



Stephens College

# ALUMNI F.Y.I.

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## NOTE FROM THE ALUM OFFICE



Dear Fellow Stephens Alums,

Throughout this season, we are celebrating and honoring the Ten Ideals of Stephens. While not all alums enjoyed the same traditions related to the Ten Ideals that we do today, they have stood as a steadfast set of principles proudly shared by Stephens Women since 1921 (and if we're honest with ourselves, since 1833!).

This month's Alumni FYI showcases the kind of alum achievement that is inherent in a culture led by the Ten Ideals of **Respect, Courage, Independence, Support, Sensitivity, Responsibility, Belief, Creativity, Intelligence, and perhaps most of all Leadership.**

As you stop and reflect on all that you are thankful for in this season, I hope you'll recognize the role that Stephens College has played in making you the person that you have become. I know I will be doing just that!

With appreciation,

*Shannon*

Shannon Blankenship Walls '93  
Vice President for Advancement  
[sbwalls@stephens.edu](mailto:sbwalls@stephens.edu)

To read previous editions of Alumni F.Y.I. - click [here](#)

## NEWS FROM ALUMNI

### A Lifetime of Achievement...



**Kay Vosburgh-LeGrand '91** of Los Angeles, has been named President of the luxury fashion label Badgley Mischka. Kay served for seven years as Vice President for Licensing Development for Badgley Mischka before stepping into the executive position where she will lead the label's business growth and customer focus. She has risen through the ranks throughout her career in the fashion industry with roles at prestigious

brands like Charming Charlie, White House Black Market, Calvin Klein, Ann Taylor, Tommy Hilfiger, and Saks Fifth Avenue.

Kay is a highly accomplished, respected, creative, and results-oriented retail professional with extensive experience in merchandising, product development, and brand building, and her mark has been one of success for each of the companies she has served. She credits Mark Badgley and James Mischka for being “simply the best and most amazing mentors,” and she is anxious to share their expertise with Stephens students.

### More about Badgley Mischka





**Ginger Gooch '97** of Springfield, MO, has been appointed to the Missouri Supreme Court, making this the first time in history that the state's highest court has a female majority. "She clerked for the first woman on the Missouri Supreme Court, and now with her appointment, we cement the first female majority on our state's highest court in state history," Governor Mike Parson said. "We know Judge Gooch is the right woman for the job."

By the way, the first woman on the Missouri Supreme Court that Ginger clerked for also happens to be former Stephens Board of Trustees member **The Hon. Ann Covington**. Ginger received her Bachelor of Arts with a double-major in Philosophy, Law, and Rhetoric and English. After graduating at the top of her law class at the University of Missouri, she served as a partner with Husch Blackwell LLP in Springfield for nearly 15 years. In 2022, she was appointed to serve on the Southern District Court of Appeals by Governor Parson.

Ginger's mother **Kay Palmer Gooch '65** (dec. 2007) was also a Stephens alumna.



English and Women's Studies graduate **Kristin Atwell Ford's '91** documentary *The Weight of a Feather* has won, not just one, but FOUR Rocky Mountain Emmy's. Kristin, who lives in Scottsdale, AZ, was individually recognized as Best Writer. The film reveals how all living beings are connected by telling the story about Arizona's Liberty Wildlife rehabilitation, education, and conservation center.

Liberty Wildlife works to ensure the survival of wildlife in the urban interface and throughout the region and to nourish the symbiotic relationship between animals, humans, and the place we call home.

The film also highlights Liberty Wildlife's Non-Eagle Feather Repository. This unique program provides feathers to Native Americans for use in ceremony. Personal stories illuminate how the feather repository preserves Indigenous cultural identity and protects birds. This is an uplifting film about how animals teach us to live compassionate, vibrant, resilient lives. The film has been featured in multiple film festivals including the Jerome Indie Film & Music Festival, the Catalina Film Festival, and the Wildlife Conservation Film Festival. It can be viewed (for a limited time) on PBS Passport, Amazon Prime, or by clicking [here](#).



**Nyla Handy '12**, owner and CEO of Nyla Couture was recognized as Designer of the Year at the Los Angeles Fashion Show during Los Angeles Fashion Week. Nyla Couture is a proud Black-owned business that Nyla founded in 2008 while at Stephens College. The label specializes in formal, prom, bridal, and special occasion

garments. At Stephens, Nyla was recognized with the 2012 Women of Influence Award for her service to the annual Collections Fashion Show and service to the Martin Luther King Student Union (MLKSU) to promote cultural awareness.



