

# College Scholars Newsletter

SPRING 2014

## From the Director

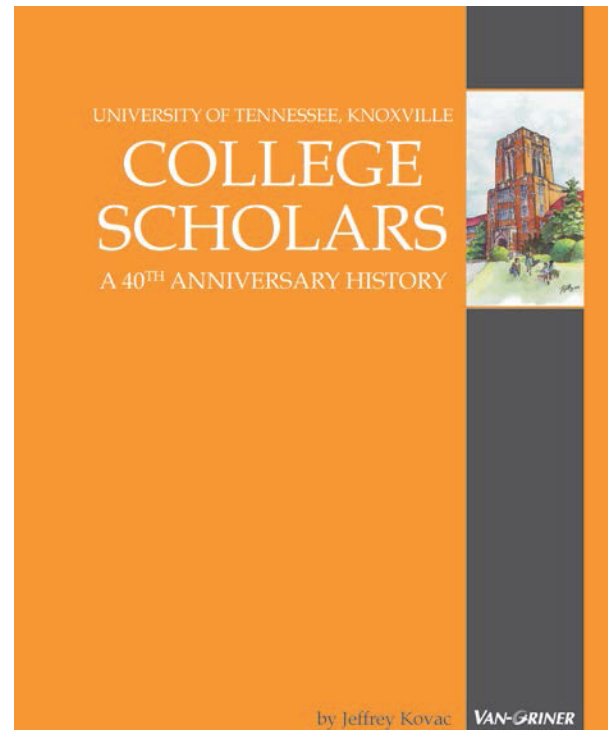
College Scholars is celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary as the original and most distinguished honors program at UT. We have 700 alumni around the country and 35 current scholars pursuing an interesting and eclectic variety of programs. To commemorate this milestone, we have initiated several projects that are described in more detail elsewhere in this newsletter.

One of those projects is a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History. Doing the research for this history has given me a deep appreciation for how remarkable College Scholars is. As one of the current Scholars commented, we offer the best possible gift to students: freedom. As I learn more about our alumni and their subsequent careers, I realize that College Scholars have taken that freedom and used it in amazing ways. As I work with the current scholars to help them realize their own dreams, I see greatness in the making.

In two years as Director of College Scholars I have come to realize that I have the best job at the University of Tennessee because I have regular contact with a creative and dedicated group of students. We have described some of their accomplishments in this newsletter but it is impossible to capture the energy that I experience when we meet for the weekly seminar.

Please keep in touch through our LinkedIn group or by sending updates by e-mail, or even through the postal service.

Jeffrey Kovac  
Professor of Chemistry  
Director of College Scholars  
Department of Chemistry  
1420 Circle Drive  
University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, TN 37996-1600



## 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary History

It seems appropriate to reflect on the history of this remarkable program so Director Jeffrey Kovac has written a 50-page book about the development and accomplishments of College Scholars. The book begins with a narrative history of the program from its inception. The remainder is a series of profiles written by nineteen alumni from over the years who describe their experiences as College Scholars and how those experiences have impacted their lives and careers. In writing this book, Dr. Kovac had the able assistance of two current Scholars, R. J. Vogt and Hanna Lustig. This book was designed and printed by Van-Griner Publishing and is available for \$10 plus shipping from their website: <http://store.van-griner.com/content/university-tennessee-college-scholars-40th-anniversary-history>

**Save the Date**  
**College Scholars Reunion**  
**Saturday, March 1, 2014**  
**Details on page 7**

## 2013 Graduates

Ten College Scholars graduated in the spring and summer of 2013. The breadth of their interests and the quality of their senior projects demonstrate the continuing vigor of the program. Here are some highlights.

**Blair West Kuykendall** was named one of the **2013 Torchbearers** and was a top graduate in the College of Arts and Sciences. A Haslam Scholar and a Baker Scholar, Blair served as Editor-in-chief of the *Daily Beacon* for 2 ½ years. During the summer of 2012 she was a student at the London School of Economics. Blair's senior project conducted under the direction of Dr. Otis Stephens and Dr. Hemant Sharma was an analysis of OECD economic regulation in the quest for ICESCR compliance. This past fall Blair began law school at Georgetown University.

