www.berea.edu/alumni/class-note

bell hooks Titles Reach New York Times Bestseller Lists



The bell hooks Institute and Berea College have announced that "Communion: The Female Search for Love" has reached the New York Times Best Seller list for the first time, marking a significant milestone for the late author's enduring legacy. In related news, "All About Love: New Visions"—

widely regarded as bell hooks' most popular and influential work—has also reappeared on the bestseller list.

bell hooks (1952–2021) was a groundbreaking cultural critic, feminist theorist and author whose work explored the intersections of race, gender, love and social justice. A native of Kentucky and longtime Berea College professor, hooks authored more than 30 books and remains a distinguished voice in contemporary thought.

This dual recognition underscores the continuing relevance of hooks' writing.

Judge Rules in Favor of Berea College, Strikes Down Eminent Domain Lawsuit

In April, a judge ruled in favor of Berea College, striking down an eminent domain lawsuit brought by East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC) that would have allowed the company to seize a portion of the Berea College Forest to erect a transmission line and towers across more than 1.5 miles of the College Forest and within view of the East Pinnacle, Eagles' Nest and other prominent vistas. Berea College President Dr. Cheryl L. Nixon welcomed the decision, noting the College has consistently opposed the proposed route, known as the Big Hill Line, on environmental, economic and mission-driven grounds, raising concerns about its potential long-term impact on the College Forest, its flora, fauna and surrounding watershed.

"We're grateful for the court's thoughtful review and care taken in considering the unique character of the Berea College Forest," Nixon said. "As we look ahead, we remain committed to stewarding this unique, irreplaceable place of environmental learning, historical significance, regional tourism and community use with the same care and purpose that has guided us for generations."

Communications Students Excel in Writing Competition

In April, the Berea College Communication Department took six students to the Southern States Communication Association Convention in Birmingham, Alabama, because their Senior Seminar research papers had been accepted for the Undergraduate Honors Conference. Seventy-four undergraduates from across the region submitted their work with only about half of all work being selected.

Recognized were Autumn Earp '26, Hailey Graber '25, Nicole Hicks '26, Isabella Kessler '26, Gage Parker '26 and Izzy Spence '26.

The conference organizes a Top Paper Panel comprising the four strongest student submissions, and two of the four Top Paper panelists were Berea students Hicks and Kessler. Kessler's paper was chosen as the top paper overall.

Doris Ulmann Galleries Wins National Award

Berea College's Doris Ulmann Galleries has been awarded a highly competitive Collections Grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art, a significant national recognition that will support a robust series of exhibitions and programs during the 2026–27 academic year, aligned with the America250 initiative and the U.S. semiquincentennial.

Under the leadership of Dr. Kelsey Frady Malone, director of the Doris Ulmann Galleries and curator of the Berea College Art Collection, this work will bring together three connected exhibitions that explore how art, images and material culture shape and challenge the story of the United States.

The three areas are:

- All Peoples of the Earth, which will be reinstalled with a focus on American art, including works from the College's permanent collection and a newly restored portrait of George Washington by Gilbert Stuart.
- We Hold These Truths: Reckoning, Resilience, and Resistance in American Art, which will be curated by Berea students, drawing from the collection to question dominant narratives and lift voices and stories too often left out.
- A visiting artist exhibition, which will feature internationally recognized artist Sonya Clark, whose work

examines identity, history and the myths embedded in our national story. Her exhibition, 1-877-OUR-CURL, will connect across campus, including collaborations with the bell hooks center, and she will join Berea as a visiting artist this fall and as Artist-in-Residence in the spring.

The Terra Foundation for American Art, established in 1978 and having offices in Chicago and Paris, supports organizations and individuals locally and globally with the aim of fostering intercultural dialogues and encouraging transformative practices that expand narratives of American art, through the foundation's grant program, collection and initiatives.

Berea Students Win 2026 Econ Games

Berea College students finished first out of 30 national teams from 29 universities to win the 2026 Econ Games.

Not only is this Berea's first win, but it's the first time they have advanced to the final round.

"Our students showed incredible persistence and growth, and very patiently built on what they learned from previous years," said Dr. Nabila Rahman Biju, assistant professor of economics and team mentor. "What stood out most was their incredible teamwork and perseverance. Even after long days of classes, every week they consistently showed up to evening training sessions with dedication and focus. I am beyond proud of them."



Berea College economics students made history by winning the 2026 Econ Games, finishing first among 30 teams from 29 universities nationwide. Photo submitted

The annual data analytics competition, hosted by the University of Kentucky and Northern Kentucky University, focuses on creating a real-world data experience, in which students must connect data analysis to economic problem-solving.

This year's prompt focused on horse racing data. In just 24 hours, Berea College students designed and built a dynamic website featuring multiple fully functional applications — from race simulations to interactive tools — demonstrating both technical skill and imaginative thinking.

Berea College Celebrates 236 Graduates

On May 10, Berea College celebrated the achievements of its graduating class, honoring 236 graduates during its annual baccalaureate and commencement ceremonies. The events brought together students, families, faculty and distinguished guests to recognize the accomplishments of the Class of 2026.

