STEWARDSHIP OF PLACE
Over 3,000 degrees conferred.

The successes from the 2015-16 academic year continue to weave a story of an institution that for more than 100 years has responded to the needs of this region and beyond. Our doors opened in 1911 as a teacher-education school, and since that time much of our landscape has changed. We have grown from an enrollment of 29 students to nearly 14,700 and have evolved into a comprehensive research institution offering more than 100 majors in 11 colleges and schools. Despite the transformation that has occurred, the one element that has remained constant is our commitment to serving this region, or, as I like to call it, “stewardship of place.”

This mission of stewardship of place touches everything we do on this campus. It is defined by the successes of our students, the accomplishments of our faculty and staff, our engagement with the community, and even in our unprecedented era of construction and growth.

The 2015-16 year saw a significant event occur not only in our history but for all of Tennessee higher education as our elected officials approved the creation of local governing boards for the universities governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents. In the months to come, the individuals comprising those boards will be named, and we will begin the process of transitioning the administrative and fiduciary responsibilities of ETSU to this board. This is certainly an exciting time, and I look forward to sharing more information with you as we move forward with this transition.

Thank you for being part of our story in 2015-16. As always, Godspeed and go Bucs!

Brian Noland
President
Md. Mahbubur Rahman came to East Tennessee State University from Bangladesh, where he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biochemistry and molecular biology from the University of Dhaka. Currently, he is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical science at ETSU, and he researches ways to generate crops that contribute to the improvement of human health and higher productivity.

Obviously a person of great intellect, Rahman has an even greater heart. His compassion and dedication to service to others earned him the 2016 Harold Love Outstanding Community Involvement Award from the Tennessee Higher Education Commission.

Since the spring of 2013, Rahman has worked through the Christian Student Organization at ETSU to build relationships between international students and the local community. He has provided free rides to international students on the first and third Saturdays of each month so that they could shop at local merchants. From helping international students find housing to taking them to doctors’ appointments, he has spent countless hours assisting others.

Rahman arranged community group discussions to promote cultural and religious tolerance, and he conducted fund-raising drives for people in and around Johnson City who could not afford medical treatment.

“I was actively involved in volunteer work in my village from childhood,” Rahman explains. “I have seen the suffering of people closely, so I started a small school for poor people there, and I am planning to open a village hospital.”

To support this vision, last year, 14 additional academic advisors were hired to support advising efforts for undergraduate students throughout most of the ETSU colleges.

The launch of the Undergraduate Student Success Specialist program has helped assist students navigate through issues that sometimes could affect their educational journey. These include personal issues outside the traditional academic domain, financial issues, or other concerns. Modeled after the Graduate Student Success Specialist initiative, the program is a joint collaboration with the Department of Social Work and provides a case management support system to support undergraduates.
Did you know…?

Laura Traister, a member of the Class of 2016, received a Fulbright-Nehru English Teaching Assistant Award during her senior year at ETSU. The Fletcher, North Carolina, native is one of 15 fellowship recipients across the country spending nine months teaching conversational English at a high school in Mumbai, India.

Sean Ochsenbein, a student at the Quillen College of Medicine, received an Unsung Hero Award from ETSU for his heroic acts that likely saved a man’s life. On Feb. 13, Ochsenbein was traveling home from a ski trip when he came upon a traffic crash on a back road in Carter County. Ochsenbein and an off-duty police officer, who also happened to be passing by, were able to free a driver from his vehicle seconds before it was engulfed in flames.

Graduate student Brandon Johnson has been appointed by Gov. Bill Haslam to serve as a member of the Volunteer Tennessee Commission, a 25-member board that oversees AmeriCorps, federal and state service-learning programs and promotes volunteerism and citizen-service activity across Tennessee.

Nolan Tankersley, a junior studying management and marketing at ETSU, won three first-place titles at the USA Cycling Collegiate Road National Championships in May. Tankersley, of Erwin, took first place in the road race and criterium events as well as the overall (omnium) championship in the Division II category.

Shannon Parkey, a second-year pharmacy student, was awarded a prestigious summer internship at Johns Hopkins University. She is spending the summer taking part in the Johns Hopkins Pharmacy Internship Program through which she is working at the Weinberg Oncology Inpatient Pharmacy at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. On average, only 20 students are hired each year for the internship program.
“Rent,” November 2015

Dreams Happen
A dream that began more than 30 years ago is closer than ever to being realized.

