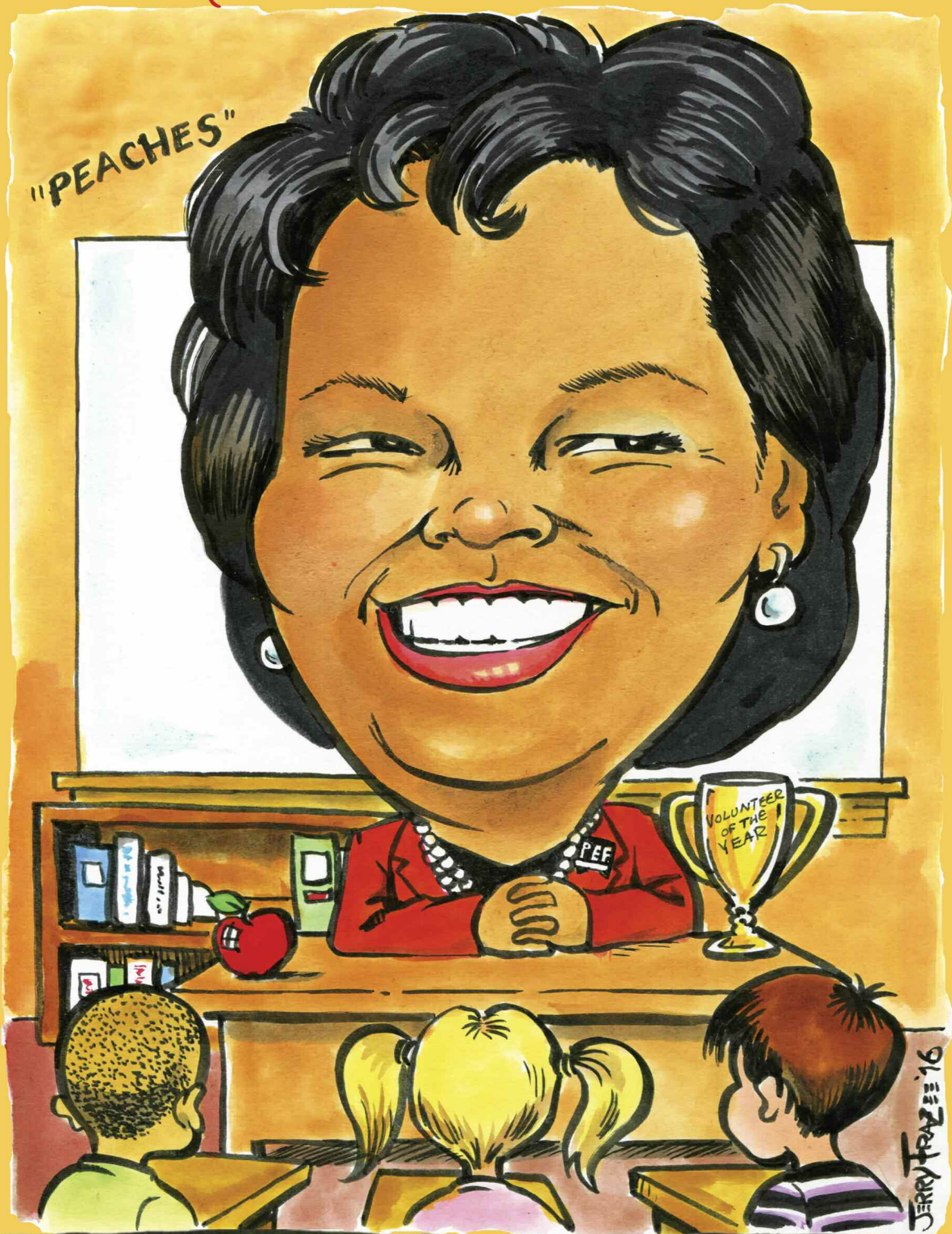


DINNER OF FIRSTS 2016

HONORING

Edna Varner



STEFANIE CROWE, EVENT CHAIR

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2016 · THE CHATTANOOGAN

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The mission of Chattanooga State

Chattanooga State is an educationally purposeful community where faculty, staff, and students share academic goals and strive for high standards that lead to the attainment of degrees and certificates, meaningful careers, and a committed citizenry of lifelong learners.