The commencement ceremony featured a keynote address from Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear.

In his remarks, Gov. Beshear delivered an inspiring message

focused on leadership, resilience and service, encouraging graduates to use their education to uplift their communities and create meaningful change.

"However you pursue your life's work, your ability to have this clarity of purpose and an impact on this world is directly tied to finding your 'why,'" Beshear said.

Berea College President Cheryl L. Nixon praised the graduates for their perseverance and commitment to Berea's values.

"Class of 2026, you are a class that asked not only 'What can I achieve?'" but also 'How can we achieve something purposeful, meaningful' and 'How can we build something meaningful together — in a way that uplifts and empowers each other?' You showed us that a Berea education is not something you earn alone — it is something you live out with and for others."

A replay of Gov. Beshear's commencement address is available at <https://vimeo.com/1181161597>

Photo Left: Silas House, bestselling author and National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Chair in Appalachian Studies at Berea College, shakes hands with Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear after introducing him at the May 2026 commencement ceremony. Also pictured is Berea College President Cheryl Nixon. Photo by Brooklynn Kenney

Photo Right: With caps flying, the Berea College Class of 2026 commemorates the close of one chapter and the start of the next at the College's May 2026 Commencement ceremony, marking a new tradition for graduates. Photo by Crystal Wylie '05.



CORRECTION in the Spring 2026 Magazine:
Emma Lou Deaton Lowe '60 was incorrectly listed as deceased. She is alive and well.

Staff & Faculty

Dr. John Little

Associate Professor of Music (1977-2003)
April 22, 2026

Bobby Scott

Public Safety (2023-2026)
March 31, 2026

Jane Ellen Baucom Stephenson

First Lady (1984-1994)
Founder of New Opportunity School for Women (1987-2026)
May 2, 2026

1940s

Dr. Geneva Matlock '48

May 1, 2026

Hilda Roderick '48

May 20, 2026

1950s

Robert D. Crippen Acad. '44, '50

May 2, 2009

Emogene Brummitt '51

March 30, 2026

Sara Barr '51

May 12, 2026

James Price Stephenson '55

April 7, 2026

Charles Lewis Morris '53

April 26, 2026

Betty Sue Sheehy Hillman '51

April 27, 2026

Jane Dick Fd '54

July 1, 2025

Rev. Dr. Delmas E. Hare '55

April 14, 2026

Robert E. Bryan '56

Feb. 20, 2026

Betty Fisher '57

Jan. 4, 2026

Eleanor Gail Smith '57

March 19, 2026

Florence Harner '58

Feb. 18, 2026

Sue Henry '58

April 3, 2026

1960s

Betty Lois Amburgey '60

March 22, 2026

Martha Hawkins '60

Feb. 23, 2026

Carol Bennette '61

Feb. 27, 2026

Caroline Dunford '61

May 31, 2025

Dr. B. Kenneth Roper '61

Feb. 18, 2026

Wayne H. Standifer '62

March 14, 2026

Rosa Keeling '64

March 4, 2026

Nancy Crabtree '65

March 12, 2026

Barbara Terrill '68

April 25, 2026

John W. Preece '68

Dec. 16, 2023

Ernest Hillard '69

March 30, 2026

1970s

James Greene '70

March 10, 2026

Charles McIntyre '72

March 15, 2026

Mark F. Boes KH '68, '76

May 12, 2026

1980s

Virginia Fisler '83

March 9, 2026

Michael P. Bobic '85

Jan. 15, 2026

1990s

Geneva S. Bryant '90

April 25, 2026

2010s

Bobby Scott

Spouse of Christina Rice Scott '11

March 31, 2026

Breanna Diane Bryant Edwards '13

April 30, 2026



The poster features a blue background with a collage of photos showing alumni at various events. Yellow fireworks are illustrated on the left and right sides. The text is in white and yellow.

BEREA COLLEGE
ALUMNI

ONE REUNION

One Blood. All Peoples.

2026

SEPTEMBER 25-27

our big reunion event weekend!

See you there!

BEREA COLLEGE

MAGAZINE

Periodical postage paid at Berea, KY and additional mailing offices.
Send address changes to Berea College Magazine, c/o Berea College Alumni Association, CPO Box 2203, Berea, KY 40404.



HISTORIC BOONE TAVERN
Hotel & Restaurant of BERE A COLLEGE

Boone Tavern events encompass all kinds of gatherings: retreats, board meetings, weddings, conferences, fundraisers, church events, reunions, holiday celebrations, and more. Our staff works closely with you to customize your event precisely. We are committed to using locally grown and “Kentucky Proud” ingredients, many of which come from the Berea College Farm. This farm-to-table commitment is at the heart of our catering services and Crafted at Boone Tavern, our onsite bar and restaurant.

To begin planning your events at Boone Tavern, please contact our Sales Department at sales@boonetavernhotel.com.

100 Main St. Berea, KY 40403
859-985-3700 | www.boonetavernhotel.com