



Stephens College

# ALUMNI F.Y.I.

## NOTE FROM THE ALUM OFFICE

---



Dear Fellow Alums,

I am thrilled to unveil our latest initiative aimed at keeping our alumni community connected and informed.

Graduates of Stephens College are **S**uccessful, **T**alented, **E**steemed, **P**henomenal, **H**onored, **E**xpert, **N**otable, **S**avvy individuals. Each has a unique story to tell, and we are delighted to publish **Alumni F.Y.I.** to serve as a window into the lives and accomplishments of our extraordinary alumni. This is a story by and about you.

### How Can You Get Involved?

We believe that **Alumni F.Y.I.** is a collective effort, and we invite all to participate. Here's how:

1. **Submit Your Updates:** Share your personal and professional achievements, life events, and exciting news with us. Your stories are what make this publication come alive!
2. **Stay Engaged:** Keep an eye out for calls for submissions, event announcements, and opportunities to engage with your fellow alumni.
3. **Spread the Word:** Help us grow our alumni community by sharing the publication with your friends and fellow graduates. We hope you enjoy this inaugural issue. We believe **Alumni F.Y.I.** will showcase the enduring bonds that unite us as Stephens alumni. We will also use this space to remember those whom we've lost. Within these pages you'll find a list of alumni for whom we've been notified of their passing since January 1, 2023. Join us in reflecting on the impact they have made on Stephens and the world around them.

**Don't forget: send us your news; be involved; and tell your friends. This is just the beginning!**

Thank you for being an essential part of our vibrant alumni community. Together, we can make this publication a thriving platform for connection, inspiration, and celebration.

Warm regards,

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

## NEWS FROM ALUMNI

### A Lifetime of Achievement...



**Alana Smith Shepherd '49** was honored for Lifetime Achievement by the Atlanta Business Chronicle. The Award recognized the significant strides in her career, making a difference in her community, and blazing a trail for others.

Alana is the Chair of the Shepherd Center and one of the organization's founders. The Shepherd Center is a private, not-for-profit hospital specializing in medical treatment, research, and rehabilitation for people with spinal cord injury, brain injury, multiple sclerosis, spine and chronic pain, and other neuromuscular conditions.

It was established in 1975 following two years of rehabilitation for Alana's son James Shepherd who was injured and paralyzed from a bodysurfing accident in Brazil. Frustrated by the lack of rehabilitation care options in the Southwest, the Shepherd family hurled themselves into the task of creating a rehabilitation center. In its more than four decades, Shepherd Center has grown from a six-bed rehabilitation unit to a world-renowned, 152-bed hospital that treats more than 743 inpatients, 277 day-program patients, and more than 7,161 outpatients each year in more than 46,000 visits. Today, the Center is recognized by U.S. News as one of the nation's top 10 hospitals for rehabilitation.

More than a hospital, Shepherd Center also advocates for all people with disabilities. Shepherd has worked regionally to improve accessibility of rapid transit systems, sports complexes, airports, local businesses, and housing facilities. The hospital sponsors 11 wheelchair sports teams and has served as official sponsor of the Shepherd Center AJC Peachtree Road Race Wheelchair Division since 1984. Shepherd was also the founding sponsor of the 1996 Atlanta Paralympic Games, bringing 3,310 world-class athletes with disabilities from 104 nations to Atlanta for Olympic-level competition.

Although Shepherd Center has evolved greatly since 1975, it remains dedicated to helping people with catastrophic injuries and illnesses reclaim their lives with dignity, independence, and hope.

Alana was honored by Stephens College with the Alumnae Achievement Award in 1999. Join us in congratulating Alana again on her amazing lifetime of achievement!

## Lives of Service...

**Vice Admiral Nancy Brown '73 (Ret.) and Sergeant Star Cathcart, MSL '06** have been honored for their military service by Warrior Canine Connection. WCC is an organization that utilizes a Mission Based Trauma Recovery model to help recovering Warriors reconnect with life, their families, their communities, and each other. Warriors interact with dogs from birth through adulthood, training the dogs to act as service dogs for wounded warriors. Each service dog is named in honor of a veteran.

