Deerfield Management commits up to $65M for new drug research company at Carolina

PINNACLE HILL

Terry Magnuson, vice chancellor for research, Dhiren Thakker of the Eshelman School of Pharmacy and Blossom Damania of the School of Medicine are the inaugural University members of the joint committee that will direct Pinnacle Hill.

Carolina and Deerfield Management have entered into a partnership to create Pinnacle Hill LLC, a company seeking to discover new medicines to address today’s significant unmet medical needs. Deerfield has committed $65 million of targeted funding and to provide drug development expertise in support of promising new drug research across a wide range of therapeutic areas.

The partnership will be launched formally at an Oct. 30 event on campus.

“This is a very exciting new partnership between UNC-Chapel Hill and Deerfield Management. In creating a new company, Pinnacle Hill, we are bringing together the best of academia and industry to accelerate innovative drug research,” said Chancellor Carol L. Folt. “By investing in our faculty’s early stage research, this partnership advances our commitment to improving the health and well-being of people around the world.”

Research and development conducted at Pinnacle Hill will be supported by funding, expert drug development guidance, experienced project management oversight and business strategy. These efforts will serve to improve and accelerate the product development process and allow founding scientists to concentrate on their research.

Pinnacle Hill will focus on drug research projects that are approved and directed by a joint steering committee comprised of members from Carolina and Deerfield leadership teams. Each selected project has the potential to receive funding to support investigational new drug enabling studies. The inaugural University members of the joint committee will be:

- Terry Magnuson, vice chancellor for research and the Sarah Graham Kenan professor of genetics,

At University Day, Folt issues apology, calls for purposeful action moving forward

At the celebration of Carolina’s 225th birthday, Chancellor Carol L. Folt acknowledged the University’s complicated past as the nation’s first public university and called for purposeful action as it moves forward.

In her welcome remarks, Folt apologized for the University’s participation in the practice of slavery. The University was built and sustained by slaves in its earliest days, and Folt is the first Carolina Chancellor to issue an apology.

“As chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, I offer our University’s deepest apology for the profound injustices of slavery, our full acknowledgment of the strength of enslaved peoples in the face of their suffering, and our respect and indebtedness to them. I reaffirm our University’s commitment to facing squarely and working to right the wrongs of history, so they are never again inflicted,” Folt said.

Folt said that Carolina is the only public university that has experienced U.S. history from the start.

“Our unique legacy demands that we continue to reconcile our past with our present and future and be the diverse and just community that is fitting for America’s first public university,” Folt said. “Our apology must lead to purposeful action and it has to build upon the great efforts and sacrifices of so many Carolina and Deerfield Management have entered into a partnership to create Pinnacle Hill LLC, a company seeking to discover new medicines to address today’s significant unmet medical needs. Deerfield has committed $65 million of targeted funding and to provide drug development expertise in support of promising new drug research across a wide range of therapeutic areas.

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The editor reserves the right to decide what information will be published in the Gazette and to edit submissions for consistency with Gazette style, tone and content.

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Crisp’s years of service to Carolina have been ‘a labor of love’

It was time.
That is the one thing Winston Crisp knows for sure about his decision to step down as vice chancellor for student affairs.

“I am just in a stage of life thinking about what is next,” he said. A 1989 graduate of Johnson C. Smith University and a 1992 graduate of Carolina’s School of Law, Crisp became the law school’s first assistant dean for student affairs. He was in that position in 1995 when a third-year law student named Wendell Williamson shot and killed two people and wounded two others in downtown Chapel Hill.

A CALMING PRESENCE
That incident, Crisp said, “is probably responsible for the direction of my career in terms of becoming someone who spent a lot of time in crisis management.”

He has taught crisis management for the past 15 years and found himself in the midst of it time and again throughout his career.

In summer of 2007, while Crisp was associate dean for student services at Carolina, colleagues at Virginia Tech asked him to serve as a volunteer on loan on their campus after the shooting tragedy there. Crisp provided that same calm and steadying presence eight years later as vice chancellor of student affairs in the aftermath of shooting deaths of three young Muslim students in Chapel Hill in February 2015.

“What crisis does is speed us up,” Crisp said. “We get in a tizzy and we make decisions at a speed and in conditions that we normally wouldn’t be making. I found out that I am one of those people, when everybody else is speeding up, I slow down.”

LOOKING AHEAD
The need to slow down—and reduce stress—was a factor in his decision to retire, along with a desire to devote more time with his family and to think about how he wants to spend the final years of his career. Crisp has served as vice chancellor of student affairs since 2010.

This place will always be a part of my very soul. No matter where I am or what I am doing, I am and will always be a Tar Heel.

WINSTON CRISP

“There is no question that a factor in all of this has been my health,” Crisp said. “I got sick last year, and it took me the better part of this year to get healthy again and I am. I only know how to do this job full throttle, and I am finally at a stage in life where it is time to do something else that doesn’t tax me quite as hard.”

This past year, for instance, he led efforts to form a mental health task force to assess mental health care needs for students. And as the students intensified their push for the removal of the Confederate Monument from McCorkle Place, Crisp continued his leadership role as co-chair on the Chancellor’s Task Force on UNC-Chapel History to develop a plan to add signs, markers and online content about McCorkle Place to give people a deeper and fuller understanding of Carolina’s institutional history.

To students, he was affectionally known as “Vice Crispy.” And whether talking on stage or sitting across from a student in his office, Crisp had the capacity to connect with students to dispense advice both inspirational and instructive. Whatever the next thing turns out to be, Crisp said, he knows it will include more time teaching and mentoring young people.

“I’ve spent the last 15 years essentially being a CEO of a company and it’s been great. I loved every minute of it. But now I want to go back to spending most of my time doing what gives me the most joy, which is working with young people more directly and trying to teach and mentor.”

UNBREAKABLE BONDS
Crisp came to Carolina to attend law school when he was 21 and, with the exception of a summer at Virginia Tech, he has been here ever since. He will retire from the University at the end of October.

“Carolina has been my home my entire adult life and I am leaving home,” Crisp said. “I will take with me the positive memories of the people whose lives I have touched and whose lives have touched mine. It has just been overwhelming. This place will always be a part of my very soul. No matter where I am or what I am doing, I am and will always be a Tar Heel.”

– Gary Moss, University Gazette
The Thomas Jefferson Award was established in 1961 by the Robert Earll McConnell Foundation. It is presented annually to “that member of the academic community who through personal influence and performance of duty in teaching, writing, and scholarship has best exemplified the ideals and objectives of Thomas Jefferson.”

‘Show up’ is motto for Eble, a true citizen of University

Connie Eble knows why she was chosen for the 2018 Jefferson Award.

“Longevity and institutional memory,” Eble said mischievously. Then, she matter-of-factly said, “I show up.”

A professor in the English and comparative literature department, Eble joined Carolina’s faculty in 1971. She is in her last semester of teaching and will retire fully in January 2019. “I’m thrilled to be named with Sue Estroff and join other award winners like Elizabeth Gibson, Alice Ammerman, Joy Kasson and George Lensing,” Eble said. She added that, because Thomas Jefferson’s reputation has suffered, she instead focuses on his contributions to public education such as founding the University of Virginia.

Eble came to Carolina as a graduate student in 1964 and earned a master’s degree in linguistics. She began work on her doctorate here then worked as an instructor at University of New Orleans and University of Kentucky before finishing her dissertation in 1970. She returned to Carolina as an assistant professor.

She became the first woman to attain tenure in the English Department and moved into a position as the department’s linguist, specializing in the history, structure and current use of the English language.

‘TRUE CITIZEN’

But her service to Carolina constitutes exceedingly more.

A nominator described Eble as “a true citizen of the University,” who recognizes the achievements of others, encourages participation in faculty governance and public outreach and is collaborative and supportive.