Chattanooga State Community College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)

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DINNER OF FIRSTS 2016

Honoree

Edna Varner

THE PROGRAM

6:00 – 7:00 p.m.	Reception	
7:00 p.m.	Seating for Dinner	
	Welcome	Stefanie Crowe, Event Chair
	Invocation	The Rev. Ann Weeks
7:30 p.m.	Master of Ceremonies	Jed Mescon, Erlanger Health System
7:35 p.m.	Opening Toast	Greg Vital, Morning Pointe Jeff Jackson, First Tennessee
7:40 p.m.	First in the Family	Dr. Flora Tydings
7:55 p.m.	Roasters	Elaine Swafford Keith Sanford Wade Hinton Pete Cooper Stacy Lightfoot
8:30 p.m.	Rebuttal	Edna Varner
8:45 p.m.	Adjournment	Stefanie Crowe

Proceeds of the event fund First in the Family Scholarships.

EDNA E. VARNER

"If your dreams don't scare you, they are not big enough."

Those words by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Africa's first female president, were spoken years after Edna saw them modeled by her parents and teachers while growing up poor in Chattanooga in the 50s. She tries to model them herself, hoping that she can inspire others to dream big even when it scares them.

Edna is the first in her family to attend college, but not the first to value education. Her parents never allowed anyone in the family to miss school or homework after dinner at the dinner table. Both parents were high school dropouts who earned their GEDs after their children graduated. Her mother, Peggie Sadler Bullard, retired as a Chief of Police from the Chattanooga Police Department, and her father, Rev. (Dr.) Andrew J. Bullard, Jr., a former foundry worker and building inspector, received an honorary doctorate from Morehouse School of Religion. (Not bad for two dropouts.) Edna's mother married three times, so she had three great fathers. Two others were small business owner and entrepreneur, Ernest E. Varner, and Police Officer Charles Black who in 1948 was one of Chattanooga's first black police officers since 1883. Edna is the oldest of eight siblings: two pastors, four educators, a construction worker, and a successful artist. Three siblings prefaced their careers as officers in the United States Army.

Years ago, when Edna was asked about her accomplishments for her Leadership Chattanooga application, she wrote simply, "I teach." Often reminded why she became a teacher and why she encourages others to teach, she was finishing some paperwork at a lunch bar between school visits recently, when a young African American man busy at his computer a few tables away called to her. "Ms. Varner, do you remember me?" he asked. "Thanks so much for teaching me to write." Her response was the same one she had given to hundreds of students in her classrooms over the years, "It feels good, doesn't it!"

Edna earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from UTC and she is currently completing coursework for her doctorate. She taught middle and high school for 20 years and was a member of the founding faculty of CSAS where she served as teacher and assistant principal before appointments as principal of Chattanooga Middle School and Howard School. After retirement from the district she was the Director of Leadership Development for the Philadelphia based Cornerstone Literacy, Inc. for eleven years. She is currently a Senior Advisor for Leading



Favorite Quotes:

"It always seems impossible until it's done."

— Nelson Mandela

"Sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast."

— Lewis Carroll, *Alice in Wonderland*

and Learning at the Public Education Foundation where she has opportunities to coach promising new principals and teachers through Project Inspire. Invited to testify before the U.S Senate Education Committee in 2006 and 2007, PEF allowed her to represent its collective thinking on changes to No Child Left Behind and high school reform. Edna's articles on leadership development have appeared in or been cited in a number of national journals, papers, and reports.

Edna is grateful to have received many awards including a recent one honoring her mentor, Dr. C. C. Bond, for whom the Chattanooga State Humanities Building is named. In addition to her work on the Chattanooga State Foundation Board and Achieving the Dream Core Team, she honors Rotary's motto, "service above self," by helping to advance the missions of Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, the Chattanooga Housing Authority, Metropolitan YMCA, Siskin's Children's Institute, and UnifiED.

She is also passionate about her work with Read 20, Ballet TN, The Women's Fund, WTCI, the Mayor's Council for Women, and Thrive 2055. She is a past president of the Chattanooga Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and past board chair of the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga and Chattanooga Women's Leadership Institute. Currently she is board chair of the Aim Center and president of the Chattanooga Chapter of The Links, Incorporated.

As a Chattanooga 2.0 Community Champion, and recently tapped as the 2017 United Way Campaign Chair, she is often asked how she can be involved in the community at this level. For her answer, see Philippians 4:13.