When **Jennifer Kelley Wilder '94**, WCC's Director of Development, learned about Stephens' Mission Promise Kept program for women veterans, a meaningful connection was established. WCC had a goal to honor more women veterans and Stephens College had a program to identify deserving candidates.

The first two are Vice Admiral Nancy and Sergeant Star.



**United States Navy Vice Admiral Nancy Brown** grew up in Marion, Illinois. After graduating from Stephens, she followed the advice of her father and entered Officer Candidate School in 1974.

Highlights of her career included Command of the Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station in Cutler, Maine, and Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Atlantic in Norfolk, Virginia. She served on the National Security Council staff at the White House and was Deputy Director of the White House

Military Office. In 2004, Vice Admiral Brown deployed to Iraq becoming the first Multi-National Force-Iraq C6. Returning in April 2005 she was assigned as the J6 for both North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command.

After 35-years of service, Vice Admiral Brown retired as Director, Command, Control, Communications and Computer Systems, The Joint Staff. She is a proud member of the Stephens College Board of Trustees, serving as Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. She has been a key member of the Mission Promise Kept advisory committee. She also serves as Vice Chair for the Veterans Honor Flight organization, and she was instrumental in organizing the first Honor Flight supported by Southern Illinois.



**United States Marine Corps Sergeant Star Cathcart**, an eight-year Veteran, embodies the true spirit of service and dedication to the Veteran community. Her journey began in Miramar, California, where she served as an Aviation Electronics Technician for the FA-18. After her honorable service, Sergeant Cathcart embarked on a path of impactful roles, including Operations Director of a homeless shelter for Veterans and Program Manager for Team Red, White, and Blue.



## ALUMNI F.Y.I.

---

Currently, as the Lead Transformation Project Manager for Kyndryl, Sergeant Cathcart's commitment to fostering inclusive workplace cultures and amplifying the voices of Veterans shines brightly. Collaborating with esteemed organizations like the NFL and Starbucks, she has become a driving force in empowering Veterans and promoting their successful transition. Sergeant Cathcart's impact extends beyond her professional endeavors. As a Certified Peer Support Specialist, she provides invaluable assistance to Veterans battling MST and PTSD. Her expertise as a PTSD/trauma-informed yoga teacher brings healing and solace to those in need. Additionally, Sergeant Cathcart's dedication to supporting women struggling with addiction and mental health issues showcases her passion for uplifting marginalized communities.

Throughout her remarkable journey, Sergeant Cathcart's strategic leadership skills and unwavering dedication to disabled Veterans have set her apart. This recognition not only celebrates her exceptional qualifications but also inspires disabled Veterans to overcome challenges and thrive in their post-service lives. Sergeant Cathcart, a Veteran, leader, and advocate, has dedicated her life to empowering the Veteran community.

WCC says the outstanding contributions of these two Stephens women make them exemplary candidates for this prestigious recognition. Stephens College agrees!

Congratulations Vice Admiral Nancy, WCC's Nancy, Sergeant Star, and WCC's Star for all the work you do to support our Veterans!

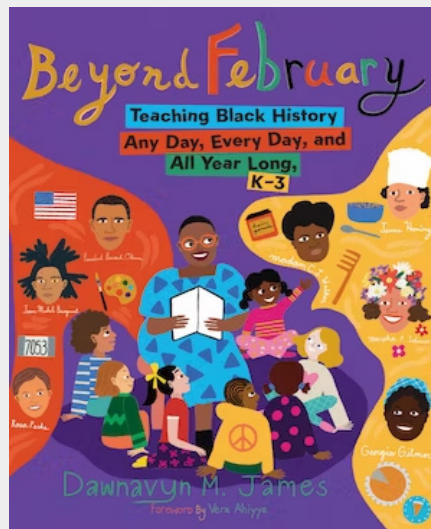
## A Special Gathering for MFA Alumni...