That assessment is fair, Eble said. “I think I am the consummate team player. I’m not the leader; I’m a follower. And I’ll work with people. I’ve worked with many different committees over the years, and I’ve enjoyed service so much and getting to know people from other parts of the University.” Those people included faculty, whom Eble called “absolute giants of the University,” with a willingness to make Carolina an excellent public university accessible to everyone.

Her work on almost 40 University and 20 departmental committees includes the founding of the Arts and Sciences Foundation, the creation of the academic support program for student-athletes and recommendations on honorary degree recipients. She also served as editor of American Speech for 10 years and as president of four professional associations.

In 2016, Eble won the Mary Turner Lane Award, which recognizes a woman who has made an outstanding contribution to the lives of women at Carolina.

'I SHOW UP'

“I go where I’m invited. If someone asks me to come to a meeting and I say, ‘yes,’ I go. I’m a team player and I’m dependable. I show up,” she said.

Her service includes years as a mainstay of teaching. Her favorite courses include Old English, which she taught for more than 10 years. “In terms of scholarship, it was perhaps the most demanding. It was a graduate course, pretty obscure and something I had written my dissertation on.” For undergraduates, she’s enjoyed teaching composition and is finishing her time with two more favorites, history of the English language (“I love that course!”) and grammar.

Teaching undergraduates led to four decades of collecting and analyzing college-student slang. During a class-time exercise, students fill out index cards with a slang word or phrase, a definition and an example of its use. Alphabetized cards from 1974 on fill shoeboxes with handwritten labels such as “Sketchy to Stank” or “Loserdom to Noob” stacked in her office. The boxes have some space for the last collection in October 2018. Her 1996 book, Slang and Sociability: In-Group Language Among College Students, is the foundational work on college slang.

As retirement nears, Eble’s to-do list includes reading, learning to play the piano, volunteering and traveling. She will keep her hand in research, having been dubbed the “Godmother of New Orleans linguistics” and is helping young scholars in that field. She will also remain active in her faith, which she said, as a practicing Catholic, will sustain her. “I still love grace, and it is important that I go to church and pray.”

CURIOUS, SOCIALE, DEPENDABLE

Curious, sociable and able to work with, educate and entertain others, Eble’s traits may stem from her time being reared in New Orleans by parents with different gifts. Her mother, who died young from cancer, was an elementary school teacher with a love for singing and performing. Her father worked in a steel factory for more than 30 years. “He was a wonderful storyteller, who somehow or another at dinner could make his job sound like the most interesting place in the world,” Eble said. “He always came home with stories and was always around friends doing something.”

Then, there’s her dependability, which Eble attributes to being the oldest of four siblings and the oldest of 23 grandchildren.

“There’s something true about the oldest taking responsibility or being dependable.”

Maybe that’s why Eble chose to “show up.” — Scott Jared, University Gazette

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Maybe that’s why Eble chose to “show up.” — Scott Jared, University Gazette
Estroff relishes teaching, collaboration and community

Sue Estroff comes across as a walking, talking version of the Social Medicine Reader, the cross-disciplinary textbook that she helped create for medical students.

Like a book, each chapter of Estroff’s career reveals her expertise in mental illness and teaching, and a love of how the humanities and arts can help medical students. Add in Estroff’s leadership, collaboration and outspokenness, and you can see why she recently received a Thomas Jefferson Award in recognition of her contributions to the University.

School of Medicine faculty who nominated her for the award wrote that Estroff’s career represents “our highest aspiration as a faculty.”

The professor of social medicine and adjunct professor with appointments in anthropology and psychiatry joined Carolina’s faculty in 1982. Estroff said that she could have remained in her corner of campus and concentrated on medical and psychiatric anthropology, community and social psychiatry, disability studies, stigma and chronic conditions, medical anthropology and qualitative research.

Instead, she searched for ways to learn about the larger campus and represent the School of Medicine on important issues. Estroff began joining committees and soon saw faculty governance as the perfect way to cross departmental lines. She was elected to Faculty Council (1995–99) then served on the council’s executive committee and was chair of the faculty (2000–03).

CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY

Estroff considered Jefferson’s writings and said that, as an anthropologist, she concentrates on how “things he talked about are nested in the context of community, so I’ve been thinking a lot about Carolina as community and how we create and sustain ourselves throughout various periods.”

Her work in faculty governance covered unique periods in Carolina’s history. One was Michael Hooker’s tenure as his administration engaged with faculty, which resulted in a renewed focus on intellectual climate and academic planning. After Hooker’s death, James Moeser became chancellor. “It was good to work with James. He was forthright, and he listened. That period was full of good times and things were popping, then there were some bad times.” Both kinds left her with memories of what make Carolina special.

QUINTESSENTIAL MOMENTS

One of those times was the day after 9/11. As thousands mournfully gathered on Polk Place, Estroff was among the speakers and read the poem “How to Number Our Days” by Rabbi Mordecai Menahem Kaplan. “At the end, James [Moeser] asked that everyone leave in silence. No one said a word. Not one sound. I can see it just as vividly now as then — gut-wrenching and comforting.”

The next summer, Estroff led a discussion with new students on Carolina’s summer reading book Approaching the Qur’an. “Here I am a nice Jewish girl from the south teaching the Qur’an to people who are Baptist and evangelical and who probably don’t know much about my people or the people in this book. That’s the quintessence of what a University is about,” she said with a chuckle. “It was a real stretch, but that’s what I love about this place. It’s stretched me in so many ways.”

That stretching has led to accolades and accomplishments. She won a Distinguished Teaching Award in 2104 for Post–Baccalaureate Teaching, which she said “was a heart-fulfilling award, even though I’m not a big awards person.” Other awards include selection to the Order of the Golden Fleece (2005), the Mary Turner Lane Award from the Association of Women Faculty and Professionals at UNC (2003) and the Margaret Mead award (1984). She’s also written or contributed to six books about serious mental illness.

THE BEST ANTIDEPRESSANT

Along the way, a constant has been medical students. “They are the best antidepressant that you can’t get at a drugstore. They are exceptional young people with tough minds and huge hearts,” Estroff said.

Estroff wants her students to think through social justice issues, end-of-life decisions, difference and disability, gender identity and practices such as prenatal screening. “I want them to think about the doctor they are constructing now, to think about those things before they are doing the tasks or worrying about what the attending physician will say, to get that fulcrum, that scaffolding to test it. There’s no right answer, but it must be your answer.”

She shares a bond with students, hinted at in an exchange as one passes by Estroff’s office. In answer to the student’s greeting, Estroff quips, “Up to no good,” then adds conspiratorially, “and I hope you’re doing the same.”

Estroff is concerned that her students are entering a status-quo system in which they will have 15 minutes per patient. “They’re not 15-minute people. I tell them to be warriors and to resist.”

TENDENCY TO RESIST

Her tendency to resist – she uses the word “intractable” – Estroff credits to her parents, Melvin and Elsie. “My father in particular, who should have been a rabbi, but was in retail. I grew up in a small town, Lakeland, Florida, where the country club was restricted. My father was the token OK Jewish guy, but we were always ‘other.’”

Estroff said her father, despite doing what he did to fit into the business community, was defiant in ways that she noticed. “It was a big deal when people of color came to our house. Social justice and speaking out were always important. I’ll give them credit,” she said. “When I was a kid, I was a good swimmer but wasn’t allowed on the country club team. So, when we moved to our second house, they built a swimming pool out of sheer defiance.”

Acceptance and respect are part of why Estroff has stayed in social medicine, where nobody’s discipline is sacred, where they rely on each other’s expertise. “This has been the right place for me to be. It’s been an extraordinary privilege and experience to work with my colleagues. I’ve seen only their best 99.9 percent of the time.”