**Ellis Greer's** program in Costume Design for the Theatre culminated in a project in which she designed costumes for Leonard Bernstein's *Candide*. After graduation, Ellis packed her bags and moved to Santa Fe where she was a stitching and wardrobe apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera. This fall she is a costume intern at the Shakespeare Theater Company in Washington, DC. Ellis sent the following description of her summer in Santa Fe.

As a Stitching and Wardrobe Apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera, I got to see how an internationally renowned company produces some of the best opera in the world. I worked in a shop of about seventy

professional costumers, and we created costumes for five large-scale operas: *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *La Donna del Lago*, *La Traviata*, and *Oscar*. I was very fortunate to be able to work as a member of the tailoring team for the first part of the summer, getting an unrivaled view into the world of creating and fitting beautiful menswear. Once the operas opened, the Apprentices worked as the wardrobe crew for all five shows. For *The Grand Duchess of Gerolstein*, I was a dresser in the same dressing room as Kevin Burdette, a College Scholars alum himself, and a native of Knoxville. Mr. Burdette, a bass, sang the role of the power-crazed and scheming General Boum. I am very proud to have contributed to a wonderful season at the Santa Fe Opera, and I am very excited to see where my costume studies will take me next.

Both **Hannah Durick** and **Elliot Bertasi** participated in the Gulu and Study Abroad Program. They spent the summer and fall in Uganda taking courses and doing research for their senior projects which were carried out under the direction of Dr. Tricia Redeker Hepner. Both were featured in the Fall 2012 Newsletter. They focused on different aspects of post war redevelopment in Northern Uganda. Elliot was named the top graduate in College Scholars for 2013. He is currently employed as a Personnel Services

Contractor at US Agency of International Development Bureau for Africa in Washington, D.C.

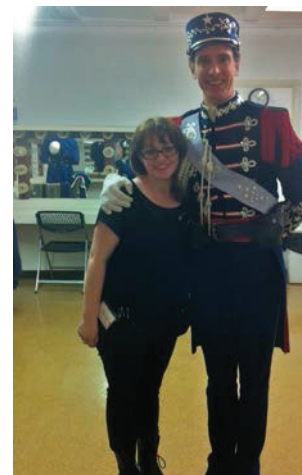
**Matthew Dillon's** senior thesis was entitled "A False START: The Role of Ballistic Missile Defense in US-Russian Relations." Matthew's program also included extensive language study in both French and Russian.

**Ryan Roberts** spent the spring semester of 2013 as an intern in the office of an oral surgeon in Nashville and working on his senior project entitled "The Role of the Pediatrician in the Oral Health of a Child: A Survey of Tennessee Providers" under the direction of Dr. Paul Erwin of the Department of Public Health. This past fall, Ryan began dental school at UT Health Sciences Center in Memphis.

**Cornelia Overton** spent part of her senior year traveling through Anderson and Morgan counties surveying the attitudes of the local population on shale gas drilling, usually called fracking. This project was the culmination of her College Scholars program in environmental cultural anthropology. Over the summer Cornelia played in a band that toured all around the West, mostly in Montana.

In contrast, **Marissa Landis** spent her time in art galleries and talking with artists as she wrote her senior thesis on "Art History, Theory and Criticism."

Many of the current College Scholars are interested in aspects of neuroscience. 2013 graduate, **McCall Sarrett**, did research in second



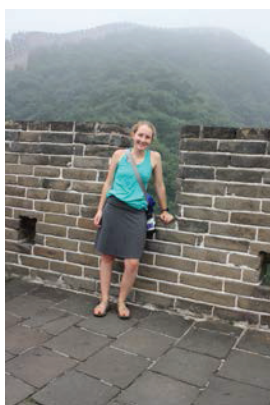
Ellis Greer and Kevin Burdette

language acquisition with Dr. Harriet Bowden of the Department of Modern Foreign Languages and Literature. McCall spent part of her junior year in Brazil improving her command of Portuguese. She is taking a year off from school working for Cruze Dairy Farm. She can be found at the Market Square Farmer's Market in Knoxville on Saturday mornings serving the rich dairy products that the farm produces.