Invictus

by William Ernest Henley

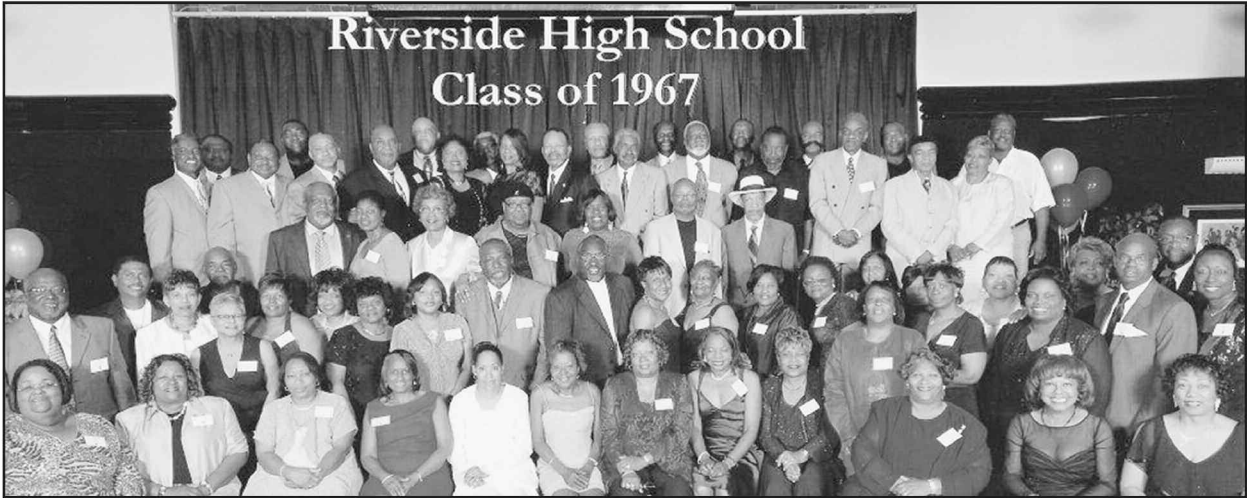
Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

OUR EDNA



ALWAYS A TEACHER



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Edna Varner*

*With best wishes,
JoAnn Yates*



"Teachers who inspire know that teaching is like cultivating a garden, and those who would have nothing to do with thorns must never attempt to gather flowers."
~ Author Unknown



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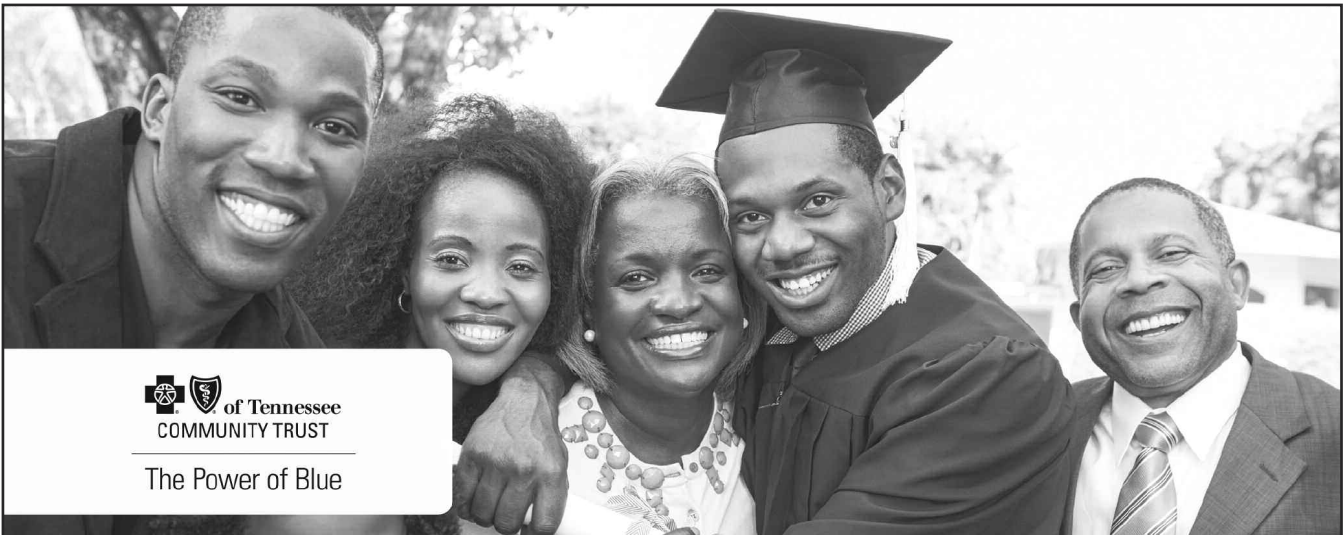