And from her MacNider Hall office, Estroff revels in the collaborative approach to education, a perfect example of which is the Social Medicine Reader. The Reader’s editions include essays on challenging issues for physicians, patients and caregivers, along with thought-provoking poetry. She pulls a copy from a shelf, flips to James Dickey’s “Under Buzzards” and reads aloud. She lets the words sink in and says, “He’s diabetic and can’t stand it, so all he wants to do is drink a cold beer on a hot summer day. This is so powerful for the students to read.”

Satisfied, she closes the book. “Obviously, I love what I do.”

– Scott Jared, University Gazette
Faculty Council supports permanent removal of the Confederate Monument from campus

In its first meeting of the academic year, Faculty Council unanimously approved a resolution to permanently remove the Confederate Monument and its pedestal from campus.

The resolution, On Supporting a Statement from UNC Black Faculty on the Permanent Removal of Silent Sam from Campus, combined two similar proposed resolutions about the controversial statue, which was toppled from its pedestal by protesters Aug. 20.

The Oct. 12 meeting began with the presentation of the Thomas Jefferson Awards and the Hettleman Prizes that had been postponed because Hurricane Florence forced the cancellation of the faculty’s September meeting. (Read profiles of the two Jefferson Award winners on pages 4 and 5 and of the four Hettleman Prize recipients on page 11.)

In her remarks, Chancellor Carol L. Folt referred to that morning’s University Day ceremony, and the apology she issued at it for the University’s role in slavery.

“I understand that the apology doesn’t mean anything without action. And while we’ve had many actions, we still have many actions to come,” she said, referring to the Nov. 15 deadline from the UNC Board of Governors for the University to submit a plan for the disposition and preservation of the Confederate Monument. Folt then read to the council the text of her apology. (See story on page 1.)

“So now it’s up to us. We have to make good on it. We have to hold us accountable,” she said.

The only business on the Faculty Council agenda dealt with the Confederate Monument resolutions.

Political science professor Frank Baumgartner presented a resolution calling for the permanent removal of the statue, in support of a Sept. 6 statement by 54 black faculty (later supported by more than 400 other faculty members) on the grounds that Silent Sam creates a “racially hostile work environment.”

“When I walk past that statue, it bothers me in my brain. It doesn’t bother me in my gut. It doesn’t bother me in my heart. It doesn’t scare me,” said Baumgartner, who is white. But he related the story of a black woman colleague who said she was traumatized by “that stupid story about Julian Carr and that black woman.”

The story is from a speech given by Carr at the 1913 dedication of the Confederate Monument in which he boasted that he had “horse-whipped a Negro wench until her skirts hung in shreds.” The speech and the fact that the statue was part of a wave of Confederate monuments erected in public spaces at the height of the Jim Crow era have been cited many times by those in opposition to the monument as proof that Silent Sam is as much a tribute to white supremacy as it is to the Confederate dead.

In their statement, the black faculty pointed out that “the memorial remains consistent in its meaning to what its historical meaning was; it’s the University that’s changed,” Baumgartner said. “Thank goodness the University has changed.”

Earlier in the meeting, council members heard from a graduate student who said she has received numerous threats from neo-Nazis and white supremacists since she protested at the monument.

“When a council member requested to hear the thoughts of black faculty members, two women responded.

“I personally would not consider it acceptable for [the statue] to remain on this campus in any form,” said Dr. Adaora Adimora, professor of epidemiology. “In my view, it represents not only white supremacy but also past treasonous activity against the United States.”

Dr. Yolanda Scarlett, assistant professor of medicine, prefaced her remarks by saying that she came from “mixed heritage,” with ancestors on both sides of the Civil War. “That was a nasty time in history. It happened. We can’t change it. We should learn from it and move forward,” she said. “But I do not think we can move forward with the base or the statue anywhere on our campus.”

– Susan Hudson, University Gazette
When English professor and writer Bland Simpson was just a little boy, he accompanied his grandfather Julius Andrews Page Sr. on long strolls across Polk Place on the Carolina campus. They would walk from building to building where his Grand-daddy Page would discuss such arcane things as mortar joints in intricate detail.

He was too young to understand what a university was, Simpson said, and his grandfather’s familiarity with all the buildings they visited led Simpson to believe he owned them. Simpson later learned that his grandfather knew so much about buildings because he was the superintendent of construction for the firm that built many of them.

One of Page’s first projects in 1924–25 was to transform Smith Hall, which was once a ballroom, a library and the building where in the spring of 1865 Union cavalry stabled its horses, into Playmakers Theatre. Page went on to build Kenan Stadium, the Bell Tower, the new Memorial Hall and Wilson Library, which his grandfather considered the heart and soul of the campus because it exemplifies knowledge and learning.

Simpson was a boy when his grandfather showed him the invisible patch in one of the six Corinthian columns on the east corner of Wilson. The patch covers the five-inch chip gouged from the column section as it was rolled into place from a railroad track.

When his grandfather saw that chip, he directed a team of Italian stone masons to fix it, said Simpson, the Kenan Distinguished Professor of English who began teaching creative writing at his alma mater in 1982.

All these years later, Simpson said, it is still a magical experience to walk by Wilson Library and other campus buildings that he first visited with his grandfather years ago. And on University Day, Simpson forged a new connection between his grandfather’s work and his own when he received the 2018 Edward Kidder Graham Faculty Service Award.

His grandfather also helped build Memorial Chapel, which opened in 1931 to honor Edward Kidder Graham, the progressive young University president who died in the influenza epidemic of 1918. The award recognizes Graham’s call to public service and his vision of the campus being “coterminous” with the borders of the state.

Simpson said it was a great honor to win an award named for one of his favorite University leaders.

“I am very glad that Edward Kidder Graham focused the phrase ‘service to the state’ so clearly,” Simpson said, “to remind us even today that is why we are here. It’s always there in your heart.”

**A WRITER’S EYE, A MUSICIAN’S EAR**

Over the past four decades, Simpson’s influence—as an English teacher, a writer, a songwriter and a “honky-tonk piano player” with the Red Clay Ramblers—has spread many times over throughout the state. But the wellspring of inspiration for much his work has been and will always be the coastal plains.

Simpson grew up in Elizabeth City and spent much time as a boy around Albemarle Sound before his family moved to Chapel Hill. Starting with _The Great Dismal, A Carolinian’s Swamp Memoir_ (UNC Press, 1990) he began writing what would become a collection of books that together chronicled the history, culture, geography and mysteries of the coastal region with an encyclopedic depth.

Historian Jack Temple said of his work, “Simpson has read his anthropology, geology, zoology and botany well, and cleverly concealed it.”

He also brings to his work a writer’s eye for uncovering a good story and a musician’s ear for telling it. Lucinda H. MacKethan, professor emerita of English at N.C. State, said, “Bland’s storytelling voice springs out of his writings as well as his songs—you hear his words on the page more than you read them.”

Many of his books, from _Into the Sound Country, A Carolinian’s Coastal Plain_ (UNC Press, 1997) to _Little Rivers & Waterway Tales, A Carolinian’s Eastern Streams_ (UNC Press, 2015), feature the photography of his wife, Ann, who has said of her lifelong collaborator, “He always has a way of telling stories that connect people to things or places or ideas.”

**‘LUCKY IN EVERY DIRECTION’**

Yet, Simpson readily acknowledges, he did not start out with a plan to write any of those books. “All of it was just a lucky accident. It was luck,” he said.

He created much of that luck, he will tell you, simply by following the advice of people who had better sense than he did about what he should do at critical points of his career.

“I don’t really know anyone luckier than I am and I count every one of those blessings all the time.”

**BLAND SIMPSON**

It began with the Ed Freeman, record producer for Don McClean’s _American Pie_ who told him to leave New York City and go home to write North Carolina songs for a record.

“It was some of the best advice I’ve ever gotten in my life,” Simpson said, and he took it, and ended up writing a book about music instead. That book, _Heart of the Country: A Novel of Southern Music_, led to a teaching offer from Max Steele, director of the creative writing program in Carolina’s English department.