**Paolo Vignali** served as the student assistant for College Scholars ("the management") during the 2012-2103 academic year. His senior thesis was entitled "Pathology of the Blood: A history of chemotherapy and immunotherapy in the treatment of hematological malignancies." Paolo is also taking a year off before going to medical school and working in a lab at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.



*Erin Grimson in Versailles*



*Kenna Rewcastle at the Great Wall and Shawana Davis in South Africa*



## Current College Scholars Travel the World

**Erin Grimson** spent her Spring 2013 semester living and working in the 12th arrondissement of Paris, France. Attending art history and photography classes in the historic Marais district, Erin left France with dozens of rolls of film and a fresh perspective for her senior thesis. Her College Scholars career will culminate in April 2014 with an exhibition consisting of her musings and photographs from France.

After spending six weeks in Shenyang, China, completing soil science research at the Institute of Applied Ecology, **Kenna Rewcastle** brought back much more than just a better understanding of soil respiration and conservation tillage practices.

Shortly after landing at the Shenyang Airport, Rewcastle attended a China-US joint workshop on the Biogeochemistry of Carbon and Nitrogen, at which UT College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources professors shared the conference's program with many Chinese scientists from the Chinese Academy of Sciences and Shenyang Agricultural University. The underlying theme for the conference was always clear: heightened collaboration between American and Chinese scientists will produce benefits in the form of a scientific relationship between two cultures that, together, can tackle global problems and research questions that face us all. This same motif of collaboration and cultural immersion became interwoven in Rewcastle's Chinese experience.

While spending late nights in the Institute's laboratory monitoring soil respiration curves with several graduate student collaborators, Kenna was struck not by cultural differences, but by how overwhelmingly similar her life, values, and aspirations were to that of her Chinese mentors. Qin Qin and Qiufeng Xu, both graduate students at the Institute of Applied Ecology, taught Rewcastle various techniques used in soil science research, but also gave Kenna insight into how their Chinese culture and education informed their research. "The Chinese graduate students welcomed me into their labs, their culture, and their lives. The patience and generosity that I was shown will forever stand as a model for me as I pursue opportunities for intercultural collaboration in the future," said Rewcastle.

Rewcastle's six weeks in China culminated with a formal

presentation of her research and a short lecture on her life as an undergraduate in the US, which was given to the graduate students involved in similar research projects at the Institute of Applied Ecology.

In late summer 2013, **Shawana Davis** studied abroad in Cape Town, South Africa under the leadership of Dr. Amadou Sall of the Africana Studies Department. In this five week course, International Civic Engagement: Social Justice, Poverty and HIV, Shawana studied post-apartheid South Africa. The students visited three poverty-stricken townships: Langa (the oldest township in Cape Town), Guguletu, and Khayelitsha. During four days in Langa they built a vegetable garden and a bookshelf for Nomonde Pre-School headed by Mama Lumka. Shawana enjoyed spending time with the children. Besides visiting townships, the students visited the Cape of Good Hope, Lion's Head Mountain, Slave Lodge Museum (where slaves were kept when they arrived in Cape Town), and the District Six Museum, which is housed in the church that was the last remaining building after District Six of Cape Town was demolished and inhabitants were forcibly removed in the 1970's during the apartheid regime. They also visited Robben Island, where Nelson Mandela spent 18 of his 27 years in jail, and the place where Mandela gave his first public speech in 1990 after being released, Cape Town's City Hall.

During the summer of 2013 **Brianna Rader** participated in Yale University's Bioethics Summer Institute which was an amazing opportunity. The program was international and for undergraduates, graduates, and professionals, so the learning community was extremely diverse. The participants wrestled with questions of healthcare allocation, public health ethics, and care for the dying. They visited the first hospice in America, Monsanto's Research facility, and the Hastings Center. Brianna's summer project was on America's flawed pre-med education system. She was able to interview deans of different medical schools and work in a bioethics analysis. New Haven had character, but it helped that New York City was a short train ride away. She had a wonderful summer with many new international friends.





2013 Graduates at the Spring Reception. Left to Right: McCall Sarrett, Cornelia Overton, Ellis Greer, Blair Kuykendall, Hannah Durick, Paolo Vignali, Ryan Roberts, Elliot Bertasi, Director Jeffrey Kovac, Marissa Landis. Not pictured: Matthew Dillon.