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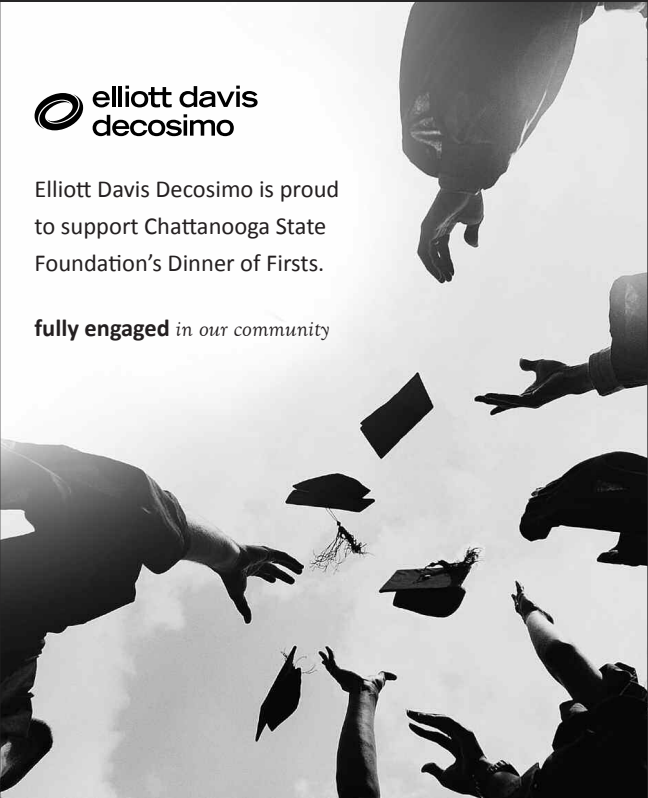


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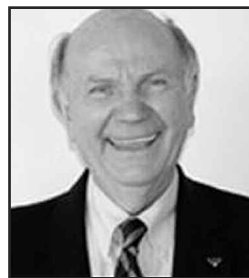
Rowena Belcher
 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER



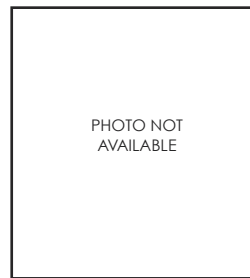
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 RETIRED ATTORNEY AND
 COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

MASTER OF CEREMONIES

After 29 years at Chattanooga's WRCB TV, Jed Mescon left the airwaves for a job in healthcare. Jed recently joined the Erlanger Health System team as Vice President of Public Relations, Marketing and Development. Jed is also on the boards of the Chattanooga Humane Society and The Boehm Birth Defects Center. Jed and his wife Phyllis have a daughter Caroline who lives in Los Angeles and works for NBC/Universal.

Jed Mescon
Vice President
Public Relations, Marketing
& Development
Erlanger Health System



ROASTERS

Pete Cooper went to work for the American National Bank (now SunTrust) immediately after college. He retired from the bank as a Senior Vice president and head of the Charitable Trust Department. He became the first President of the Community Foundation of Greater Chattanooga in 1990 and oversaw 25 years of significant growth until he retired from that position in 2015. He immediately failed retirement for the second time and went to work for the McKenzie Charitable Foundation. He is currently working with the McKenzie Foundation on issues of inner-city public education.

Pete has served on numerous charitable boards and has consulted with hundreds. He is currently the Board Chair of the Chattanooga Tumor Clinic at Erlanger, a position he has held for over 30 years. He has been happily married to Linda for 43 years. They have four adult children.



Peter T. Cooper

Keith Sanford is a native of Lynchburg, Virginia. He graduated from Virginia Episcopal School, Washington and Lee University, the Southeastern School of Banking, and the Graduate School of Banking of the South. Keith moved to Chattanooga in 1980 right out of college to join the Management Trainee program of First Tennessee, where he was employed for the past 36 years, most recently serving as Market President. In March of this year he left to accept his current position at the Tennessee Aquarium.

Keith is active in many non-profit organizations including ArtsBuild, Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce, Chattanooga Rotary Club, Chattanooga Symphony and Opera, Hunter Museum of American Art, Lookout Mountain Conservancy, Tivoli Foundation and United Way. He was the recipient of the Chattanooga Area Manager of the Year award in 2014. Keith has been married to Julia for over 35 years and they have four children, Charles (Meg), Phillips, Julia and Lizzie. They also have two rescue dogs, three rescue cats, a rescue snake and a rescue gecko. They live on Lookout Mountain and are active at Church of the Good Shepherd Episcopal.