It was only a temporary gig, Steele told him, but ended up writing a book about music instead. That book, _Southern Music_, led to a teaching offer from Max Steele, director of the creative writing program in Carolina’s English department.

Vice Provost Ron Strauss congratulates Bland Simpson for winning the 2018 Edward Kidder Graham Award as distinguished alumni honorees Tift Merritt and Peter Henry applaud.

**‘YOU ARE THE UNIVERSITY’**

When Simpson returned to Carolina’s English department in 1989, after several years of musical touring, he eventually won the tenured and endowed position he still holds. Another bit of good fortune was getting an office next to the late Doris Betts who, along with office-mate professor Jerry Leath Mills, Simpson said, taught him everything he would ever need to know about how to go about being a writer and a teacher while making time to give back to his students and the people around the state.

“We all learned from her. ‘You couldn’t do everything,’ she said, ‘but if you could, it was better to say yes than to say no.’”

Simpson remembers the pep talk Betts gave him when he was feeling nervous about going to speak to a group in a small town miles from campus. “I am not famous,” Simpson told her. “None of them will know who I am.”

It didn’t matter, Betts told him.

“When you walk into that room, they will see you as the University,” Betts told him. “You will have an enormous blue flag behind you. Let that give you confidence wherever you go.”

Ever since, whenever he has gone somewhere to speak, Simpson understood, whether he said greetings from Chapel Hill or not, that was exactly what he was doing.

“That is a great privilege,” Simpson said, “and it is a great responsibility.”

— Gary Moss, University Gazette
across the years who fought so hard for much of what we value about Carolina today.”

Folt presided over the Oct. 12 University Day ceremony at Memorial Hall, which marks the laying of the cornerstone of Old East, the nation’s first public university building, in 1793. Folt, celebrating her fifth year as chancellor, also served as one of the keynote speakers, along with history professor and alumnus James Leloudis and alumna Felicia Washington, Carolina’s vice chancellor for workforce strategy, equity and engagement.

I offer our University’s deepest apology for the profound injustices of slavery, our full acknowledgment of the strength of enslaved peoples in the face of their suffering, and our respect and indebtedness to them.

CAROL L. FOLT

In his remarks as a co-chair of the Chancellor’s Task Force on UNC-Chapel Hill’s History, Leloudis detailed the University’s newest efforts to install signs and educational markers in McCorkle Place, the historic heart of campus and the site of Carolina’s first buildings. Those plans, Leloudis said, include:

- Signs and thresholds markers at the quad entrances that will mark the birthplace of American public higher education and acknowledge the indigenous people who “were the first stewards of this land, and whose descendants work, study and teach here today.”
- A marker near the Unsung Founders Memorial that “will express the University’s deep contrition for its role in the injustices of slavery and invite visitors to join us in researching and recovering the full humanity of the enslaved men and women who built so much of the early University and sustained it.”
- Repair and renovation of the Unsung Founders Memorial site that “will create a more respectful, contemplative space of the sort that the Class of 2002 imagined when they presented the sculpture as their class gift.”

Leloudis said once there is a plan for the Confederate Monument’s location, extensive research already conducted will help “inform an exhibit and other educational materials to teach the history of the monument and the era of white supremacy in which it was erected.”

In her remarks, Washington detailed how Carolina helped her begin her journey toward accomplishing her dreams of going to law school and then becoming a partner at a law firm, a member of the Board of Trustees and a vice chancellor.

“My story is not unique. My story is that of thousands before me and thousands yet to come,” Washington said. “This is Carolina: the place of continuing, virtually unlimited opportunity for students.”

Folt followed Washington’s speech with predictions for the future, noting that the accelerating pace of change, innovation and adaptation will become commonplace as Carolina redefines how the modern university operates.

Carolina’s students will continue to diversify and “we’re going to meet them more where they are actively doing things,” Folt said. “They will integrate their learning with their off-campus experiences and research. Many of them will study off campus. Some may spend their entire career outside of Carolina and we are still and always going to be preparing them to be ready to be the ones who adapt and extend their skill set so that they can be creating the jobs and the ideas of tomorrow.”

Faculty from all fields at Carolina, Folt said, will be better supported “to take their work out into the world however they see that can take place, to take risks and to collaborate in solution-oriented teams that will span the globe.”

Many jobs of today will phase out, she said, and Carolina will help the state retrain its workforce to develop the skills needed for the future.

“No matter what the future brings, I am confident that Carolina will both ride and guide those changes,” Folt said.

— Susan Hudson, University Gazette

Award recipients and speakers at University Day sway to the alma mater at the close of the ceremony.
5 receive 2018 Distinguished Alumni Awards

DONALD A. BAER

Donald A. Baer is chairman of the global strategic communications firm Burson Cohn & Wolfe. From 2012 to 2018, he was chair and CEO of its predecessor firm, Burson-Marsteller, where he had served as vice chair since 2008. Previously, Baer was senior executive vice president for strategy and development at the global media company Discovery Communications. From 1994 to 1998, he was an assistant to President Bill Clinton, serving as White House communications director and, before that, as chief speechwriter and director of speechwriting and research. Currently, Baer serves as chair of the Board of Directors of the Public Broadcasting Service. He is also a board member for the publicly traded Meredith Corp. and the nonprofit Urban Institute. Baer previously served as a member of Carolina’s Board of Visitors and General Alumni Association Board of Trustees. A Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Carolina, Baer earned a master’s degree as a Rotary International Scholar from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

ROBERT L. BRYANT

Robert L. Bryant is the Phillip Griffiths Professor of Mathematics at Duke University. Previously he served on the faculties of Rice University and the University of California at Berkeley. He was formerly the director of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in Berkeley and is a past president of the American Mathematical Society. He is a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Sciences. Bryant’s research in differential geometry has had applications in the study of minimal surfaces, the calculus of variations, and, especially, the geometry of spaces with exceptional holonomy, an area of mathematics that, in recent years, has become important in constructing models of theoretical high-energy particle physics. Bryant earned a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from North Carolina State University. While a graduate student at Carolina, he was a founding member and, later, organizer of Triangle Gay Scientists.

VAUGHN D. BRYSON

Vaughn D. Bryson worked at Eli Lilly and Co. for 32 years, concluding his career as president and CEO in 1993. He later served as vice chairman of Vector Securities International, a private healthcare-focused investment banking firm in Chicago. He was also president of Life Science Advisors, a healthcare consulting organization, and president of Clinical Products, a medical foods company. Bryson has served on the boards of directors of more than 20 companies. Bryson’s service to Carolina has included terms on the Dean’s Advisory Board of the School of Pharmacy and on the Board of the General Alumni Association, including one term as chairman. In addition, Bryson served on the Carolina First Campaign Steering Committee, and he is a recipient of the Board of Trustees’ William Richardson Davie Award and the General Alumni Association Distinguished Service Medal. Bryson is a graduate of the Sloan Program at the Stanford University Graduate School of Business.

PETER B. HENRY

Peter B. Henry is dean emeritus of New York University’s Stern School of Business, where he holds the William R. Berkley Professorship of Economics and Finance. Formerly the Konosuke Matsushita Professor of International Economics at Stanford University’s Graduate School of Business, Henry is the author of Turnaround: Third World Lessons for First World Growth. In 2008, Henry led Barack Obama’s Presidential Transition Team in its review of international lending agencies such as the IMF and World Bank. A member of the board of the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Economic Club of New York, Henry also serves on the boards of Citigroup and Nike. In 2015, Henry received the Foreign Policy Association Medal, the highest honor bestowed by the organization. A native of Jamaica who became a U.S. citizen in 1986, Henry was honored in 2016 as one of the Carnegie Foundation’s Great Immigrants. Henry holds a bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Oxford University and a doctorate in economics from MIT.