She is proud of her Missouri roots, and gives a shout-out to Stephens, saying, “In 2012, I graduated from the prestigious women’s college, Stephens College, in Columbia, MO, with my Bachelor of Fine Arts in Fashion Design and Product Development. Faith, family, and education are the foundation that leads me to be the woman I am today.”



**Mariah Lee '13** has been cast in the role of Mayella Ewell in the third touring season of the First National Tour of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Academy Award winner Aaron Sorkin’s play, directed by Tony winner Bartlett Sher and based on Harper Lee’s classic novel. Mariah returns to the role after making her Broadway debut with the company in 2019. This is the third season of the production in a multi-year national tour across North American with 41 cities on the schedule.

Mariah has also made appearances in television and film with roles in Showtime’s *City on a Hill*, CBS’ *Law and Order: SVU*, and short film *The Real American*.

Last month, she stopped by campus, even in the midst of a prominent national tour, to sit in on a Conservatory for the Performing Arts class and to interact with current students. Check out the [tour schedule](#) to see if you can catch Mariah and Co. in action near you.



In addition to Mariah, Costume Designer **Cami Huebert '12** visited campus earlier this month to meet students in the Conservatory. Cami works as a draper at Tricorne, in the Garment District in Manhattan. Most recently, she has been sharing her talents with the Milwaukee Ballet for their production of *The Nutcracker*. Check out this video of the costume fittings [here](#) – pay special attention to the Sugar Plum Ferry costume that she created from designer Gregory Poplyk’s drawing! It’s spectacular!!

Her work can also be seen in HBO’s *Gilded Age* with designs by Kasia Walicka-Maimone worn by the character Ada Brook, played by Cynthia Nixon.



**Jill Schlude '15 MSL** has been tapped as Columbia’s next Chief of Police. When she is sworn in on December 4, she will become the first woman to hold the position. She has been with CPD for 18 years, most recently serving as the department’s assistant chief, vice president for the police union, and liaison to the Citizens’ Police

Review Board as public information officer. She describes herself as a “straight shooter” with a “vision of community partnership and proactive engagement.” As Stephens, we are proud to have a graduate in this role to foster communication and collaboratively address the challenges in our local community.

## In Mini Reunions...



A group of South Hall alums and lifelong friends visited Columbia for a mini reunion, tour of campus, and shopping spree at Susie's. Pictured are: **Kathy Davis '83, Kelli Shannon Koberlein '84, Mindee Bergen Munie '84, Rena Littleton '83, Lynne Besson '83, Michele Bossert '83, Colleen Stuvick '83, Debbie Rubin '84, and Aline Reese Compton '84.**

At the same time in Santa Fe, NM, five alums from different Stephens classes who are lifelong friends from their service as Alumnae Leaders gathered for their annual mini reunion. Pictured are **Libby Taylor Reid '71, Kay Chaney Nadel '65, Allen Hull Hermann '63, Jean Steven McVicker '49, and Kathy Stolte Sherrod '71.**

**If you and your classmates or other Stephens friends have mini-reunion news to share, please let us know!!**

**If you're interested in visiting campus for a mini-reunion, contact us at [alums@stephens.edu](mailto:alums@stephens.edu) or (573) 876-7110 to help with the planning.**



## In Class Notes...



flower girls (ages 4 & 5). Michael is a civil engineer working as a hydrologist with USGS.

Jayne said she retired in 2010 from teaching elementary school after 39 years. Her husband retired in 2016 after working for ND Game & Fish as a biologist for 40 years. He loved his work with game birds so much, she worried he'd never retire!

**Mary Conley Kosmal '66, '68** asks, "Anybody out there from Savannah, GA? Miss Stephens - what a great education and experience! I have been living in Savannah for the past 10 years. My husband, Brian, and I have traveled the world - what a thrill! Unfortunately, Brian died in 2021. Miss him every day - we were married 54 years - quite an accomplishment these days!" Mary is the middle of a three generation Stephens Family with mother **Dorothy Leeder Kosmal '42** (dec. 2006) and daughter **Rachel Kosmal McCart '92**.

**Joyce McClure '69** reports that she has moved again...yes...again! "After living on the remote Pacific island of Yap for five years followed by two years on the US Territory of Guam, I've returned to the 'mainland' and landed in Charlottesville, VA, in August after testing the waters in NYC, my home for a total of 25 years. I'm teaching ESL to employees of UVA part-time and settling in otherwise. I got my BFA in '69 from Stephens and spent more than 40 years as a senior public relations/marketing communications executive. I morphed into being a freelance writer for the Pacific Island Times and various travel media while living in the far western Pacific region. ([www.muckrack.com/joyce-mcclure](http://www.muckrack.com/joyce-mcclure)) I served as a Trustee and FAB member in past years. Anyone else living in or near Charlottesville? Would love to connect!"



