Rewards of Ministering to MKs and International Students

It was their first Christmas away from their native country. Too far away—and far too expensive—to fly home during the winter break, they stayed in the dorm at Union. Although they lived in a safe place and had sufficient food—it wasn't home.

My husband suggested we bring the two students I sponsored, to our home during the holidays. We did and this simple act of kindness gave us one of our best Christmas seasons ever.

Many of the things we take for granted became a “first” for these students. For example, they had never decorated a Christmas tree. So after an evening meal, I pulled out the boxes of ornaments and the artificial tree. Nearby, a CD played “Silent Night, Holy Night.” I related stories of how in the past our family would walk over my grandparent’s farm to find the perfect cedar tree. We laughed about the time the tree was too tall for our home, so my husband cut off the top—instead of the bottom. Imagine a tree fitting flush with the ceiling!

As promised, I made hot chocolate with marshmallows to sip during the evening. There have been several International students and MKs since those first ones. And our family has been blessed beyond measure for offering our home as a place away from home. Our children and grandchildren treasure the time spent talking with Union students, learning their customs and traditions. Even our dog, Ernest Miller Hemingway, loves the extra attention as these students talk of the day they once owned—or had to leave behind then they came to the United States to study.

I encourage you to become involved with either an International or Missionary Kid. Could any of these ideas work for you or your family?

- Remember birthdays and Christmas with a gift card to a nearby restaurant or Walmart.
- Send cards to their Union P.O. Box offering words of encouragement throughout the school year—especially during finals.
- Invite students to your family dinners.
- Pray for these students.

When these students return to their native country, let’s hope they take back memories of a Christ-centered, people-focused, and future-directed institution. The Auxiliary seeks to aid Union in its mission to operate as an excellence-driven, Christ-centered, people-focused, and future-directed institution. The Auxiliary also desires to lend support to students of missionary families. The organization will strive to enhance the visibility of Union in the community.

Save the Date

Spring Luncheon

Tuesday, April 19, 2016

Carl Grant Events Center

Snow day and MKs since those first ones. And our family

Upcoming Union Events

Town and Gown Lecture Series:
The Legacy of the Civil Rights Movement
Thursday evenings
September 3–October 1

Theatre Performance:
And Then There Were None
October 1

Scholarship Banquet
with David Brooks
October 6

McAfee Organ Concert
November 5

Homecoming
November 6–7

Dedication of New Library
November 6, 2:00 p.m.

A Union Christmas
December 1

For more information and other upcoming events, visit uu.edu/news.

David Brewer
I spent most of my years growing up in Collierville, TN. I was saved at a very young age and was baptized at Kirby Woods Baptist Church, where I still attend. There I learned what it looks like to be a true Christian leader, and I have been heavily involved in their sound and puppet ministries. Ever since I was young, I have enjoyed designing and building with Legos or models, and I still enjoy working with model trains. It was through this gift that I decided to major in engineering. It is my goal to use engineering to solve problems and create a better world to live in. Lastly, I would like to thank the Auxiliary members for this honor and scholarship award.

Brianna Hill
Born in Arkansas, I moved to West Tennessee when I was 12. My major is Elementary Education primarily focusing on Early Childhood and I love every second of it. I wish to become a preschool teacher. I am a member of Fellowship Bible Church where I have the opportunity to lead worship for the college ministry. My hobbies are longboarding, singing, drinking tea, going to concerts, and reading. I am a vegetarian with a compassionate heart for animals. The biggest interest in my life is Haiti—my home away from home. I enjoy loving on the people there and serving. Hearing their stories and seeing them smile changed my life. I can’t wait to see where God will lead me next.

Zack Crane
It is an honor to be given this Auxiliary scholarship. I am very thankful for this and I know how much my family is as well. My name is Zach Crane and I am from Columbia, Tennessee. I am on the Union University soccer team. Fishing and soccer are my main hobbies, however, spending time with my family is my favorite thing to do. My career goal is to one day be an athletic trainer for a professional soccer team or to go on and be a physical therapist. I truly believe that if you keep the faith and trust in the Lord, then whatever goals you have can be achieved through Him, but only by giving Him the glory for everything you do.