CATHERINE “TIFT” MERRITT

Catherine “Tift” Merritt is a Grammy-nominated singer and songwriter who began her career in local venues such as Cat’s Cradle and The Cave and soon began appearing on top-10 lists in The New Yorker and Time. Since starting a band while a creative writing student at Carolina, Merritt has released a unique, critically acclaimed body of work including seven albums of original material and three live records. Merritt has been compared to Joni Mitchell and Emmylou Harris and has been covered by Don Henley. In her nearly 20-year career, Merritt has toured the world and shared the stage with artists as varied as Iron & Wine, Nick Lowe and Jason Isbell. She collaborated with classical pianist Simone Dinnerstein on the album Night and played harmonic foil and rhythm guitar for Andrew Bird in his old-time band Hands of Glory. Most recently, Merritt has been a regular contributor to the Oxford American, chronicling her 2017 tours with her young daughter, Jean.

The University Day audience heard from three speakers this year: Chancellor Carol L. Folt, professor James Leloudis and Vice Chancellor Felicia A. Washington.
**A view from many lenses**

Felicia A. Washington, vice chancellor for workforce strategy, equity and engagement, has seen the University from just about every lens. At University Day, she shared those perspectives as a featured speaker at the ceremony. Here is an excerpt from an interview she did for Carolina’s podcast Well Said before the event.

**As an alumna, former trustee, administrator and parent, you have many unique perspectives. How has your appreciation for Carolina changed in each of those roles?**

I think that each opportunity being a trustee, serving as an administrator and being a parent have each given me a unique lens. And I carry all of those lenses, and the lens as an alum, as I do what I do every day. The appreciation or the change in perspective I think that came with being an administrator was really broadened from what I had when I was a trustee. Once I was a parent, I had an even different perspective with which to evaluate exactly what it is we’re doing. So I think each of those experiences gives me a unique opportunity to add value.

**What was it like for you as a Carolina student in the late ’80s?**

I was living my dream. It was exciting to meet so many people from all over the state and beyond. I was here, though, at the time that Michael Jordan was here. For some folks, it would be, “Need I say any more?” I did participate in the Black Student Movement gospel choir, and I was also a member of a sorority. And I was vice chair of honor court. I have vivid memories of those three organizations.

**How do you try to show that you care in your role as a vice chancellor?**

I take the role very seriously. I try to think in the work I do how I would like to be treated, what resources I would like to have if I were the recipient of what I’m charged to try to provide, so it’s humbling. But it gives an opportunity to really show that you care. And when you’re working with a team like the team that Chancellor Folt has assembled, it really makes us understand the importance of the work and all that we can actually do if we continue working together toward the goal.

To hear the complete interview or read the transcript, visit unc.edu/discover/well-said-felicia-washington.

**What can Carolina do to ensure that it’s continuing to improve the experiences of students, faculty and staff?**

I really think the answer is all in the people. If we have people at all levels of the University — management, administration, faculty — who really care about what they’re doing, care to provide a quality experience, care to make sure that those that they are serving and that are in their environments feel welcome and they belong, care that people are getting the services they need, I believe that Carolina will continue to thrive and prosper going forward.

**What was it like for you as a Carolina student in the late ’80s?**

It was exciting to meet so many people from all over the state and beyond. I was here, though, at the time that Michael Jordan was here. For some folks, it would be, “Need I say any more?” I did participate in the Black Student Movement gospel choir, and I was also a member of a sorority. And I was vice chair of honor court. I have vivid memories of those three organizations.

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**Carolina announces scholarship initiative for N.C. middle-income students**

Carolina will expand its commitment to access and affordability for North Carolina families with a new $20 million scholarship initiative to provide financial aid for middle-income undergraduate students within the state. The Blue Sky Scholars program will launch with a $5 million gift from alumnus and UNC System President Emeritus Erskine Bowles. The University aims to raise an additional $15 million to grow the program.

Chancellor Carol L. Folt introduced the Blue Sky Scholars program during the annual University Day ceremony Oct. 12, honoring the 225th anniversary of Carolina’s founding as the nation’s first public university. The new initiative is designed to fill an important gap by supporting exceptionally qualified North Carolina residents from middle-class backgrounds who qualify for financial aid but do not meet the requirements for the Carolina Covenant. The University launched the groundbreaking Carolina Covenant program in 2003 to guarantee students from low-income families could graduate debt-free.

"Today it is my pleasure to announce the Blue Sky Scholars program to help middle-class families facing the overwhelming burden of college debt. This distinctive program expands Carolina’s commitment to excellent, affordable higher education for the hardworking people in our state," said Folt. "Thanks to a generous lead gift from Erskine Bowles, we will make the promise of a Carolina education possible for even more students and their families, regardless of their ability to pay."

Middle-income students, classified as those whose household incomes average $75,000 per year, make up the majority of North Carolinians who receive need-based aid at Carolina. For every low-income student eligible for the Carolina Covenant, there are two middle-income students supported by other forms of institutionally funded aid. The average debt for the graduating class of 2017 was approximately $22,000, which is 22 percent less than the national average. The University estimates the Blue Sky Scholars will graduate with debt of $10,000 or less.

The admissions and student-aid offices will identify students for the new scholarships based on academic and extracurricular achievement and potential, demonstrated work ethic and sense of responsibility to family and community. As part of their finalized financial aid package, Blue Sky Scholars will receive:

- an annual award of $7,500, renewable over four years;
- $2,500 per year in work-study employment;
- a one-time enrichment award of $2,500 to support internships, study abroad or other opportunities that enhance their Carolina experience; and
- access to academic, personal and career support.

“Carolina has a rich history of serving the people and state of North Carolina. The Blue Sky Scholars program is designed to serve more North Carolinians,” said Bowles. "We want to recruit more of these promising, middle-income students and set them up to succeed while at Carolina and well beyond graduation. Not only are we helping prepare tomorrow’s leaders, we’ll help them hit the ground running in a modern workforce and without burdensome college debt."

Bowles is a native North Carolinian, born and raised in Greensboro. He graduated from Carolina in 1967 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and went on to receive a master’s in business administration from Columbia University. A leader in the financial services sector, Bowles co-founded Carousel Capital, a Charlotte-based middle-market private equity firm. He has also served on the boards of various companies, including Morgan Stanley, Merck, Norfolk Southern and Facebook. In 1991, Bowles served as administrator of the Small Business Administration under President Bill Clinton, and later as Clinton’s deputy chief of staff and chief of staff. From 2005 to 2011, Bowles was president of the UNC System. He has also served as a board member of the Golden Leaf Foundation, the Duke Endowment, the Carolinas Medical Center and founded a private equity company to bring investment capital to rural North Carolina.

Bowles’ gift supports The Carolina Edge, a signature initiative in the University’s $4.25 billion fundraising campaign. For All Kind: the Campaign for Carolina is the most ambitious university fundraising campaign in the Southeast and in Carolina history. Nearly one-quarter of the overall campaign goal, $1 billion, will fund undergraduate scholarships and graduate fellowships to ensure the University can recruit the very best students. The Campaign for Carolina is inspired by The Blueprint for Next, the University’s overall strategic framework built on two core strategies: “of the public, for the public,” and “innovation made fundamental.” The Campaign for Carolina secured $2.23 billion through the end of fiscal year 2018, exceeding half of its goal ahead of schedule.
Four faculty members honored with Hettleman awards

Four highly promising Carolina faculty members in diverse fields have been awarded the Philip and Ruth Hettleman Prizes for Artistic and Scholarly Achievement by Young Faculty. This year’s prizes were announced at the Oct. 12 Faculty Council meeting.

The recipients are:
- **Joaquin E. Drut**, associate professor and Melchor Fellow, physics and astronomy;
- **Shawn D. Hingtgen**, associate professor, pharmaco-engineering and molecular pharmaceutics, Eshelman School of Pharmacy; clinical assistant professor, neurosurgery, School of Medicine;
- **Juan Song**, assistant professor, pharmacology; and
- **Gabriel Trop**, associate professor, Germanic and Slavic languages and literatures.

