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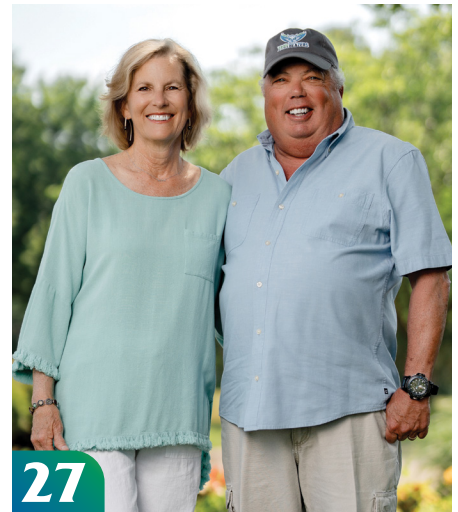
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On the cover: Dr. Myers, photography by James Moore.

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Publisher **Sarah Knight**
Custom Publication Writer **Dwain Hebda**
Custom Publication Copy Editor **Melinda Lanigan**
Contributing Photographers **James Moore**

All effort has been made to make this publication as complete as possible. The publishers cannot and do not guarantee the correctness of all that is available to them, and errors will be corrected in subsequent issues if reported by letter to the company. ASUMH distributes 30,000 copies of The Keystone magazines bi-annually. Over 28,000 copies are mailed to residents in Baxter and Marion counties with the remaining copies distributed to locations within the two counties, including high schools, chambers/visitor centers, doctor offices, hospitals and financial institutions. Copyright July 2023 Wheelhouse Publishing. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited.

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Greetings,

As this will be my last public communication as your Chancellor of Arkansas State University – Mountain Home, I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support of me and this institution over the past eleven years. I arrived here in Mountain Home in July of 2012 and was overwhelmed by the level of community support that I received and have continued to enjoy throughout my tenure here.

Mountain Home and the Twin Lakes area is a special place, blessed with so many natural resources, incredible people from all parts of the country, great public schools, a hospital and healthcare access unsurpassed in communities our size, city and county governments focused on enhancing the quality of life for area citizens, and of course, Arkansas State University – Mountain Home. All of these elements and so many more make this a wonderful place to live and work.

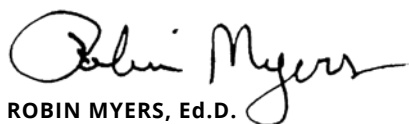
I am especially thankful for the fantastic faculty and staff of the college that I have had the opportunity to work with over these past eleven years. They are the people who have created and accomplished all the things you will hear about in this publication. I am just the person who has had the privilege to work with them and support them in these endeavors. I am also grateful for the support of our many donors, board members, and committee volunteers who are so critical to the progress of the institution.

I leave confident in the future as the tenure begins of Dr. Bentley Wallace as your new Chancellor of ASUMH. I am certain that he will lead ASUMH to new heights of

accomplishment. I look forward to watching the many successes that are sure to come.

My single greatest joy from this job and career has been the opportunity to help students achieve their goals and improve their lives. That reward is unsurpassed in any profession. Tracy and I are thankful for the many blessings we have enjoyed through our time here and look forward to seeing each of you as we continue to make our home here in the twin lakes area.

With warmest regards,



ROBIN MYERS, Ed.D.

Chancellor
Arkansas State University
Mountain Home

THE KEYSTONE

A PUBLICATION OF
**ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
MOUNTAIN HOME**

key-stone

noun \ˈkē-,stōn\

: a large stone at the top of an arch that locks the other stones in place

: something on which other things depend for support

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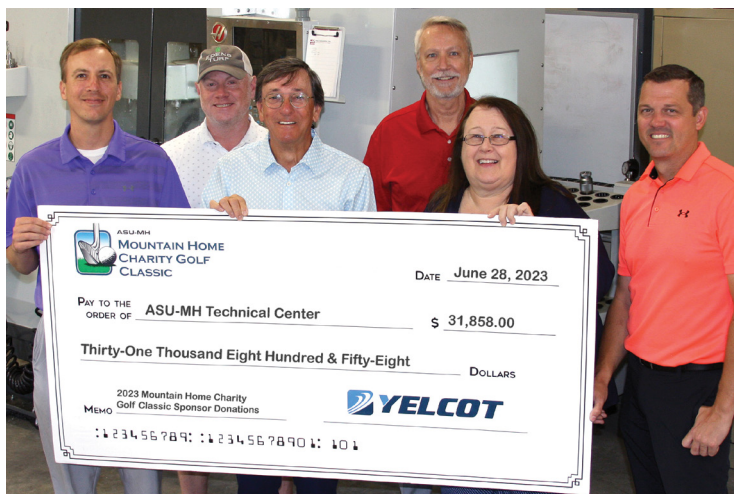
Mountain Home Charity Golf Classic raises funds for ASUMH Tech Center

Several tournament sponsors of the Mountain Home Charity Golf Classic recently presented a check in the amount of \$31,858 to ASUMH Chancellor Robin Myers, Ed.D.