## College Scholars on Social Media

College Scholars is establishing a presence on social media. We now have a Facebook page, “University of Tennessee College Scholars Program,” where we post news and photos about the program. You can “like” us and keep informed. We have also established a members-only group on LinkedIn (LinkedIn.com). All alumni for whom we had an e-mail address have been invited to join. If you have not yet joined, we encourage you to do so. As of this writing, 117 alumni and current students are part of this group and the discussions are lively. The group was established to allow alumni to connect with each other and to allow them to connect with current students and, as

appropriate, serve as mentors. If you have not received an invitation, please send an e-mail message to [scholars@utk.edu](mailto:scholars@utk.edu) and you will receive one. If you are not part of LinkedIn, it is easy to join.

To give you a taste of what you can learn by joining the LinkedIn group, here are a few selected alumni notes posted there.

**Fisher Neal** (2006) received the MFA from Yale School of Drama and is a co-founder of the Old Sound Room in New York City. The Old Sound Room “makes live experiential performance incorporating music, movement, and the

dynamic adaptation of classical & modern texts.”

**Nathan Oesch** (2000) is in the final year of doctoral program in experimental psychology at Oxford where he is continuing research in language evolution.

For the past several years **Glenn Morgan** (1976) has been Post Producer (overseeing the editors) on Project Runway, which has received several Emmy nominations during its twelve years on the air.

**Jay Raman** (1997) has been a Foreign Service since 2002. He has been posted abroad in the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Guatemala, and Ecuador, primarily working as a spokesman and on cultural programs. He has recently returned to the Washington,

DC area to study Khmer in preparation for his next assignment in Cambodia.

After earning the B.A. in College Scholars in 1997, **Eugene Burns** stayed on at UT and received a Ph.D. in microbiology. He is currently Associate Professor of Biology at Shawnee State University in Portsmouth, OH.

**Paige Graham** (1999) earned the Ph.D. in Industrial and Organizational Psychology and is currently President of Graham Consulting Group and on the faculty of the University of the Rockies in Colorado Springs, CO.

## Nobel Laureate Visits College Scholars

On April 19 and 20, 2013, Roald Hoffmann, Frank H. T. Rhodes Professor of Humane Letters and Professor of Chemistry, emeritus, at Cornell University and winner of the 1981 Nobel Prize in Chemistry visited the College Scholars program. On Friday evening there was a dinner reception at the director's home where many of the scholars were able to talk informally with Dr. Hoffmann. During the evening, he read and discussed some of his poems.

On Saturday afternoon, there was a staged reading of Dr. Hoffmann's latest play, "Something that Belongs to You," in the Carousel Theatre. The staged reading was directed by College Scholars alumnus, Dennis E. Perkins ('89) and featured several of Knoxville's best actors. The semi-autobiographical play is a story of survival and memory, and of the choices, always there, that human beings must make between good and evil in terrible times. As a small child, Dr. Hoffmann and his mother were hidden in an attic for more than a year to save them from the Holocaust.

Dr. Hoffmann's visit was sponsored by the College Scholars Program and the East Tennessee Section of the American Chemical Society. It was the first event in what we hope to make an annual series of visits by distinguished interdisciplinary scholars.



*Roald Hoffmann reading his poetry to a group of College Scholars*

### Alumni Promise Awards

Two College Scholars received Alumni Promise Awards in 2013: **Kevin Burdette** ('97) and **Michael Wahid Hanna** ('95). This award recognizes alumni no older than 40 who have demonstrated distinctive achievement in a career, civic involvement, or both. Kevin Burdette, a graduate of the Julliard School and Columbia Law School, is a full-time opera singer who has performed with major opera companies and symphony orchestras and received enthusiastic reviews for his mellifluous voice and strong dramatic characterizations. Michael Wahid Hanna, a graduate of New York University School of Law, is a senior fellow of the Century Foundation where he works on issues of international security, international law, and US foreign policy in the broader Middle East and South Asia.