**JOAQUIN E. DRUT**

Drut works in the realm of quantum mechanics, the branch of physics that uses complex mathematical equations and computers to predict how matter and light behave at atomic and subatomic scales.

Drut’s particular research focuses on quantum many-body physics, the branch of physics that provides the framework for understanding the collective behavior of large numbers of interacting particles, said Christian Iliadis, chair of the physics and astronomy department. This field of inquiry, which operates between the world of physics and applied mathematics, searches for answers beyond the reach of classical physics.

At the heart of this work is the quest to explain how collections of quantum particles work together to give rise to the observed phases of matter — such as liquid, solid, superfluid and superconducting — and then understand how to use that knowledge for real-world applications.

“The quantum many-body problem is one of the central challenges of modern natural science,” Iliadis said. “Dr. Drut is a key player of international prominence who is pushing on this boundary of knowledge.”

Born and raised in La Plata, Argentina, Drut earned his doctorate in physics at the University of Washington in 2008 and completed postdoctoral work at Ohio State University and the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico before joining Carolina’s physics and astronomy department as an assistant professor and Melchor Fellow in 2012.

Since joining Carolina, Drut has won two large National Science Foundation grants, including a $400,000 grant that was a prestigious CAREER award for 2015-20. He also served as visiting professor at the Technical University of Darmstadt.

**SHAWN D. HINTGEN**

Hingtgen harnesses the potential of stem cells to develop new and better methods for treating terminal cancer.

Hingtgen joined the faculty in the Eshelman School of Pharmacy in 2012 and holds a joint appointment as an assistant professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at the School of Medicine.

Michael Jay, chair of the pharmacy school’s Division of Pharmacoengineering and Molecular Pharmaceutics Division, described Hingtgen as an “energetic and open collaborator” who has an innate ability to ask his research questions from different perspectives and apply tools and techniques from various disciplines to produce groundbreaking results.

The key to Hingtgen’s treatment is “skin flipping,” a technology for creating neural stem cells from skin cells. That technology won a Nobel Prize in 2012. The first step is to harvest fibroblasts — skin cells responsible for producing collagen and connective tissue — from the patient and then reprogram those cells to become what are called induced neural stem cells. Working closely with an interdisciplinary team of researchers and clinicians, Hingtgen showed how these neural stem cells can hunt down and deliver cancer-killing drugs to glioblastoma, the deadliest malignant brain tumor in adults, in initial preclinical studies published in Science Translational Medicine on Feb. 1, 2017.

“His work has changed the field and is the basis of work in many cutting-edge laboratories around the world,” Jay said.

In 2015, Falcon Therapeutics was founded to advance the discovery generated in Hingtgen’s lab toward the clinic to redefine the care for patients with glioblastoma and other cancers that are currently incurable.

Hingtgen earned his doctorate at the University of Iowa and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical School.

**JUAN SONG**

Song, who came to Carolina in fall 2013, leads a research team trying to understand how the healthy adult brain regenerates and to apply basic learned principles to the degenerated or injured brain to promote regeneration upon neuronal loss.

The birth of new neurons, a process called neurogenesis, is important for normal learning and memory, stress response and mood regulation. By understanding how neuronal circuitry and signaling mechanisms regulate the birth of new neurons in the adult hippocampus—an area of the brain critical to memory formation—Song’s team hopes to create therapeutic interventions for brain injuries, degenerative diseases and mood disorders by targeting these adult-born neurons.

At Carolina, Song has developed a reputation both as an “innovative and fearless investigator” and a “model of friendship and collegiality” whose work blends exceptional experimental skills with originality and creativity, said Henrik G. Dohlman, chair of the pharmacology department.

When Song was a postdoctoral fellow at Johns Hopkins University, she studied how neural stem cells create new neurons and how these new neurons contribute to specific brain functions. Building on these findings, Song and her team at Carolina have published 13 research articles in some of the most prestigious scientific journals. On Nov. 2, 2017, Cell Stem Cell journal published a Song lab paper later selected as one of the journal’s best eight articles of the year.

“I have worked with some high-achieving individuals over the years, including several Nobel laureates and National Academy members,” Dohlman said. “Even in this distinguished comparison group, I consider Dr. Song to be one of the most ambitious.”

**GABRIEL TROP**

Trop, who came to Carolina in 2010 after earning his doctorate from the University of California at Berkeley, is a rising star in the field of German literature and philosophy. His research interests tend to examine the relationship between literature, science and philosophy, with a special focus on German idealism, comparative romanticisms and politics and aesthetics.

His major scholarly achievement to date is his monograph, *Poetry as a Way of Life: Aesthetics and Askesis in the German 18th Century*, published by Northwestern University Press in 2015. Reviewers described the book as “refreshingly original,” “bold” and “groundbreaking” and heralded it as a major reinterpretation of German poetry. He has also published 13 peer-reviewed articles in prestigious scholarly journals in Europe and North America.

Eric Downing, interim chair of the Germanic and Slavic languages department, who completed Trop’s nomination after the death of former chair Jonathan M. Hess, said departmental course offerings in the field of literature and philosophy have expanded exponentially since Trop came to Carolina. For instance, Trop designed a new first-year seminar, Intensity, Vitality and Ecstasy, and revamped and revitalized key courses such as German Intellectual History and The Age of Goethe.

In addition, Trop is an adjunct associate professor in the English and comparative literature department and an official mentor for the Carolina Scholars Program. He has also served as a visiting professor at the Eberhard Karls University in Tübingen. He earned a Johnston Teaching Excellence Award, a Global Partnership Award and a Schwab Academic Excellence Award.

Said Downing, “Trop has truly distinguished himself as a scholar, teacher, mentor and colleague since joining the Carolina community.”

~ Gary Moss, University Gazette
The Gazette welcomes your story ideas and calendar announcements. To make sure your information reaches us in time for the next issue, please submit it at least 10 days before our publication date. You can find our latest publication schedule online at gazette.unc.edu/about.

The next Gazette will be published Nov. 14. To announce events occurring Nov. 15–Dec. 19, please submit your information no later than Nov. 5. Email us at gazette@unc.edu or submit through the Got News? page on our website (gazette.unc.edu/got-news).

### OCTOBER 25

Michael J. Gerhardt, Samuel Ashe Distinguished Professor in Constitutional Law at the School of Law, will speak at 7 p.m. at Flyleaf Books in Chapel Hill about his latest book, *Impeachment: What Everyone Needs to Know* (Oxford University Press). The book defines the scope of impeachable offenses and how the Constitution provides alternative procedures and sanctions for addressing misconduct in office.

### OCTOBER 26

The department of art and art history will host Kimberly Lamm, associate professor in the program of gender, sexuality and feminist studies at Duke University, for the Art History Colloquium in Phillips Hall room 247 at 12:20 p.m. Lamm researches contemporary feminist art, contemporary poetry, feminist theory and 19th- and 20th-century American literature. For more information, contact Christoph Brachmann at cbrachma@email.unc.edu.

### OCTOBER 26–28

Join the philosophy department for the 52nd Chapel Hill Colloquium in Philosophy in Howell Hall room 115. The weekend-long event will feature speakers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Johns Hopkins University and New York University, among others. General registration is $150, including meals. Susan Neiman, director of the Einstein Forum, will deliver the Claire Miller Lecture on “Monuments, Memory and History.” For more information and to register, visit philosophy.unc.edu/event/52nd-chapel-hill-colloquium-philosophy.

### OCTOBER 26

Two events will celebrate the Kenan Music Building installation of *A Sound Map of the Danube* (2001-5), an aural tracing of the Danube River, with the memories and reflections of its people, from the Black Forest to the Black Sea. At 4 p.m. in Hill Hall room 103, the installation’s creator, Annea Lockwood, and assistant music professor Andrea Bohlman will lead Rivers, Sound and Place, a public conversation about *A Sound Map of the Danube*. The composer will then make remarks at the installation opening at 7 p.m. in the Kenan Music Building room 2002. In addition to sound, the installation also includes a large fold-out map and translations of the interviews.