ETSU has completed the design phase for our new arts center and during the upcoming academic year will break ground on this $40 million facility.

For decades, the building of a new arts center for ETSU has been the dream of students studying the arts. It has been the dream of the faculty, staff and alumni, and for members of the community, including the late James C. and Mary B. Martin.

It was a dream their legacy has helped make happen.

In addition to donating $4 million to create and sustain the Mary B. Martin School of the Arts at ETSU in memory of his wife, Mr. Martin provided $3 million as the first gift toward the new arts center.

Sadly, Jim Martin passed away on December 19, 2015. One of Jim’s last visits with the ETSU family was in late October — just weeks before his death — when he was the honored guest at a celebration of the arts ceremony when ETSU announced the official site of the arts facility and recognized him for his steadfast determination in seeing the project come to fruition.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM EXCELLENCE —

57 accredited programs
10th anniversary of the Gatton College of Pharmacy which has produced 517 graduates
Over 12 new programs in 2015-16, including the B.S.E. in Engineering, B.S. in Pharmacy Studies, M.S. in Sport Science and Coach Education, M.S. in Human Services and Ed.D. in Global Sport Leadership.

Jim Martin is congratulated by ETSU President Brian Noland during an October event for the ETSU arts center.

Coming Home
Elizabethton native Dr. Dennis Depew was the first generation in his family to go to college; “living proof that mama’s dreams don’t die easily” as he says.

He received both his bachelor’s degree in technology education and master’s degree from ETSU before attending Purdue University in Indiana to earn a Ph.D.

After coming back to ETSU to start his teaching career, Depew returned to Purdue where he eventually became dean of the College of Technology. In 2014, after being away for nearly three decades, Depew came home again, this time to serve as the dean of ETSU’s College of Business and Technology.

“Frankly, if it had been any other institution at any other time, I’d have stayed where I was,” Depew says. “But ETSU is a place I had called home. ETSU helped me prepare for life – not just a career, but a life. This place is special.”

He arrived just in time, helping develop plans for an engineering program at ETSU that was approved in early 2016 by the Tennessee Board of Regents. The bachelor of science degree in engineering will be offered at ETSU beginning in fall 2016 through a joint effort with Tennessee Technological University.

“It is a generalist engineering program that will meet a lot of the needs of the workforce in this state,” Depew says. “The work ahead of us will be around launching this curriculum in a very successful way with some outstanding faculty.

“Ten to 15 years down the road, I think we will see some specialties grow into majors or minors that we won’t see at the launch – manufacturing, biomedical, environmental engineering. Right now, it’s about building a solid foundation. If we do the initial things correctly, the future will take care of itself.”

It’s not the first time Depew has set to work building a solid foundation at ETSU.

“Attending ETSU was a life-changing experience for me. I didn’t realize then what an important role my journey through this university was going to play in my life,” he says. “And now, it’s great to come back to a university that gave so much to me and give back.”
New Tools, New Solutions
It's a partnership that is the first of its kind.

This fall, students in a number of undergraduate and graduate programs at ETSU will have the opportunity to use industry-leading digital marketing tools throughout their curricula. It's an initiative made possible through a new alliance between ETSU and Adobe. Announced in May 2016, the venture allows ETSU faculty to integrate solutions, or tools, from Adobe Marketing Cloud into the curriculum of several academic programs, giving students one-of-a-kind learning experiences.

ETSU is the first university in the nation to partner with Adobe to teach enterprise-level Adobe Marketing Cloud solutions in courses.

“We are giving students the digital tools they need to enter the workforce,” said Dr. Stephen Marshall, chair of the ETSU Department of Mass Communication. “The job market for digital marketers is hot and Adobe has been an amazing educational partner. There is no program in the country like ours.”

Another exciting element of the alliance for students, Marshall added, will be to work in teams and assist ETSU leaders on special projects and initiatives using Adobe Marketing Cloud.

Adobe Marketing Cloud will be integrated into several ETSU programs, including the undergraduate and graduate programs in media and computing; the M.S. degree program in digital marketing; and the doctoral program in global sport leadership.

