



Stephens College

# STEPHENS F.Y.I.

---

## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT



We are fresh off the Screenwriters Research Network Conference that was held on campus last week. The campus and our guests came together for fascinating keynotes from the amazing Meg LaFauve, Lorien McKenna, Jeff Melvion, and Phillip LaZebnik. I was thrilled to see so many of our students mingling and making connections with these industry giants and other conference attendees. I thank Dr. Rosanne Welch for leading this endeavor and bringing international recognition to Stephens College!

Progress on our strategic plan continues as we prepare to enter the 2nd quarter of the College's fiscal year. 2023-2024 is a year of transformation and reimagination. Some highlights of our work include:

- Development of a women-centric workforce development program in partnership with industry leaders
- Creation of a secondary education certification program in partnership with Columbia Public Schools and two school districts in the Kansas City area
- An academic and student experience focused on collaborative, immersive learning and cross-cultural experiences
- A comprehensive rebranding and strategic marketing plan to show and tell what makes Stephens unique and the impact it makes on the lives of her students
- A recommitment of emphasis on what we've always done best – to innovate and educate individuals to prepare them for lives, careers, families, service, and contributions in the world they will soon lead.

What we need now is you...

- Stay tuned and informed. And if you have questions, ask us at [alums@stephens.edu](mailto:alums@stephens.edu).
- Check out the new information below that we are sharing with prospective students and families – and if you know anyone who is ready to focus on their passions and become their best selves at Stephens – [send them our way](#).
- Support Stephens. We have lots of ways for you to do just that throughout the year. Help us move onward and upward with gifts of your time, talent, and treasure. We value your investment in our future and the impact it makes on the students of today and tomorrow.

All my best,  
Dianne

## NEWS FROM CAMPUS

### A Lifetime of Giving...



We are delighted to announce a gift commitment from **Professor Emerita Dr. Judith Pettersen Clark**, former program chair of English and Creative Writing, and the first woman to achieve the rank of full professor at Stephens College.

Now retired after 45 years (plus three additional part-time years) of teaching English and Women's Studies, she continues to serve as an advisor to Stephens' Alpha Epsilon Eta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, International English Honor Society, a role she treasures

because of the professional growth opportunities it provides for the students and the lasting connections she makes with them along their educational journey.

To ensure the continuation of her support for students, Dr. Clark has included Stephens in her estate plan by designating the English, Creative Writing, and Women's Studies programs as primary beneficiaries of her living trust—including cash, real estate, and personal effects.

Dr. Clark's gift will create an endowment with perpetual distributions funding student travel and participation in regional and national conventions, as well as funding for the Writers on the Edge speakers series. Dr. Clark is a proponent of immersive learning opportunities and networking connections for students with professional writers and lecturers, and her gift creates funding for this and other Sigma Tau Delta chapter, and English/Creative Writing activities.

In all her years at Stephens, Dr. Clark says she has seen welcome support for Harbinger literary magazine, but she has not seen a transformational gift designated for the English/Creative Writing program—and she knows that her gift will make a difference and ideally inspire more support for the program.

Dr. Clark was inspired to make her gift because of Stephens' steadfast commitment to women's education. "There is still an important role for women's colleges," she says. "They offer a kind of nurturing, growth-oriented education that is not duplicated at a coed institution."

She also credits the deep collegiality she shared with fellow faculty and the curiosity, aspirations, and values of the students as inspirations for her gift.

Dr. Clark encourages others to consider the legacies they could leave to support future Stephens students and how their own philanthropic gifts can make a splash rather than a ripple.

*Thank you, Dr. Clark, for your generous support, your life's work dedicated to your students, and your devotion to Stephens College and the English/Creative Writing and Women's Studies programs. We are so grateful.*

## A Stephens Day for Scholarships...

**STEPHENS COLLEGE  
HONORS ITS BUILDER**

Week's Celebration Is Tribute  
to James Madison Wood,  
Missouri Educator

**PIONEER IN 'JUNIOR' FIELD**

He Developed Training for Women  
That Made His Institution  
the Largest in Its Class

By IRMGARD JOHNSON

A college president who in twenty-five years has transformed his institution from the smallest to the largest private junior college in the United States is being fêted this week. Students, faculty and alumnae, with a number of persons prominent in the junior college movement, are holding a week's celebration in honor of President James Madison Wood at Stephens College in Columbia, Mo.