### THROUGH OCTOBER 28

PlayMakers Repertory Company is proud to present Dominique Morisseau’s *Skeleton Crew*, the final installment in Morisseau’s Detroit Trilogy. *Skeleton Crew* transports the audience to the start of the Great Recession in 2008, where one of the last auto stamping plants in Detroit is in trouble. For information and to purchase tickets, call 919-962-7529 or visit playmakersrep.org. Individual ticket prices start at $15.

### OCTOBER 29

The Carolina Center for Jewish Studies will host a conversation between author Jonathan Weisman and Ryan Thornburg focused on Weisman’s book, *Semitism*), from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Friday Center. Weisman is a deputy Washington editor and Congress editor at *The New York Times* and Thornburg is the director of the Reese News Lab at the School of Media and Journalism. The discussion will be followed by a book signing and reception.
OCTOBER 24, 2018

NOVEMBER 2

Join the Center for Faculty Excellence for the Faculty Showcase on Teaching at the Carolina Club from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. This event is an opportunity for instructors to learn from each other about promising teaching practices and make new contacts with colleagues across disciplines. The showcase is free to all Carolina faculty. There will be lunch and prize giveaways. For more information and to register, visit cfe.unc.edu. Registration closes Oct. 29.

NOVEMBER 4

Visionary horticulturist Brie Arthur will present the Jenny Elder Fitch Memorial Lecture at the North Carolina Botanical Gardens Education center at 2:30 p.m. Brie will discuss her signature design technique of “foodscaping,” a sustainable landscape practice that integrates edible and ornamental plantings to create beautiful and functional gardens. The event is free but registration is encouraged. For more information, visit ncbg.unc.edu.

NOVEMBER 5

The Learning Center in the College of Arts & Sciences and the UNC General Alumni Association will host the Timothy B. and Jane A. Burnett Seminar for Academic Achievement at the George Watts Hill Alumni Center from 1 to 4 p.m. The seminar will feature Theresa Maitland, a leading expert on college students with ADHD/LD. Maitland will share what parents and professionals can do to increase the odds that transitioning teens with ADHD/LD will be ready to navigate successfully in college. For more information and to register, visit alumni.unc.edu/events/2018-annual-burnett-seminar.

NOVEMBER 8

In celebration of its 30th anniversary, the Stone Center will host an opening reception for With Us Comes the Parallax, the center’s first retrospective exhibition, at 7 p.m. in the Robert and Sallie Brown Gallery and Museum (rescheduled because of Hurricane Florence). This show features 14 award-winning past Stone Center Visiting Artists from the 30 exhibitions and 71 artists displayed at the center since 2004. The event will include talks by some of the participating artists as well as a silent auction. All proceeds will benefit the Stone Center’s Gift Fund, which supports programming and events.
Carolina earns diversity award for fourth consecutive year

Carolina has been named a recipient of the 2018 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine, the oldest and largest diversity-focused publication in higher education. The annual award recognizes U.S. colleges and universities that demonstrate an outstanding commitment to diversity and inclusion.

This is the fourth consecutive year Carolina has earned the HEED Award.

5 selected as 2018–20 faculty diversity fellows

Carolina has selected five postdoctoral scholars as 2018-20 Faculty Diversity Fellows. They are:

- André Keiji Kunigami, Romance studies;
- Jacob Lau, women’s and gender studies;
- Sarah Mills, Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center/ Gillings School of Global Public Health;
- Danielle Purifoy, geography; and
- Annette Rodriguez, American studies.

The fellows receive paid two-year postdoctoral positions in their selected departments, additional funds for research, professional development and networking opportunities and a unique opportunity to work closely with a faculty mentor in their discipline.

The University launched the program in 1993 as part of a continuing commitment to building a culturally diverse intellectual community and advancing scholars from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in higher education.

ANDRÉ KEIJI KUNIGAMI

André Keiji Kunigami received his doctorate in Asian studies from Cornell University. He is a film and media scholar whose interests revolve around questions of perception, spectatorship, and temporality in the early 20th century so-called peripheral spaces to the “West.” At Carolina, he will work on revising his dissertation “Of Clouds and Bodies: Film and the Dislocation of Vision in Brazilian and Japanese Interwar Avant-garde” into a book manuscript. Before joining the University as a Carolina Postdoctoral Fellow, Keiji taught history of Brazilian and world cinema at the Fluminense Federal University.

JACOB LAU

Jacob Lau received his doctorate in gender studies from the University of California, Los Angeles. His work theorizes transgender affect through postcolonial, queer of color and historical materialist theorizations of time and historicism. Along with Cameron Partridge, he is an editor of Laurence Michael Dillon’s 1962 trans memoir Out of the Ordinary: A Life of Spiritual and Gender Transitions (Fordham University Press, 2017), for which he also co-authored an introduction. He was previously a University of California President’s Postdoctoral Fellow at UC Irvine.

SARAH D. MILLS

Sarah D. Mills has a doctoral degree in clinical psychology from the San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego joint doctoral program in clinical psychology and a master of public health degree in epidemiology from San Diego State University. Mills completed her clinical internship at the University of California, Los Angeles. Her research focuses on tobacco control and tobacco-related health disparities. She uses an ecological framework to examine the roles that culture, the neighborhood in which one lives, and public policy play in tobacco use among racial/ethnic minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged groups. She has also conducted research in cross-cultural measurement.

DANIELLE PURIFOY

Danielle Purifoy received a juris doctorate from Harvard Law School and a doctorate in environmental politics and African American studies from Duke University. Her current research focuses on the intersection of racial segregation and local political geography in the production of environmental inequality in North Carolina. She is also interested in the historic sociopolitical roots of contemporary environmental conditions in the U.S. South. Purifoy is an editor for Scales wag, a magazine devoted to Southern politics and culture, a board member of the North Carolina Environmental Justice Network and the co-creator, with visual artist Torkwase Dyson, of In Conditions of Fresh Water, a multimedia black spatial history project.

ANNETTE RODRIGUEZ

Annette Rodríguez received a doctorate in American Studies from Brown University. Her research interests focus on the functions of public violence in U.S. empire and nation building, U.S. racial formation, immigration and the production of U.S. citizenship. Her current book project Inventing the Mexican: The Visual Culture of Lynching at the Turn of the 20th Century centers performance, popular culture, and visuality as assisting in the relational construction of race. In addition, she has initiated a data, mapping and social history project on U.S. bounty land grants. This project, which tracks the over 6 million acres of land granted by both the U.S. federal government and individual states—as incentive to serve in the military and as a reward for service—is provisionally titled Intimate Acquisitions: A Relational History of U.S. Bounty Lands.

For more information about the University’s diversity and inclusion initiatives, visit diversity.unc.edu.

For more information about CPPFD, please visit research.unc.edu/carolina-postdocs.
McFee and Roper win North Carolina’s highest civilian honor

William L. Roper and Michael A. McFee are among the six people who will receive North Carolina’s highest civilian honor. Roper, CEO of UNC Health Care, dean of the School of Medicine and vice chancellor for medical affairs, received the 2018 North Carolina Award for Public Service. McFee, a distinguished writer and poet in Carolina’s English and comparative language department, received the 2018 North Carolina Award for Literature.

Gov. Roy Cooper will present the awards Nov. 16 at the Raleigh Convention Center. The award was created by the General Assembly in 1961 to recognize significant contributions to the state and the nation in fields of fine arts, literature, public service and science. “It is an honor to pay tribute to these outstanding individuals who have made North Carolina better by their extraordinary involvement in this state,” said Susi H. Hamilton, secretary of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. “Each of them has enriched the lives of North Carolinians through their lasting achievements in the arts and public service.”