Alums from the MFA classes of 2017 through 2023, as well as some currently enrolled students, gathered on campus as part of the 2023 Screenwriters Research Network Conference. Alums **Hadley Houck MFA '22** and **Melle Richardson MFA '22** planned the event that was sponsored in part by the Missouri Film Office. They showcased pride in the College's deep history of connections with Hollywood through with a photo and bio display of the Stephens People who have made their impact on the industry.

We anticipate great things from this group of talented alums – and we are grateful to the SRN for hosting their international conference on our campus!

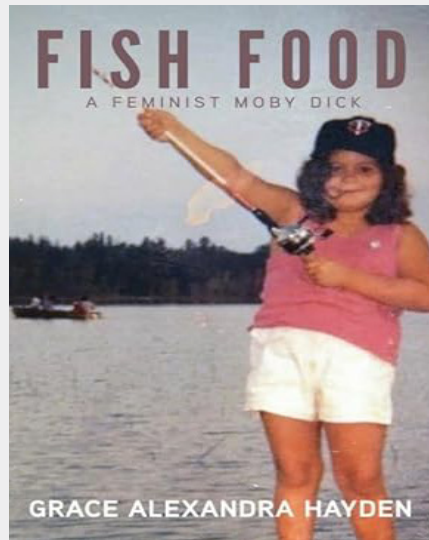
## Highlighting More Alum Author...



**Dawnavyan M. James '15** announces that her book “Beyond February: Teaching Black History Any Day, Every Day, and All Year Long” will publish on October 31, 2023.

Drawing on her experiences as a classroom teacher and a Black history researcher, Dawnavyan illustrates the big and small ways that we can center Black history in everyday teaching and learning practices across curriculum using read-alouds, music, historical documents, art, and so much more. She has taught students from kindergarten to fifth grade, but her favorite years of teaching were her three years with kindergartners. She is currently pursuing her Ph.D. at the University at Buffalo and is a fellow at the Center for K-12 Black History and Racial Literacy Education.

Dawnavyn is also the founder of The Black History Club, an organization that empowers and equips teachers and students with information and resources that will benefit themselves, their families, and the community through engaging with Black histories.



**Grace Hayden AA '88** shares her story about becoming a storyteller. While at Stephens, English instructor **Dick Caram** encouraged her to pursue writing. She recalls telling him that she would – but not until she was 45. He told her that would be too late. She shrugged his advice off and told him that’s what she thought would happen – and happen it has! She has just published her first book, “Fish Food: A Feminist Moby Dick” which she began writing in her late 40s.

Grace lives in Minneapolis, Minnesota, where she sells real estate, writes, and fishes. Her screenplays have placed at The Catalyst Festival (2019) and The Austin Film Festival (2021). At Stephens, she was on the staff for Harbinger, and she says she’s still in touch with Stephens instructors Tom Dillingham and Leslie Miller.



MFA alum **Rene Rawls '20** is an award-winning screenwriter who loves creating content for kids! Her affinity and talent have led to her being chosen as a 2023 Fred Rogers Productions Writers' Neighborhood Fellow. This prestigious fellowship program is for professionals "interested in deepening their work in service of children, families, and their helpers."

Rene is a former teacher turned writer who now has a classroom full of students all over the world! Her work has been acknowledged by prestigious programs, including the Iowa Writers' Workshop and the Mandela Day/Tribeca All Access Award. Rene wrote and produced the animated film "Sule and the Case of the Tiny Sparks." She says she "loves capturing those fun, magical moments of learning in her work, and her heart melts when she's asked by kids to create more content."

## Class Notes...



**Lynn Espeland AA'72** shares that she is currently serving as Senior Vice President and General Counsel of WoodmenLife, a life insurance company founded in 1890. After Stephens, she received her BSJ from the University of Kansas in 1974 and her JD from Creighton University in 1982.