The Adobe alliance makes ETSU an innovator in a growing digital industry. Since the formal announcement, a number of corporate agreements are underway connecting academic programs with industry talent needs. ETSU expects to be a formal industry talent pipeline for years to come.
Noteworthy

Dr. Krishna Singh, a professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences in the Quillen College of Medicine and physiologist at the Quillen VA Medical Center, received a $423,485 grant from the National Institutes of Health to research the role of a specific protein in ischemic heart disease.

Dr. Randy Byington, an associate professor in the Department of Allied Health Sciences, was named to the inaugural All-Southern Conference Faculty Team as the ETSU representative.

Along a 12-acre stretch of the Nolichucky River, ETSU archaeologist Dr. Jay Franklin spent several weeks in December and January excavating. There, he uncovered part of a large village that led him to believe Cherokee Indians were in Northeast Tennessee between 1450 and 1650.

Dr. Robert Means, dean of the Quillen College of Medicine, received the ‘Founders Medal’ from the Southern Society of Clinical Investigation.

Dr. Christy Hall, assistant professor in the College of Nursing, received a $1.8 million grant to launch a new model to be used for preparing and mentoring nurse practitioners who serve as clinical faculty preceptors for graduate students.

In August, Dr. Dilshod Achilov, an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science, International Affairs and Public Administration, traveled to Oman on a study visit led by the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations (NCUSAR), as one of the inaugural recipients of the Alwaleed Fellowship.

Mina McVeigh, who works in ETSU’s Counseling Center as a senior staff counselor and serves as the Alcohol and Other Drug Outreach Coordinator, was named “Social Worker of the Year” by the National Association of Social Workers – Tennessee Chapter.

Dr. Ken Silver, an associate professor in the Department of Environmental Health, was named to serve on the Advisory Board on Toxic Substances and Worker Health, which was established by President Barack Obama.

Dr. Tom Kwasigroch from the Quillen College of Medicine named The Alpha Omega Alpha Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges for his efforts in medical education since joining ETSU in 1979.

Researchers from ETSU and Vanderbilt University garnered a $2.4 million federal grant to jointly study a cutting-edge concept in the world of immunology. Dr. David Williams, a professor of surgery, is one of the principal investigators.

Dr. Jonathan Moorman, a professor at Quillen College of Medicine and section chief for infectious diseases at the Quillen Veterans Affairs Medical Center, was awarded a grant to investigate strategies to better understand how chronic inflammation affects aging in HIV patients.

“One could define success in many ways. But, for me the bottom line is: happiness. Happiness, as I see it, is about satisfaction. One way to achieve satisfaction is to continually grow as an individual.”

Dr. Chris Dula
ETSU Professor of Psychology, from his May 2016 Commencement address

FACULTY & STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

17:1 student/faculty ratio in fall 2015

Over $36.7 million in research and sponsored programs funding in 2015-16

1,043 faculty members taught 169,802 credit hours in fall 2015, with 69% of courses taught by full-time faculty
Dr. Chi-h-Che Tai and Dr. Karin Keith from the Clemmer College of Education received funding from the Tennessee Department of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission to enhance science and literacy across 10 school districts in the East Tennessee region.

Dr. Fred Alsop, faculty member in the Department of Biological Sciences, received the 2016 Paul Hayden Memorial Award given by the Tennessee Environmental Institute.

Dr. Jesse Graves, an associate professor in the Department of Literature and Language, was inducted into the East Tennessee Writers Hall of Fame.

Dr. Kurt Maier, professor and chair of the Department of Environmental Health, was elected to serve as president of the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry.

Dr. Jonathon Peterson, an assistant professor of Health Sciences, garnered a federal grant he hopes will help lead to a treatment to prevent cirrhosis of the liver.

Dr. Ron Hamdy, a 30-year faculty member at Quillen College of Medicine, was awarded a “Bronze Medal for Commendable Service” in recognition of his contributions to the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

Dr. Arnold Nyarambi, an associate professor in the Clemmer College of Education, was selected for the Maxine Smith Fellows Program, hosted by the Tennessee Board of Regents.