*Kevin Burdette*



*Michael Wahid Hanna*

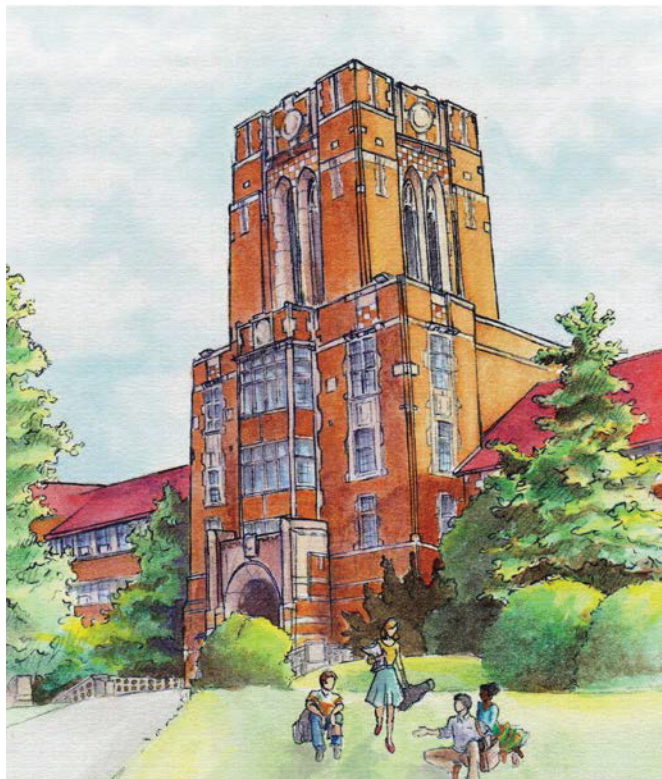
**Jacob Clark** is in the middle of a research project determining the impact of federal health reform in nonprofit primary care providers. He is doing this through two different means. He is currently forecasting the economic environment to determine demand and utilization of different health care services post-reform. He is also performing a case study on a nonprofit primary care provider in East Tennessee looking at their decisions through the implementation of reform. He plans to use those two things and a survey of many similar clinics in Tennessee to determine a broader effect federal health reform will have on mission-driven healthcare organizations.

Jacob has created and founded a new branch of the Student Government Association called the SGA Ambassadors. SGA Ambassadors will be the SGA's official service organization, focusing on campus service projects. By the end of the year, SGA Ambassadors should be playing a significant role in aiding other student organizations, university functions, and individual students, as it will be meeting the needs of students at their request and designing and carrying out its own service projects.

Jacob and fellow College Scholar Brianna Rader are heading a project working with UTK administrators on designing and implementing a program for incoming students to significantly lower the incidences of sexual assault on campus and the surrounding student communities. This project is the beginning of a larger effort to dramatically reduce sexual assault that will develop over the year. They would like to extend their efforts beyond the university campus.



## THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE COLLEGE SCHOLARS



## College Scholars 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Poster

2011 alumna Kelsey Roy has designed a 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Poster for College Scholars. This beautiful 11" X 17" poster is suitable for framing. We will send a copy to anyone who donates a minimum of \$100 to the College Scholars Excellence Fund. Kelsey's College Scholars program was entitled "Children's Book Narrative and Illustration." Since graduation she has done the illustrations for three delightful children's books: *Yahootie and the Shoe Shenanigans*, *The Banana Police*, and *I Really Love You, Ava*. During the summer of 2013, Kelsey attended the Columbia Publishing Course at Columbia University.

## Wade Guyton receives Accomplished Alumni Award

1995 College Scholars alumnus Wade Guyton received an Accomplished Alumni Award in December 2102. Originally from Lake City, TN, Guyton currently lives and works as an artist in New York City. He is the first UT alumnus to have his art featured in the prestigious Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City.

The exhibition entitled Wade Guyton: OS was on display between October 4, 2012 and January 13, 2013. It explored our changing relationships to images and artworks through the use of common digital technologies. The exhibit received a favorable review

in the *New York Times* which commented that "interesting art is being made here and now."