Roper was recognized for offering groundbreaking approaches and responsive programs during a period of rapid change and complex demands in the medical field. Under his leadership, Carolina has seen an expansion of UNC Health Care to serve rural and urban communities, while promoting programs to ensure medical students go on to practice in underserved communities across the state. His innovative approach to medical education and expanding access to affordable care led to his recognition as one of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare by “Modern Healthcare.”

McFee is the author of 16 books and has published 11 volumes of poetry and two essay collections. He is also the editor of several anthologies of North Carolina literature. His celebrated works include Vanishing Acts and We Were Once Here. McFee is a devoted teacher, mentor and dedicated champion of the literary culture of North Carolina. He has been at Carolina since 1991, and his honors include a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry and the Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award.

The other winners are Carolyn Q. Coleman of Pleasant Garden for public service, Bill Leslie of Cary for fine arts, Barbara B. Millhouse of Winston-Salem for fine arts and Gene Roberts of Bath for public service.

Engagement survey results rollout continues across campus

The results of a survey of Carolina faculty and staff that gauged opinions on a variety of work-related issues, job satisfaction and employee engagement are being shared across campus with ongoing opportunities to see and discuss the results.

A total of 4,776 Carolina employees responded to the UNC System Employment Engagement Survey, a 37 percent participation rate. Employees had an overall positive response of 62.4 percent in applying a five-point agreement scale to the survey’s 77 statements, covering areas such as collaboration, compensation, pride, senior leadership and professional development and on benefits satisfaction.

The survey also included two open-ended questions, 16 demographic questions and one multi-selection question. More than 3,400 participants made 7,000 comments to two open-ended questions about what makes the University a good place to work and what might make it better. Employees had strong positive responses about Carolina’s culture of excellence and noted pride in the University’s mission and their departments as being great places in which to work. Some comments praised the diversity of faculty, staff and students at Carolina and described how these interactions contributed to a more collaborative environment and higher quality work, while others noted these same topics as areas where the University might improve.

Other areas employees identified as opportunities included compensation levels and salary increases or adjustments, the need for more adequate staffing and a commitment of resources to create safe classroom, work and research spaces and a desire for senior leadership to increase transparency in communication and value the input of faculty and staff more.

Administered in January 2018, the survey is part of a five-year project by the UNC System to help achieve the goals of the UNC Strategic Plan, “Higher Expectations.” It also aligns with the goals of The Blueprint for Next, Carolina’s strategic framework.

“I appreciate the efforts of all who participated in this important survey,” said Chancellor Carol L. Folt. “The resulting data gives critical insights as we strive to improve our communication, employee benefits and overall workplace satisfaction so that every member of our community has the support they need to contribute to our mission of teaching, research and public service.”

Felicia Washington and Becci Menghini, vice chancellor and senior associate vice chancellor for workforce strategy, equity and engagement respectively, have led discussions with faculty and staff groups, describing topline findings and answering questions. Information about the survey was also shared with the campus community in an Oct. 15 discussion session open to all employees, by email and in the University Gazette. The survey, highlights and detailed reports of UNC-Chapel Hill responses are at hr.unc.edu/unc-system-engagement-survey.

“Data from this survey will be useful to University leadership and our community as we work on faculty and staff engagement – building on what we do well and addressing the challenges the survey revealed,” said Robert A. Blouin, executive vice chancellor and provost. “For example, there are specific data points that received high marks that may have application in other aspects of campus life. Survey results also will inform the implementation strategies for the Blueprint for Next priorities.”

The survey compares Carolina’s results with three other data sets: aggregate scores from all UNC System institutions, the 2017 Carnegie Research Institutions and the 2017 Great Colleges “Honor Roll” of institutions with enrollment higher than 10,000. Menghini said that the Great Colleges group serves as the aspirational group for Carolina.

Menghini said that Carolina’s Office of Institutional Research and Assessment analyzed the comments and grouped them by theme so that administrators and the community could better learn from them.

Next steps include sharing the results of the survey with smaller work units through December, developing and implementing new initiatives to address the survey responses throughout 2019. This work will be undertaken in consultation with the UNC System Office. The survey will be repeated in 2020.

UNC System leaders have indicated they will use survey data to help establish baseline metrics and assist in advocating for improvements to human resource policies at the statewide level.

The survey was administered by ModernThink, which also administers the Great Colleges to Work For survey on behalf of the Chronicle of Higher Education.

– Scott Jarrod, University Gazette
Folklorist, scholar and musician Tiber Falzett is passionate about sharing the Scottish Gaelic culture and language and is excited about the opportunity to incorporate the rich legacy of North Carolina’s Scottish Gaelic heritage into his teaching this year.

He believes that knowing more about Gaelic can help break down barriers and bring people together, making learning an endangered minority group’s language and its traditions all the more important. He will share his expertise with Carolina students this fall as the first Visiting Lecturer in Scottish Gaelic Studies in the English and comparative literature department.

Beginning in the 1730s, Scottish Highlanders immigrated to the Cape Fear region of North Carolina, founding the earliest multi-generational Scottish Gaelic-speaking community on the North American continent. Gaelic continued to be transmitted across the generations into the early decades of the 20th century. Many North Carolinians share ancestral ties to this immigrant group, including well-known surnames like Blue, Cameron, Campbell, MacDonald, MacDowell, Macintosh and MacNeill.

Scottish Gaelic is a separate language from what Americans commonly refer to as Irish Gaelic, which is more accurately called “Modern Irish.” The two evolved from earlier linguistic forms, Falzett said, noting that Scottish Gaelic and Modern Irish are about as similar as Romance languages are to one another.

“The hope is that we can raise awareness,” said Falzett, who has done extensive fieldwork in Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia in Canada and the Outer Hebrides and West Highlands of Scotland. “By engaging with some of these under-recognized forms of expression rooted in endangered language communities, we can better understand the human experience and, indeed, ourselves.”

Falzett has a doctorate in Celtic and Scottish studies from the University of Edinburgh. He has taught at the University of Prince Edward Island and St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia.

Both family ties and music were important factors to Falzett in learning the Scottish Gaelic language in his late teens and continuing to pursue studies in its cultural expression.

His maternal great-grandmother was a Scottish Gaelic speaker from Southwestern Ontario, which, like North Carolina’s Cape Fear Valley, was once a hotbed for the language. In its diaspora, Scottish Gaelic crossed ethnic boundaries, fostering a sense of community and serving an essential role in communication and social engagement as part of everyday life.

Falzett’s grandfather frequently shared memories of growing up in a multilingual home and community in rural Manitoba, where Gaelic, Icelandic, Finnish and French were spoken alongside indigenous languages like Cree and Ojibwe.

Falzett’s interest was further piqued when he began playing the Great Highland bagpipes at age 11.

“I loved the sound and noticed that a lot of the vocabulary used when learning to play was Scottish Gaelic,” he said.

This fall Falzett is teaching introductory courses in folklore and fairy tales. His spring lineup includes courses on Celtic cultures, everyday stories and legends, and a first-year seminar on Scottish Gaelic literature in North America. The seminar course will include texts from North Carolina that provide the earliest extant Gaelic poetic compositions and published texts in North America.

Scottish Gaelic studies has “not enjoyed any previous support in the American academy,” said Michael Newton, secretary of GaelicUSA, a nonprofit advocacy group that coordinated the visiting lecturer position, which was funded by Scottish Heritage USA.

Today just over 1 percent of Scotland’s population speaks the language. In spite of its endangerment, globally an estimated 60,000 people speak Scottish Gaelic, Falzett noted. Currently, both the language and its cultural expression are undergoing a renewal in Scotland and Canada’s Maritime Provinces.

These days, Falzett said he only wishes he could sit down with his own great-grandmother, hear her voice and speak with her in what was her first language and one that he has now carefully fostered as his second.

~ Pamela Babcock, College of Arts & Sciences