**Khyneesha Edwards '16** has been named President of AIGA KC, an organization that provides innovative professional development opportunities for Kansas City's graphic design community. She says, "My journey with AIGA started back in 2018. I participated as a mentee in our mentorship program, and it impacted my life so greatly that I joined the board. I wanted to provide opportunities for professional development to young designers who were seeking community, just like I was."



**Macy Kunke '20** is a graduate student at CalArts studying stage management. She writes to share about her recent publication of an article about Sustainable Stage Management at the HowlRound. She's proud to share that many of her current professional practices were shaped by her time at Stephens.



**Michele Dagle O'Connor MFA '22** writes that since graduating from Stephens, she has become an Adjunct Professor at Marquette University in Milwaukee teaching screenwriting courses. Michele was on campus in September for the International Screenwriters Research Network Conference and presented her research about Joan Harrison, the screenwriting mind behind many of Alfred Hitchcock's classic films.

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

## **Regional Fall Events...**

### **Friday, October 13**

Kansas City Alumni Club  
Hallmark Crown Center Lunch and Tour

**Hallmark Vistor Center**

### **Friday, October 20**

Mid-Missouri Homecoming Happy Hour  
**for all alums** in or visiting Columbia

**The Roof on Broadway**

### **Saturday, October 28**

Northern California Alumni Club Fall Event  
and zoom with President Dianne Lynch

**Atherton Home**

### **Friday, November 10**

Lunch with VP Shannon Blankenship Walls '93  
and VP Dr. Leslie Swanda Willey '83

**San Francisco Tower**

### **Saturday, November 11**

Phoenix Alumni Group Lunch with  
Dr. Michael Barger, Dean, School of Health  
Science and Jenny Trom, Director of  
Philanthropy and Engagement

**Paul Martin's American Grill**

### **Sunday, December 3**

Mid- Missouri Alumni Group Holiday Party

**Save the Date and  
stay tuned for more info**

### **Tuesday, December 5**

Northern California Holiday Party with  
VP Dr. Leslie Willey and Director of  
Philanthropy and Engagement, Jenny  
Trom

**Save the Date and  
stay tuned for more info**

### **Friday, December 8**

Kansas City Alumni Club Lunch

**Nelson - Atkins Museum of Art**

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

## We've also heard...

Carol Anderson '66-'68 and Shanna Hudson-Stowe '86 are collaborating in New Orleans to connect with area alums. Roxene Freese '79 is making connections in Minneapolis. If you're interested in learning more, email 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 come together through this publication to celebrate the recent 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.