Dr. Wallace Dixon, chair of psychology, was among the 25 candidates nationwide selected to participate in the inaugural class of Emerging Leaders Program, hosted by the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

A top-tier academic journal named an article written by Dr. Chayadevie Nanjundeswaran, a speech-language pathologist at ETSU, as the best speech-language pathology paper published in 2015.

Dr. Larry Calhoun, founding dean of the Gatton College of Pharmacy, was the recipient of the American Pharmacists Association’s 2016 APhA Academy of Student Pharmacists Outstanding Dean Award.

People First

Dr. Angela Radford Lewis credits her parents for teaching her the values of “stewardship of place.”

“It was a major part of my upbringing,” said Lewis, who serves as ETSU’s associate vice provost for Undergraduate Programs, Curriculum and Service. “My family was always involved in the church and in the community, and my dad was very active with the NAACP.”

Lewis remembers Sunday afternoon trips to nursing homes where she and her family would take goodies to the residents who had no family.

In college, she continued to pursue internships and service-learning opportunities that allowed her to give back.

“I was blessed to receive an education that provided me with knowledge and skills, and I felt it was important to share those with the community.”

She has also stayed active with her profession at the state and national levels and was the 2015 recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences. Locally, she has volunteered with the United Way of Washington County, Johnson City Public Schools Foundation Inc., Boys and Girls Club of Johnson City/Washington County, Johnson City Senior Services and AHERN, Inc., a regional publication for the African American community.

This past spring, Lewis learned she had been selected for the highly prestigious ACE Fellows Program, hosted by the American Council on Education (ACE), which is designed to identify and prepare faculty and staff for senior administration in higher education.

As part of her fellowship experience, Lewis will complete a year-long placement at James Madison University and will be working on a project that will strengthen ETSU’s efforts in community service.

Embracing Differences

Nathaniel Farnor knew at an early age he had an affinity for politics. From his studies to his campus involvement, he has been able to immerse himself in politics and diversity at ETSU.

His experience of living in different places, meeting people from all walks of life and other aspects of living a child in a military family led to Farnor’s interest in government, politics and international affairs. When he entered college, he realized he loved learning about different people and cultures.

Because of that realization, the junior Roan Scholar from Erwin added a second major in communication studies and a religious studies minor to his initial major of political science.

“I believe, regardless of whether you’re going to become president of the United States or a lawyer, your ability to work with people who are different than you, your ability to talk with them and communicate with them respectfully—and to disagree respectfully, if you have to—are an important part of the government process,” he said.

Farnor’s education in the political process isn’t taking place only in the classroom. He is vice president of ETSU’s Student Government Association for 2016-17, and is a member of several other organizations, as well, including the Diversity Educators, College Democrats, Preview and Orientation Leaders, Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, and Men of Distinction & Ladies of Virtue. He is also a co-leader of the American Cancer Society’s Relay for Life at ETSU.

Farnor is on track to graduate in 2018 with his Roan Scholars class. “When I’m still in school,” he says, “I’m exploring opportunities to do internships with some international organizations, such as the Peace Corps, United Nations or the World Health Organization, trying to look at different ways I can put my love for diversity and humanitarian aid into action. I’m hoping one of those will turn into a long-term career.”
Serving Others

Dr. Rebecca Copeland had never been to Guatemala and never really planned to go there. But after a series of fortuitous events, the physician and professor in ETSU’s Department of Internal Medicine found herself boarding a plane in June to travel to a Guatemalan village to help the people of that region.

She went as part of a Johnson City Central Baptist Church mission trip led by Dr. Ron Murray, former pastor of the church. After a construction phase for a new mission camp that lasted a few years, the missionaries arrived in June and were able for the first time to provide a medical clinic for the people of the village of Pacaya.

“They just don’t have access to good medical care there,” Murray said. “So to be able to offer that medical care through Dr. Copeland’s leadership was just an answer to prayers.”

Copeland didn’t do it alone. In all, 48 people went on the trip, including several other members of the ETSU community. Dr. Leslie Fitzgerald, now a pulmonary critical care fellow at ETSU, gave up her residency graduation to take the trip and serve as the other doctor seeing patients there. Rising second-year medical students Alecia Hsu and Lorin Tackling went, too, as well as Graycen Clark, an undergraduate in the College of Nursing, and Erin Bailey, a doctoral candidate in the College of Nursing.