**LaQuita Shackelford Misner '79** of Knoxville, TN, messages, “Hey South Hall buds. Looking to see where everyone is now. Have not been good at maintaining contact. Please let me know how you are.”

**Samantha Galati Iadanza '12** shares, “I will graduate with my Masters in Library Science from the University of Central Missouri on Saturday, December 9th. The College of Education has chosen me as the commencement speaker. Some of my accomplishments during my time at UCM include graduating with a 4.0 GPA, being the President of SOLIS (Student Organization of Library and Information Services), and being an inaugural member of Beta Phi Mu (Library Science Honor Society).”

**Amy Banks '17** MFA has been nominated for a Children’s & Family Emmy for writing her Word of the Day segment of *Sesame Street* which starred Zahn Tokiya-ku McClarnon of *Dark Winds*. The segment can be viewed [here](#).

**Michelle Mowery Harris '77** shared, “I’ve been radio silent for many years. After 20 years in marketing and consulting roles, primarily with Purina in St. Louis, I now serve as Mayor of Clayton, Missouri, after 8 years as an Alderman. Clayton, the county seat of St. Louis County, has a population of over 17,000 and a downtown of all-sized businesses including the headquarters of several Fortune 500 companies: Enterprise, Centene, Graybar, Olin, and soon Emerson. I am married with two grown children.”



**Kristy Simpson**, Admissions Navigator for the Conservatory for the Performing Arts, shares a “Proud mom moment” about her daughter **Danielle Simpson '22** who is currently appearing in *School House Rock* at Maples Repertory Theatre in Macon, Mo.

**Do you have news to share Please let us know!!**

**To connect with or respond to any of these alums or to search for others, check out Stephens Connect!**

## In Club Notes...

Regional Groups are preparing for their holiday parties all over the country. Click [here](#) to see our calendar of regional alumni and campus events!



Alumni in the **Phoenix** area gathered at Paul Martin's American Grill in Scottsdale on November 11. Dean of the School of Health Sciences **Dr. Michael Barger** and Director of Philanthropy and Engagement **Jenny Trom** brought news from campus. Board of Trustees member **Kay Chaney Nadel '65** honored **Wendy Lindrud Bissonett '80** with the **Just One** award to recognize her service and support of Stephens College at the local level.

**Kansas City Alumni** were recently hosted by **Karen Erickson Granville '61** at the San Francisco Tower in KC. Stephens VPs **Shannon Blankenship Walls '93** and **Dr. Leslie Swanda Willey '83** visited from campus with news of the College's Reimagining Stephens strategic plans.



Scholarship presentation to Ellie Stevens by Sally McClure Jackson '56 and President Dianne Lynch



Amy Luppino and William at the American Royal

Across town, the UPHA/American Royal Horse Show was taking place with three Stephens students in competition. Senior **Amy Luppino '24** placed 6th in MO/KS/IA Adult Show Pleasure and 8th in the Championship. Freshman **Ellie Stevens '27** placed 6th in MO/KS/IA Three Gaited Park Open and 5th in the Stake. To honor her achievements, Ellie was presented with the \$10,000 USEF/ASHBA Performance Rider Stephens College Scholarship generously sponsored by **Sally McClure Jackson '56**. To read more exciting news about the Equestrian Program, check our *Stephens Equestrian FYI* Newsletter [here](#).

For more information about regional and campus events, check out the events listings on [Stephens Connect](#) or contact us at [alums@stephens.edu](mailto:alums@stephens.edu).

**Do you have an alum event to share? [Please let us know!](#)**

***In Memoriam: Honoring the Lives and Legacies of Our Departed Alumni...***

In every chapter of our alumni journey, we encounter individuals who leave an indelible mark on our hearts and our alma mater. As we celebrate the accomplishments and milestones of our alumni, we must also pause to remember and pay tribute to those members of our alumni family who have passed away. Their contributions, friendships, and memories continue to resonate within our community, and we take a moment to reflect on their lasting impact. Join us in honoring these individuals whose legacy will forever be woven into the tapestry of Stephens College.