W. Keith Sanford
President and CEO
Tennessee Aquarium

ROASTERS

A Chattanooga, Tennessee native, Stacy received a Bachelor's degree in Communications & Theater from DePauw University in Indiana. After briefly returning to Chattanooga to work as the Career Development Director at Girls Incorporated, Stacy left to pursue a Master's degree in International Service from the University of Roehampton in London, England in 2001. As part of her graduate program, she taught mathematics and English in Kingston, Jamaica.

Stacy has used her skills and expertise in non-profit to help students see college as a worthwhile possibility. Coming from a low-income, single-parent home, she understands the importance of education. Since graduating from the Master's program in London, she has worked with college access programs locally and nationally; and, currently works for the Public Education Foundation as the Vice President of College & Career Success Initiatives.

With her expertise and passion, Stacy is able to work with students from all socio-economic backgrounds to ensure student success. This year, she was instrumental in the launch of STEP-UP Chattanooga, a robust high school internship program that connects low-income students to Chattanooga's top companies and organizations. In May of 2015, Stacy was invited to testify before the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions for the US Senate on what consumers need to know to make informed decisions about college choices. Stacy has received a number of local, regional and national awards for her work in college access and success. Most recently, she received the 2016 National Excellence in Education Award given to individuals who have improved student success and are at the forefront of initiatives advocating for students' access to education. First Lady Michelle Obama was the 2014 recipient of the Excellence in Education award.

Stacy currently serves on the Board of Directors of Ballet Tennessee, Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, WTCI PBS, Downtown YMCA and the Downtown Chamber Council. She has also served on the regional board of the Southern Association for College Admission Counseling and is a member of numerous networks and associations including the Tennessee College Access and Success Network and the National College Access Network.

On top of a busy work and community schedule, Stacy is the primary caretaker of her mother, Cula, and has been for fifteen years. She also has a six-year-old son, Dallas, who attends Battle Academy.



Stacy Lightfoot
Vice President, College & Career Success Public Education Foundation

Wade Hinton is a native Chattanooga and a graduate of Emory University, and the University Of Memphis School Of Law. He also studied at Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. Wade currently serves as Chief Legal Officer and City Attorney for the City of Chattanooga. Prior to his appointment, he served as Deputy General Counsel for Volkswagen Group of America Chattanooga Operations and counsel at the law firms of Miller & Martin PLLC and Snipes Roberson & Hinton.

Professionally, he is a member of the Association of Corporate Counsel, Tennessee Bar Association, and the Chattanooga Bar Association. He has served as President of the Chattanooga Bar Association – Young Lawyers Division, and on the Board of Governors for the Chattanooga Bar Association. Wade currently serves as a board member for the Friends of the Festival, the Benwood Foundation, and is a member of the Leadership Development Advisory Council for the German Marshall Fund. He is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and the Rotary Club of Chattanooga. He is a recipient of the 2013 TNJ Forty Under 40 Award, the 2013 National Bar Association Forty Under 40 Award, the NAACP Thurgood Marshall Award, and several other awards.



Wade A. Hinton
City Attorney
City of Chattanooga

ROASTERS

In July 2012, Dr. Elaine Swafford took the helm as the Director of the Chattanooga Girls Leadership Academy, the first all-girls public charter STEM school in the state of Tennessee. She and her team are in the 5th year of overseeing a school turnaround process and are meeting expectations of leading exceptional gains in student progress and academic achievement. Prior to accepting the position at CGLA, she returned to the college campus in July 2008 to assume the position as the Vice President of Student Affairs at Chattanooga State, where she served 15 years prior in various positions, to include Vice President of Economic and Community Development. She was selected to the position of Area II Superintendent for the Hamilton County Department of Education. She has worked for the past 34 years in both public and higher education.

Dr. Swafford's community involvement during her career includes participation as a member on various local community boards. Dr. Swafford was responsible for building and implementing innovative educational programs such as Project AHEAD, Diploma Completion Program, Middle College Collegiate High School and the BOSS Program, while employed with Chattanooga State Community College. She uses her educational experience, leadership ability, energy and passion to inspire and motivate, while having a positive impact in the Chattanooga and surrounding community.