“Dr. Copeland was able to influence some really quality people to go with us,” Murray said. “They were able to provide high quality medical care for 450 people in a four-day period. They touched a lot of lives.”

Roughly 75 percent of the patients visiting the clinic were children. In fact, Copeland’s first patient was a premature baby born at six months gestation to a mother who was somewhere around 15 years old. The ETSU doc hadn’t been there 30 minutes when she was rushed up a mountainous road to get to the mother and child.

“It brought back a connection that had been missing,” said former Buccaneer quarterback Matt Wilhjelm. A native of South Florida, Wilhjelm played his last season for the Bucs in 2001 before graduating from ETSU. In 2012, he served on the Committee for 125 Task Force that recommended football be added back to the university’s roster of intercollegiate athletics teams.

“We had a great first year, and while we were not there in terms of the number of wins, I’m excited about where our team is heading. I am very proud,” Wilhjelm said.

The Bucs are playing their first seasons at Science Hill High School as construction continues on a new $22 million stadium on campus.

The return of the marching band also brought Dr. Joe Moore back to the campus and the region he had called home. Moore, a 1987 ETSU graduate and former drum major, was named Director of Athletic Bands.

“We initially planned to start in fall 2016, but the interest and enthusiasm were so strong we took to the field a year earlier,” Moore said.

“For the first year, we hoped to have about 100 members, but we ended up marching 164. Our students were simply amazing. Of course, since it was our first year there were no returning members, but from our very first meeting, they came together and were ready to go.”
Addressing an epidemic

Prescription drug abuse is a national epidemic that has hit this region particularly hard. More than 20,000 people in the immediate region struggle with addiction to or misuse of prescription drugs.

For several years, a team of researchers at ETSU has worked to study the epidemic and work toward solutions to quell the problem. In April, the institution’s efforts were propelled when the Tennessee Board of Regents approved the establishment of a center of excellence at ETSU focused solely on the issue. The Center for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment facilitates a multi-level approach to addressing the prescription drug abuse problem in Appalachia, focusing on research, education, outreach and treatment.

“There is a desperate need in this region for the implementation of these treatment methods. We will only see success in reducing the problem of prescription drug abuse if we provide patients with a full range of treatment options, and that, up until now, has not been available here.”

The not-for-profit medication-assisted addiction treatment facility will be operated by Mountain States Health Alliance with members of ETSU’s faculty also involved in treating patients. All revenue generated through the effort will be reinvested into the ETSU Center for Prescription Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment to bolster its research, education and outreach efforts.

The goal is to open the medication-assisted addiction treatment facility sometime next year.
“In a compressed, five-year window, this may be the largest amount of projects and dollars spent on projects in the history of this university. And given the changing landscape of higher education, that is a powerful place to be.”

Brian Noland
President
**Project: Interprofessional Education Center**  
**Cost: $13 million**  
Located on the Quillen VA Medical Center grounds, this facility will be a top-of-the-line interprofessional education center that includes four floors of simulation laboratories, research space, classrooms, conference rooms, student study space, food service space and administrative offices. Students from the Gatton College of Pharmacy, Quillen College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Public Health and College of Clinical and Rehabilitative Health Sciences will have access to the facility. These colleges are funding the renovation project.

**Project: Data Center**  
**Cost: $2.7 million**  
The new ETSU Data Center is a 4,954-square-foot facility being built to house, protect and service ETSU centralized data and core communications infrastructures. It will be equipped with redundant cooling, conditioned uninterruptible power, fire suppression and two-factor secure access and capacity for substantial future growth. Construction is on schedule to complete in December 2016 with migration plans to move into the facility over the following months.

**Project: Lamb Hall Renovations**  
**Cost: $20 million**  
In the near future, ETSU anticipates moving forward with a major renovation of Lamb Hall, which, for a number of years, has housed many of ETSU’s health programs. The university is awaiting planning and construction dollars to be made available from the state.

**Project: Johnson City Downtown Clinic Day Center**  
**Cost: $1 million**  
In November 2015, ETSU’s College of Nursing announced it was the recipient of a $1 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration to build a new Day Center in downtown Johnson City dedicated to providing health care and social services for the region’s homeless population. Groundbreaking for this building, which will be located adjacent to the current Day Center, will take place during the upcoming year.