Skylar Argo
My name is Skylar Argo. I am from Atwood, Tennessee. I’m a computer science major. I love to craft, be outdoors, and spend time with my family. I currently interning at an accounting firm as an IT intern. Once I graduate, I plan on starting a career in IT or networking. Thank you to all the auxiliary members for this scholarship, I could never express how much it is appreciated!

Anna Jenkins
My name is Anna Jenkins, and I am a class of 2018 Nursing major from Olive Branch, MS. My mom was my biggest inspiration as I grew up, motivating me to be a nurse through her dedication to her patients and her own fight with cancer. After graduating from Union, I hope to become a traveling nurse for several years and to then attend graduate school to become a Doctor of Nursing Practice specializing in Oncology. Union has been such a welcoming place that has allowed me to grow so much as a person, and I am very grateful to the Union Auxiliary for choosing me to receive this scholarship and helping that time of growth and development to continue.

No photo or biography available for Jessica Gates

DIFFERENCE

Union Auxiliary Newsletter

Fall 2015  Vol.17  No.1

2015-2016 Scholarship Recipients

Skylar Argo
Ben Baytes
David Brewer
Brianna Hill
Anna Jenkins
Zack Crane

Fall Luncheon
Noon, Thursday, Sept. 17

Speaker: Mark Campbell
Register Online uu.edu/auxiliary
or mail your response card
Contact Gaye Christy at 661-S2D2
for more information.

Spring Luncheon
Tuesday, April 19, 2016
Carl Grant Events Center
Since I love to write and watch television, I decided to combine Auxiliary and I am overjoyed to be a recipient. This has been possible because of scholarships like the Union Education program that named, Mrs. Springer. My journey at Union University thus far for customers all over the state of Tennessee. I am very thankful for Cornerstone I get to provide medical supplies and equipment early this year and moving to Atlanta to pursue my career. and Talent for Christ. I look forward to graduating a semester this year and moving to Atlanta to pursue my career.

Cody Mitchell
I am a Senior Business Administration major with a focus in Management. I am from Hohenwald, Tennessee, and married to Haley Hall Mitchell who also attends Union University. I get the honor of being president of Enactus for 2015-2016 year. I currently work for Cornerstone Health Systems in Hohenwald Tennessee, who I will work for full-time when I graduate. Working for Cornerstone I get to provide medical supplies and equipment for customers all over the state of Tennessee. I am very thankful for this gift.

Rose Mullins
My name is Rose Mullins and I am a senior this year at Union University majoring in Elementary Education. I have recently started a yearlong internship in a 4th grade classroom at East Elementary in Humboldt, TN. I am so blessed to be working with 20 individual students under a wonderful teacher named, Mrs. Springer. My journey at Union University thus far has been such a rewarding blessing. I am so thankful to be in such a giving program, such as the Education program that is teaching me and preparing me for future as a teacher. This has been possible because of scholarships like the Union Auxiliary and I am overjoyed to be a recipient.

Katherine Murchison
I am a native of Natchitoches, Louisiana. I am currently working on a B.F.A degree in Art with an emphasis in Painting. My future plans include receiving a Master's in Education and teaching art.

Anna-Alicia Sails
I was born in Memphis and a couple of years later, I moved to Whiteville, Tennessee. I am interested in theatre, art, and eclectic genres of music, short stories. My favorite hobbies are reading, going to the movies, and hanging out with my friends and family. Since I love to write and watch television, I decided to combine the two together in college. I am a Broadcast Journalism major and a Theatre minor. One day, I hope to anchor a newscast that entertains and help young people give a voice to their struggles so that they will know that they are never alone in this world. With this, I always keep Joshua 1:9 close to my heart.

Bangali Sillah
My name is Bangali Sillah. I am originally from West Africa Sierra Leone. I now live in Memphis with my mother and my sister. I graduated from a Christian boarding school in Mississippi called French Camp Academy. Because of your generous gift, you have made it possible for me to attend this wonderful school to grow spiritually in Christ and also receive a good education in the process. This substantial gift will help me in my education here at Union University. I appreciate all you have done for me.