**Anna Jane Sitton Hays '58  
1938 - 2023**

Anna Jane moved to New York City in 1970 to serve as a founding executive of the newly created Children's Television Workshop (CTW), now known as Sesame Workshop. CTW was producing a revolutionary new national public television show called *Sesame Street* with the mission of supporting the intellectual and emotional development of preschool and grade-school children across the United States. Anna Jane was hired as the Editor-in-Chief and, with an exceptional team of all-female editors, edited and published every major *Sesame Street* book and periodical from 1971 to 2000, over 1,000 titles. With Stan Lee of Marvel Comics, in concert with CTW's other new public television show, *The Electric Company*, Anna Jane served as editor of *Spidey Super Stories*, one of the first Marvel Comic series geared toward older readers to encourage literacy.



In addition to serving as editor-in-chief at CTW, Anna Jane authored many Sesame Street books under the pseudonym Anna H. Dickson, in honor of her maternal grandmother including: *The Sesame Street Story Book*, *Grover's Bad Awful Day*, *Grover: I Can Dress Myself*, and *The Pokey Little Puppy Comes to Sesame Street*. Most of these titles are still in print to this day.

Anna Jane returned to her childhood home of New Mexico, retiring to Santa Fe, in 2002. Anna Jane was recognized as one of Carlsbad New Mexico's most "accomplished citizens" and inducted into the Carlsbad Hall of Fame in July 2021.

At Stephens, Anna Jane was honored as one on the Ten Ideals - Appreciation of the Beautiful - in the Class of 1958.

*Other Notices received by Stephens since the last issue of Alumni FYI:*

### **1940s**

**Phyllis Nigh Yochem** '44; Corpus Christi, TX

**Wilma Webster Schwada** '46; Chandler, AZ

**Dama Truett Wimbish** '47; Chandler, AZ

**Anne Reimann Bonestroo** '48; Okoboji, IA

**Lanier Jenkins McCrary** '54; Brownsboro, AL

**Barbara Oldt Ware** '54; Tampa, FL  
**Susan Widney Dvorak** '57; Scottsdale, AZ

**Barbara Brook Brodbeck** '59; Brady, TX

### **1950s**

**Beverly Koeneman Maxfield** '50; Fort Wayne, IN

**Norma Parker Guest** '51; San Antonio, TX

**Dorothy Jacobson Rice** '52; Englewood, CO

**Mary Hearon Dickson** '53; Jacksonville, FL

**Sandra McKemie Reese** '53; Albany, GA

### **1960s**

**Sandra Schilling Rakestraw** '65; Statesboro, GA

**Jerrie Rogers Walden** '68, Jonesboro, AR

### **1970s**

**Carolyn Smith Decker** '72; Charlotte, NC

**Marilyn Miller Robitaille** '74; Folsom, CA

## Holiday Checklist:

- Give.
- Connect.
- Recruit.

## Giving Tuesday



As the year comes to a close, we are excited to invite you to be a part of something truly meaningful and uniquely Stephens.

Stephens College stands as a beacon of education and personal growth, guided by the Ten Ideals that define our core values and enrich and inspire our lives. The Ten Ideals are **Respect, Courage, Independence, Support, Sensitivity, Belief, Responsibility, Creativity, Intelligence, and Leadership.**

These Ideals are more than mere words; they are the compass that guides us and shapes the character of our institution. This year-end giving campaign, “**Embrace Our Ideals,**” provides a unique opportunity for you to give to one or more Ideals that resonate most with your values. By giving to the Ideal

that resonates with you, you become a part of a transformative force, shaping the future of Stephens College, and empowering our students to thrive. Each Ideal is linked to a specific Onward or Upward giving initiative, allowing you to directly support the area that aligns with your passion.

You can see the **Ten Ideals** and give to their corresponding funds [here](#).

**#givingtuesday, #tenideals, #stephenscollege**

## Alumni Weekend Registration Open



Alumni Weekend is a time to celebrate Stephens, engage with classmates, and reminisce about days gone by. Classes ending in '4 and '9 will celebrate Milestone Reunions. All Alumni are welcome.

If you haven't been to campus for a while, there's so much to experience, and we have big plans for this fun and engaging weekend. Remember the moments you created. Spend quality time with today's students who are writing their own stories. Mingle with faculty - current and retired. Celebrate the service and accomplishments of our amazing alumni. Hear an exclusive Stephens College update from President Dianne Lynch. And more. You won't want to miss a minute.

Visit [Stephens Connect](#) to see the schedule and register. Then **call your friends!** If you have questions or prefer to register by phone, call us at (573) 876-7110.

## Request for Alumni Award Nominations



Stephens alums accomplish amazing things in their careers and through service to Stephens and their communities, and we love to recognize them. Nominations are now open for the College's expanded Alumni Awards! Discover the awards, nominate a worthy alum, and read about past honorees [here](#).

***Thank you for staying connected to Stephens!***

**Give. Connect. Recruit.**