#### **1930s**

**Constance Barnard Pach** '39;  
Dedham, MA; 06/05/2023

#### **1940s**

**Sybil Kahn** '40; Kansas City, MO;  
05/05/2023

**Eugenia Hoffert McGill** '40;  
Philadelphia, PA; 06/10/2023

**Muriel MacDonald Will** '40; Tacoma,  
WA 08/17/2023

**Dorothy Williams Jennings**  
'41; Wellsville, MO; 05/31/2023

**Mary Park Bryant** '44; Nashville, TN;  
07/09/2023

**Shirley Ward Dieter** '44; Madison, WI;  
06/04/2023

**Betty Winton Fay** '44; Fort Worth, TX;  
06/15/2023

**Marilyn Johnson Giancola** '44;  
Fayetteville, NY; 03/14/2023

**Ruth Fetscher Williams** '44;  
Oklahoma City, OK; 07/06/2023

**Mary Stewart Bush** '45; Saint Louis,  
MO; 01/15/2023

**Betty Jo Howe Sherwood** '45; Allen,  
TX; 01/10/2023

**Patricia Mollring Stewart** '45;  
Coronado, CA; 07/05/2023

**Pattie Henegar Chambers** '46;  
Gastonia, NC; 05/17/2023

**Virginia Courtice Rankin** '46;  
Lexington, KY; 05/12/2023

**Miriam Dyer Bliss** '47; La Habra, CA;  
03/23/2023

**Marjorie Gittelsohn Hurwitz** '47; San  
Rafael, CA; 05/01/2023

**Ruth Rueseler Knot** '47; Cape  
Girardeau, MO; 03/27/2023

**Marjo Langrell Price** '47; Columbia, MO; 03/10/2023

**Martha Arnold Sheerin** '47; Indian River, MI; 02/18/2023

**Ruth Wilkinson Williams** '47; Indio, CA; 06/04/2023

**Virginia Ruesch Woerner** '47; Chandler, AZ; 03/25/2023

**Jo Reed Cole** '48; Peoria, AZ; 08/15/2023

**Ramona Massey Kean** '48; Leander, TX; 06/03/2023

**Mary McNease Kinard** '48; West Columbia, SC; 05/09/2023

**Phyllis Mossberg Palm** '48; Cheshire, CT; 07/07/2023

**Elizabeth Swallum Sheehan** '48; Macon, GA; 02/11/2023

**Alice Hyers Swanstone** '48; Shawnee KS; 09/23/2023

**Geraldine Fox Turner** '48; Twin Falls, ID; 02/25/2023

**Nancy Langford Finsness** '49; Swansea, MA; 09/29/2023

**Emily Kirkland Grimball** '49; Charleston, SC; 06/03/2023

**Shirley Hampton Hunt** '49; Baltimore, MD; 01/17/2023

**Betty Cook Vieth** '49; Havana, FL; 03/26/2023

## **1950s**

**Elizabeth Croll Atkinson** '50; Wareham, MA; 08/25/2023

**Barbara Peterson Blair** '50; Atlantic Beach, FL 03/01/2023

**Scottye Cobb Davidson** '50; Olive Branch, MS; 05/21/2023

**Marjorie Copher Dundas** '50; Santa Barbara, CA; 02/07/2023

**Anne Focht Embody** '50; Savannah, GA; 08/04/2023

**Alouise Lien Fenstermacher** '50; Wilmington, NC; 09/14/2023

**Claudette Collett Kruger** '50; Jasper, IN; 09/01/2023

**Joan Potter Stout** '50; Lone Tree, CO; 07/07/2023

**Ann Sanders Campbell** '51; Spartanburg, SC; 01/29/2023

**Nancy Whiteley Coates** '51; Corydon, IA; 07/02/2023

**Patricia Kuebler Holmes** '51; Roanoke, VA; 03/07/2023

**Sally Pricer Kenney** '51; Lighthouse Point, FL; 06/12/2023

**Mary Billeness Oakley** '51; Arlington, VA; 05/23/2023

**Betty Dill Van Niel** '51; South Windsor, CT; 01/31/2023

**Joan Anderson Anklam** '52; Lambertville, MI; 06/18/2023

**Joan Menge Foreman** '52; Columbia, MO; 06/23/2023

**Clara Munholland Montgomery** '52; Monroe, LA; 08/21/2023

**Marilyn Morgan Brintnall** '53; San Clemente, CA; 03/29/2023

**Mary Berinstein Harris** '53; Dayton, OH; 04/24/2023

**Marianne Katz Kessler** '53; Overland Park, KS; 07/04/2023

**Dorothy Alsup Robertson** '53; Mc Gregor, TX; 03/13/2023

**Lyndal Reed Simon** '53; Cincinnati, OH; 09/01/2023



**Janet Barth Tuttle** '53; Vermilion, OH;  
01/21/2023