### Developing a Program

"Our primary concern has been to formulate a program for the education of women; this could be accomplished only after intensive study of what women do," he once said.

Sixteen years ago the Research Department, under the direction of Dr. W. W. Charters, began a study of the life activities and interests of educated women, with a view toward changing the curriculum to meet the actual problems they encounter in home, community and vocations.

The results of this study today dictate the development of courses which fall in these functional areas: Esthetics, social problems, health, psychology, economics, communication and ethics. This program at Stephens seeks to guide both the emotional and intellectual life in relation to the demands of actual experience.

Similarly, an extensive program for the teaching of economics from the standpoint of the consumer is now being started under a special grant from the Sloan Foundation. President Wood points out that the fact that the income of the nation is spent largely by women argues for the development of a sound sense of values on the part of the "buying" partner of the family.

The program of consumer education includes more than consumption as it is usually treated in economics. It seeks to develop wise choices in the "consumption" of such cultural products as music, art, drama, literature. A program of continuous research in current economic trends will accompany the projected work in consumer education.

*Excerpts 1937 New York Times story*

**October 2 is "Stephens Day"** – a day created by the Alumnae Association in honor of the birthdate of storied Stephens College President James Madison Wood. President Wood served from 1912 until 1947, and he led the College through a renaissance and secured its future by establishing a culture of innovation. He expanded campus residence halls and classroom spaces, recruited industry experts, and led the College to a position of national prominence.

President Wood's legacy lives on every day we educate students at Stephens College. Today we strive to continue to carry the torch of his legacy.

The traditions of Stephens Day are as follows:

- Light a candle in remembrance of your time as a student at Stephens;
- Meet with or get in touch with fellow alums;
- Reflect on those who helped you become who you are today;
- Envision how you can make a difference in the life of the next generation of Stephens Alums.

We hope you will join us on October 2 - *and throughout October* - to celebrate and bring back this tradition. Call your lifelong friends from Stephens. Look up those you've lost contact with on [Stephens Connect](#). Give to the Stephens Scholarship Fund to support future students' ability to be part of our Stephens Family.



## Following in President JMW's Footsteps...

Just as James Madison Wood set out to do 111 years ago, we are on a mission of renaissance at Stephens. We have bold plans to amplify our already immersive curriculum, to strengthen our business model, to expand the profile of the students we serve (while forever staying true to our 190-year mission of educating women), and to deliver student learning in a model that fits how students learn best. Check out this hot-off-the-presses information about how we are sharing our plans with prospective students.

## A New Stephens Star...



Stephens is thrilled to announce the hire of **Melinda Wrye-Washington** as Assistant Athletic Director for the Stephens Stars. Melinda was inducted into the Missouri Sports Hall of Fame in 2019 for her remarkable career as a Volleyball Coach and player.

As an athlete, Melinda was All-State in three sports and a three-time All-State volleyball player, leading Eldon (MO) High School to four state volleyball tournaments. She played three seasons at the University of Missouri (team captain, all-tournament selections, spring All-Big Eight selection) before transferring to Columbia College, earning the first NAIA First Team All-American honors in program history, and led the team to its first national tournament.

After graduation, she coached at Westminster College, leading the volleyball program to its first NCAA Tournament, plus coaching basketball and serving in the role of Senior Women's Administrator.

Melinda returned to Columbia College to coach volleyball from 2000 to 2018, compiling a program-best 747-126 record (.855). Each of her teams reached the NAIA Tournament, with the 2001 and 2015 teams winning national titles and six finishing as runners-up. She earned 11 American Midwest Conference Coach of the Year awards, five Region Five Coach of the Year awards, and three NAIA National Coach of the Year awards. She has coached 51 All-Americans and 3 National Player of the Year recipients.

Following her impressive career at Columbia College, Melinda returned to her roots at Eldon High School as Athletic Director and Volleyball Coach and Senior Program Director for Special Olympics Missouri.

But, she's just getting started...

Now at Stephens College, Melinda will focus her expertise on recruiting student athletes, raising funds for the newly established Stars Scholarship Fund, and building the regional and national profile of the Stephens Stars Athletics programs. Joining Athletic Director, Andre Bell and a cadre of experienced coaches, her extensive experience will make a profound impact on the program and its student athletes.