*Emma Hicks at Auschwitz, April 2013*

## Holocaust and Genocide Studies – Emma Hicks

During the spring of 2013 College Scholar Emma Hicks studied abroad in Copenhagen, Denmark through the Danish Institute for Study Abroad (DIS) in pursuit of her major in Holocaust and Genocide Studies. Emma was able to take many of DIS's unique classes concerning the history of Jewish life in Europe, the history of the Holocaust, and the widespread impact that such history has made on the memories and cultural identities of different European nations post-WWII. Another unique aspect of the DIS program in which Emma was able to participate were the Study Tours which allowed students to approach their area of study in a hands-on and experiential manner, combining theory with real life experience and cultural perspective. This active learning approach facilitated an education on the Holocaust from the perspective of current residents from cities like Berlin where layers of victimization and scarring are deeply embedded in the culture. A visit to Auschwitz in April was perhaps the most defining moment of the semester and inspired Emma to use the complexity of memory in places such as this infamous concentration camp as the basis for her senior thesis project to be completed next spring. The project will be a narrative historical exhibit containing pictures and memories from her trip along with research which looks at the controversy of Holocaust recollection and its importance in our modern world.



*Kelsey Ray (on right) in Russia, Summer 2013*

For six weeks last summer **Kelsey Ray** participated in a budding non-profit program called Crossroads Eurasia, interning as an English teacher at E-Studio School in Ryazan, Russia. Away from the cosmopolitan Moscow, she immersed myself in the Russian language and culture, and visited the local villages and museums, while developing lesson plans and teaching students from ages 7 to 50. She lived with a host family and worked with other students from the USA in teaching and exploring the small city. Among the many benefits of this internship, she will be able to apply what she learned to her current studies in comparative literature and linguistics. Kelsey will spend the spring semester in Marburg, Germany.

## College Scholars Reunion

To celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of College Scholars we are planning a reunion on Saturday, March 1, 2014, in Knoxville. Current plans include an afternoon program where alumni and current Scholars will reflect on the program and its impact on their lives. There will be a gala dinner on Saturday evening with a keynote address by Ellen Godbey Carson, one of the first College Scholars. Further details and costs will be forthcoming, but will be announced first on our Facebook page and LinkedIn group, one more reason to follow us on social media.

**Big Orange. Big Ideas.**

**College Scholars**

Department of Chemistry  
1420 Circle Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37996-1600

[scholars.utk.edu](http://scholars.utk.edu)

The University of Tennessee is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA institution in the provision of its education and employment programs and services. All qualified applicants will receive equal consideration for employment without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, physical or mental disability, or covered veteran status. A project of the College Scholars Program in the UT College of Arts and Sciences. PAN E01-1002-012-001-14.

## New Scholarship Endowments

College Scholars has several scholarship endowments that help support our talented students but with the increasing cost of college, additional funds are always welcome. Therefore, we are grateful to two alumni who have pledged new scholarship endowments in the past year. The two new scholarships are:

The Andrew Hoover Endowed Scholarship, pledged by Andrew Hoover (1984), an attorney in Pulaski, TN.

The Jay and Cindy St. Clair Endowed Scholarship, pledged by Jay St. Clair (1982), an attorney in Birmingham, AL.

In addition, we are pleased to report that both the Laura Bowe Memorial Scholarship and the Joseph B. Kennedy Memorial Fund are fully endowed and are being used to further the work of College Scholars.

For more information on how to establish an endowment for College Scholars, please contact Michelle Geller, Director of Development – UTK College of Arts and Sciences at (865) 974-3816 or by e-mail at [mgeller@utfi.org](mailto:mgeller@utfi.org)

## Ensuring the Future

The College Scholars Program acknowledges the generous financial support of our alumni and friends. Your contributions, no matter what size, play a crucial role in supporting the academic achievement and research of these remarkable students. We hope that you will remember us when deciding to make a gift. Gifts can be made to one of our Scholarship Endowments or to the College Scholars Excellence Fund which provides support for student senior projects or other academic activities. For mailed donations, please send a check payable to the UT Foundation to the address below with College Scholars written in the memo line. For online donations, visit [www.artsci.utk.edu/giving](http://www.artsci.utk.edu/giving) and click the “click here to give” button. On the screen that appears, edit the selected designation. Under “College Fund for Arts and Sciences” there is a drop down menu that includes College Scholars. Please send all checks to:  
UTK College of Arts and Sciences  
137 Alumni Memorial Building  
1408 Middle Drive  
Knoxville, TN 37996-1331