**Diane Freeto Harmon** '54; Covington,  
LA; 08/20/2023

**Marilyn Young Leiter** '54;  
Ridgefield, CT; 01/26/2023

**Corinne Gerdes Bradford** '55;  
Anderson, SC; 09/05/2023

**Ila Wanderer Malakhoff** '55;  
Arlington, VA; 01/22/2023

**Elinor Bardes Pippin** '55;  
Madison, GA; 07/08/2023

**Marilyn Parsons Budde** '56; Tyler, TX;  
06/06/2023

**Karen MacLaggan Roe** '56; Haines  
City, FL; 04/12/2023

**Virginia Rufin** '56; Metairie, LA;  
06/28/2023

**Denise Pourroy Ziony** '56; Menlo Park,  
CA; 02/01/2023

**Susan Eggleston Donaghue** '57;  
Prairie Village, KS; 07/27/2023

**Elizabeth Thut Hamilton** '57; Dallas,  
TX; 07/03/2023

**Melanie Heyerdale Maxwell** '57;  
Dallas, TX; 04/08/2023

**Jane Sturgell Antle** '58; Camarillo,  
CA; 06/26/2023

**Kay Klint Jevitz** '58; Granite Bay, CA;  
08/08/2023

**Judy Zerrenner Rowe** '58; Fox River  
Grove, IL; 01/14/2023

**Linda Barry Snyder** '58; Columbus,  
OH; 02/11/2023

**Joyce Bonifield Lucas** '59; West  
Frankfort, IL; 08/30/2023

## **1960s**

**Judith Marrow Dichsen** '60; O Fallon,  
IL; 02/12/2023

**Patricia Gallagher Miller** '60;  
Schaumburg, IL 08/19/2023

**Mildred Swearengen Patterson**  
'60; Lebanon, IL; 05/11/2023

**Dorothy Hanny Swatek** '60; Des  
Moines, IA; 01/13/2023

**Frances Bickelhaupt Hill** '61;  
Albuquerque, NM; 08/31/2023

**Martha Lacy Howe** '62; Waco, TX;  
05/17/2023

**Ann Pearson Jorgenson** '62; Paradise  
Valley, AZ; 03/24/2023

**Elizabeth Moran Mitchell** '62;  
Louisville, KY; 01/05/2023

**Karen Yellen** '62'; Munster, IN;  
05/29/2023

**Jane Johnson Bernhardt** '63; Saint  
Louis, MO; 04/09/2023

**Barbara McLean** '63; Quincy, IL;  
06/22/2023

**Patricia Larson Krueger** '64; Saint  
Cloud, MN; 08/04/2023

**Carolyn Dunn Steele** '64; Niceville,  
FL; 06/01/2023

**Mary Sturtevant Dent** '65; Greenville,  
SC; 08/13/2023

**Marjorie Cook Hutcheson** '68;  
Houston, TX; 06/27/2023

**Candice Feldt** '69; Phoenix, AZ;  
08/04/2023

**Kay Bleakley Kullas** '69; Littleton, CO;  
06/08/2023

## **1970s**

**Penny Hawk** '71; Dayton, OH;  
08/04/2023

**Dawn Parsons Feller** '77; Hinsdale, IL;  
09/16/2023

**Mary Duffy** '78; Pompano Beach, FL;  
09/18/2023

**Crystal Buckles Welch** '78;  
Scottsdale, AZ; 06/15/2023

**Katie O'Shinsky Walker** '79; Hartsburg  
MO; 02/23/2023

## **1980s**

**Cynthia Smith Fallin** '80; Saint Louis,  
MO; 05/02/2023

**Jacque Robertson** '89; Tulsa, OK;  
06/13/2023

## **1990s**

**Diane Ehrhart** '90; Keller, TX;  
08/06/2023

## **While You're Away...**

1. Join **Stephens Connect**
2. Follow our new social media sites especially for Alums: **Facebook** & **Instagram**
3. Shop at **Susie's**
4. Travel with alums: **Stephens Alumni travel opportunities**

## **When You're On Campus...**

1. See a show: **76th Performing Arts Season**
2. Catch a game: **Fall Athletics Schedules**

Save the Date...

**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**

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

**Give. Connect. Recruit.**