Join us in giving Melinda a spirited Stephens welcome!



## Broadway Composer and Lyricist Joins the Conservatory this Fall as a Guest Artist



This fall, **Craig Carnelia**, joins the Conservatory faculty to teach “Acting through Song” to Musical Theatre and Acting students in the Conservatory. Throughout his esteemed career, Craig has been nominated for multiple Tony and Drama Desk awards, is a recipient of the Johnny Mercer Award, the Gilman and Gonzalez-Falla Musical Theater Award, and the Kleban Award.

Craig is the author of “The Reason to Sing: A Guide to Acting While Singing” and is a renowned instructor of some of Broadway’s biggest stars, including Tony Award winners Sutton Foster, Aaron Tveit, and Annaleigh Ashford.

In addition to his success as a composer/lyricist, author, and instructor, Craig mentors young writers through the ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop, the Dramatists Guild Musical Theatre Fellowship, and the Eugene O’Neill Musical Theatre Conference.

The students at the Conservatory for the Performing Arts at Stephens College are incredibly fortunate to have the opportunity to work with the legendary Craig Carnelia!

## History Being Made...



The **Stars Volleyball Team** had a historic win on September 26 as they conquered the William Woods Owls in 5 sets. First-year Coach Travis Koelling led the team to its first victory over WWU in program history. Overall, the Stars are 14-4 for the Season and 3-0 in Conference Play with an 11 game winning streak. Check out this [great coverage](#) of the game in the Columbia Missourian!

Go Stars! Keep up the good work.

## A Star is Born...



The Fashion Program and Costume Museum and Research Gallery held the grand opening of the Costume Exhibition “**A Star is Born: How Fashion Supported Screenwriters to Create Iconic Female Characters,**” on September 21, during the Screenwriting Research Network Conference held on the Stephens campus.

The exhibition highlights the way Costume Designers work with a script to create clothing that helps actresses embody their characters and the female gaze. Fashion Student and brand-new Alum **Aspen Oakley '23** assisted **Dr. Monica Phillippe McMurry '82** to curate the pieces for the show. The stunning



exhibition celebrates women in fashion and the arts as they influenced women worldwide to follow their “Hollywood” style. Some of the films show connections to Stephens College, to Columbia, and Missouri.

The exhibit is now open and free to the public on Thursdays in October through November 9 from 12:30-1:20 p.m. For more information, call 573-876-2312 or email [fashion@stephens.edu](mailto:fashion@stephens.edu).



### Celebration of Hispanic Heritage...



Students, faculty, and staff gathered together on a perfect fall day to celebrate Hispanic Heritage. They learned about the iconic aspects and rich traditions of Hispanic and LatinX cultures that share African and indigenous roots while enjoying Tamales, Horchata, and Aguas Frescas on the Journey Plaza. Plus, there was a Piñata!



## Showing Our Pride...



Students and faculty from the Conservatory for the Performing Arts participated in the Mid-Missouri PrideFest Parade on September 24. Viewers said their parade performance “stole the show!” with their choreographed dance down Broadway to ABBA’s Dancing Queen.

## While You’re Away...

Join [Stephens Connect](#)

Follow our new social media sites curated for Alums: [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#)

Shop at [Susie’s](#)

Travel with alums: [Stephens Alumni travel opportunities](#)

Stay tuned to Giving Day opportunities like the upcoming Stephens Day, October 2

## When You’re On Campus...

See a show: [76th Performing Arts Season](#)

Catch a game: [Fall Athletics Schedules](#)

# SAVE THE DATE



Are you interested in serving as a volunteer for your class reunion during Alumni Weekend?

**CLASSES ENDING IN 4S & 9S**

Contact us to learn more:

(573) 876 -7110

[alums@stephens.edu](mailto:alums@stephens.edu)

## Stephens College *Alumni Weekend*

# APRIL 11-13, 2024

## GIVE. CONNECT. RECRUIT.

### Thank You for Staying Connected to Stephens!

In closing, I want to thank you for all that you do for Stephens. From reading all of our news to the very end, to making a gift, to connecting with old friends and new, and to referring prospective students to Stephens. You are an important part of what we do – the steward of our history, the concierge of our present, and the benefactor of our future. And for all that, we are grateful every day.

JUST ONE [gift](#), JUST ONE [connection](#), JUST ONE [new student](#).

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