Robby Spearman
My name is Robby William Spearman. I grew up in Jacksonville, Florida. However, when I was twelve years old I moved to Henderson, Tennessee. I am a junior Conservation Biology major and when I graduate I hope to become a Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency officer. I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping, and anything outdoors. I am currently working towards my wildlife rehabilitation certification with a professor, Dr. James Huggins. I love animals, have several rescue dogs, and enjoy volunteering with local animal rescues. In my spare time, I like to go hiking with my dogs and my girlfriend. I would like to thank the Union Auxiliary for making this scholarship award possible.

Eric Wegner
I am an ministry and missions major and theatre minor. I am originally from Memphis Tennessee, but my family moved to Jackson area before I entered high school. I received my EMT IV license from JSCC after high school, but God had different plans for me. I now have been given a vision of going into the mission field both foreign and domestic using the theatrical arts as a way to communicate the gospel to all people. I would like to thank the Auxiliary for helping to provide this opportunity.

Autumn Wegner
I am an art major from here in Jackson, Tennessee with a primary emphasis in art therapy and a secondary emphasis in photography. I hope to one day work with restavecs, or child slaves, in the country of Haiti. This past June, I had the opportunity to spend the month of June there, working with these children as an intern with myLIFEspeaks. I am also a very clumsy human despite the fact I took fifteen years of dance classes and currently work as a dance instructor for supporting us as further education and work toward my dreams, I am honored and extremely grateful.

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Mark Campbell
Mark Campbell is entering his 17th season as head coach of the Union women’s basketball team. Campbell began his tenure at Union in 1996 as assistant coach for the men’s basketball team, but in 1999 he was tapped to lead the Lady Bulldogs after the retirement of NAIA hall of fame coach, David Blackstock.

Under Campbell’s leadership, the Lady Bulldogs have had over 500 wins and have brought home five national titles of the six in women’s basketball history at Union. Campbell’s resume is extraordinary. He has won four National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) National Titles (2005, 2006, 2009 and 2010). In the last eight seasons of Union’s NAIA era, he made eight straight trips to the NAIA semifinals. The 2012-13 season for Union was the first year of playing as members of NCAADivision II and the Gulf South Conference. Campbell led the Lady Bulldogs to a first place tie in the Gulf South Conference regular season standings. He also coached the team to the 2013 National Christian College Athletic Association (NCCAA) mid-east region title and a third place finish in the NCAADivision II National Tournament.

In the 2014-15 season, he led the Lady Bulldogs to the: Gulf South Conference regular season and tournament titles, a south region No. 1 ranking, No. 1 seed and host to NCAA Division II National Tournament South Region and an NCAADivision II Sweet Sixteen appearance. Union finished 28-3 overall and 19-3 in the Gulf South Conference.

Last season, Campbell was listed in the NCAA record book with the top winning percentage in Division II at .879 among coaches that have not yet spent at least five years at the Division II level, but have been a head coach for at least five years. Campbell’s impressive work on the court has garnered him countless awards and accolades. Among them, in 2015 Campbell was named the Gulf South Conference Coach of the year and the TranSouth Coach of the Year six times (2001, 2002, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010). However, it is Campbell’s work off the court that has earned the respect and admiration of his players and colleagues. Campbell has invested much of his personal and professional life in challenging students to become Christian leaders in a variety of contexts including academia and in the community. The coaching staff and players spend time at local elementary schools and mentoring at-risk youth. Each year Campbell and his players sponsor a child in Sierra Leone through the World Vision organization and sponsor a local child in a campus-wide effort to provide Christmas for children from the Carl Perkins Child Abuse Center. In the off-season Campbell hosts a summer camp for youth in the local community.

To many, Campbell is more than just a great basketball coach; he is a man of faith. And to Campbell, faith is everything. “Faith is the foundation from which everything else overflows,” he says. “It is essential that we know what we believe, why we believe it and why it matters.”

This is the message that Campbell hopes to share during his address at the fall luncheon. He will speak from the topic, “Why the things we do today matter.” He hopes to convey the importance of being productive and useful.

He says, “Union is an investment and I am a product of others’ choices and their faith.”

Campbell is married to the former Molly Graves of Jackson. They are the proud parents of four children, son Gray, born on July 10, 2002, daughter Ella, born on April 9, 2004, son Kalan, born on February 16, 2009 and daughter Mia born on July 26, 2010.

Story by Veronica Perry