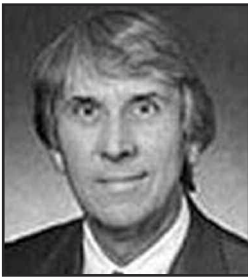
Dr. Elaine Swafford
Director
Chattanooga Girls
Leadership Academy



CHATTANOOGA STATE FOUNDATION

The Chattanooga State Foundation was chartered in 1977 by citizens interested in the educational well-being of Chattanooga State's students, faculty and staff. In addition to providing 474 deserving students \$802,327 in scholarships the past two years, the Foundation supports professional development, excellence in teaching and special capital projects to help the college fulfill its mission.

The Chattanooga State Foundation is a nonprofit organization and maintains a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation is supported by private donations and contributions, tax-deductible as allowed by law. For information about the Chattanooga State Foundation, please contact the Advancement Office at (423) 697-2630 or visit chattanooga.state.edu/give.



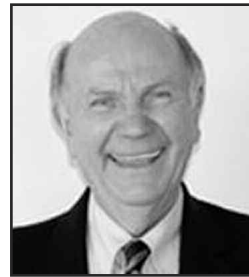
Alan L. Cates, Chair



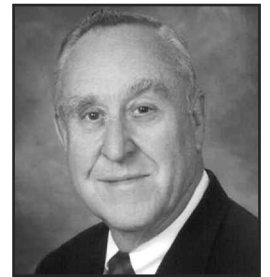
Rowena Belcher



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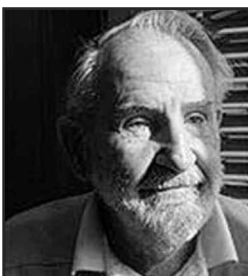
Reggie Piercy



Maricela Rodriguez,
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W. Keith Sanford



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Edna E. Varner



Tom White

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LETTERS FROM SOME OF OUR FIRST IN THE FAMILY SCHOLARS...

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Sincerely, Megan Bain

My name is Melanie Doyle, I am a 32-year-old Art History Major at Chattanooga State and the first person in my entire family to ever attend college. It took me a while to get to the point of being able to pursue going to college but what matters is that I finally got to the point and wouldn't be able to do it without receiving grants or scholarships. So I want to say a Big Thank You for accepting me as a recipient for a First in the Family Scholarship and for helping me being able to follow my dream. It truly means the world to me and honestly something that I never thought I would be able to do. Again thank you a million times over.

Thank you, Melanie Doyle

I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of the First in the Family Scholarship. Thank you for your generosity, which has allowed me to not worry about having financial struggles through my college experience. This Scholarship actually gave me the push to continue on my college career, because I was going to quit when I thought I did not have enough money to go. This blessing come through and gave me a push and hope I needed to keep furthering my education at Chattanooga State Community College, I am very thankful for receiving your thoughtful gift. Because of your scholarship I am now able to start my nursing career at Chattanooga State with no worries about book fees, or having to drop classes. Thank you again for your thoughtful and generous gift.

Sincerely, KyAnna Ray

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your contribution in furthering my education. By receiving this scholarship you are allowing me to have a chance to be the first in my family to graduate college. Words cannot describe how appreciative and touched I truly am. My mother did not further her education and therefore did not get a good job. I've seen how hard it is to make a living and take care of me and my sister. She inspires me to get a better job for myself. I feel without your help I would not be able to attend college and achieve my dream job. I want to thank you for allowing me to receive this scholarship. It means so much to me and I am so grateful you have given me the opportunity to further my education. Thank you.

Sincerely, Jana Crook

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends of Edna and Chattanooga State:

What a special treat for all of us to come together this evening to celebrate our friend, colleague and public education champion – Edna Varner!

As the first in her family to graduate college, we celebrate Edna's incredible record of service to our community and honor her educational work for so many children and young people.

Led by event Chair Stefanie Crowe and her passionate committee of volunteers, we expect plenty of laughter to fill the ballroom tonight as our roasters poke a little fun at Edna -- all to support first generation college students at Chattanooga State!

For more than fifty years, Chattanooga State has provided high-quality education and workforce training in our community. With more than 100 different programs of study and the area's most affordable college degree, we take pride that our graduates enjoy a 96% job placement rate. Our students who work hard can expect a great return on their investment.

Thank you for supporting our deserving students!

Sincerely,
Flora W. Tydings, Ed. D.
President



Pub. No 11-70-302001-250-11/16-bap – 420 - Chattanooga State Community College does not discriminate against students, employees, or applicants for admission or employment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, age, status as a protected veteran, genetic information, or any other legally protected class with respect to all employment, programs and activities sponsored by Chattanooga State. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Director, Human Resources, 4501 Amnicola Highway, Chattanooga, TN 37406, 423-697-2417.



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