The funds were raised during the annual charity golf tournament held at Big Creek Golf and Country Club on June 10-11, and will assist with equipment funding and program needs for the Technical Center.

ASU-Mountain Home's Technical Center works with local industry and other employers to develop technical programs needed to serve our region. These programs also serve the area high schools through a secondary center arrangement.

Through generous contributions over the past 22 years, this tournament has raised over \$555,520!



L/R: Jessie Parnell, ASC Warranty; Brent Eden, Edens Turf; Dr. Robin Myers, ASUMH Chancellor; Vernon Dewey, Ultimate Auto Group; Sara Zimmerman, YELCOT; Brad Goeke, Ultimate Auto Group



RN PROGRAM

ASUMH granted initial approval for new registered nursing program

Arkansas State University-Mountain Home (ASUMH) has received initial approval from the Arkansas State Board of Nursing to offer an Associate of Applied Science degree in Registered Nursing. Beginning May 30, 2023, the program provides students with an alternative route to complete their nursing education locally through two years of full-time, face-to-face classes. According to Dr. Julia Gist, retired dean of Health Sciences at ASUMH, the program anticipates accepting 16-24 students in its first class and graduating 60-75 registered nurses annually, thereby meeting the increasing local and national nursing needs. This expansion follows strong local health care community support and rising demands for RNs, as data indicates a projected 14% increase in RN employment in Arkansas from 2018 to 2028. For more details, contact Sarah Smith at (870) 508-6266 or visit the ASUMH website.

AUCTION

Annual Truck Party was a success

Thanks to the generosity of online bidders, \$32,890 was raised to support TrailBlazer athletic programs at ASUMH during the 2023 Online TrailBlazer auction. A 2011 Chevy Silverado pickup truck was donated to the auction by North Arkansas Electric Cooperative. Ultimate Auto Group provided a safety checkup and upgrades. The high bid went to Dr. Rob and Mindy Conner. Dozens of other prizes were donated by local businesses and bidders participated in the auction for more than a week.

Mel Coleman, NAEC; Mindy Conner; Robin Myers; and members of the TrailBlazer Baseball team.





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PROGRAMS

ASUMH to offer fully online business degrees and certificates starting Fall 2023

ASUMH is set to offer fully online associate of applied science degrees in Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Digital Design, and Programming/Mobile Development starting Fall 2023. Also offered online will be technical certificates in General Business, Information Systems Technology, and Web Development. Certificates of proficiency in Criminal Justice, Graphic Design, Programming/Mobile Development, and Web Development will be included. This decision, approved by the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board, comes in response to increased student demand for flexible learning. While offering these online programs, ASUMH continues to accommodate students preferring traditional formats. More details can be found at www.asumh.edu, or contact the Dean's office at 870-508-6185.



LECTURE SERIES

Eli Cranor to present at Terre Ware Book Author Lecture Series

Award-winning author Eli Cranor will headline the Terre Ware Book Author Lecture Series on Tuesday, October 3, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. in the McClure Convention Center at The Sheid. Hailing from Lake Dardanelle, Arkansas, Cranor's debut novel, "Don't Know Tough", earned him the Peter Lovesey First Crime Novel Contest and was recognized as one of the "Best Books of the Year" by USA Today, and one of the "Best Crime Novels" of 2022 by the New York Times. Cranor also writes regular columns for the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and CrimeReads. The presentation is free; no tickets are required.

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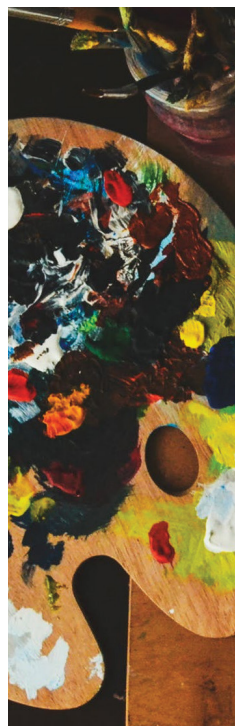


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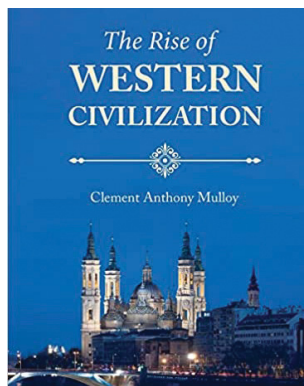
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AUTHOR

ASUMH Faculty Clement Mulloy authors *The Rise of Western Civilization*

Exploring the impact of past civilizations on today's society, *The Rise of Western Civilization* delves into art, literature and social history. Thematic and chronological organization provides insight into empire establishments, government formations and major societal shifts from ancient Greece to early modern Europe. Features like Historical Profiles, Issues and

Connections encourage critical thinking and connect the past with modern relevance. Part of the Cognella History of Europe Series, this text by Clement Anthony Mulloy, an assistant professor at ASU-Mountain Home, is perfect for world and European history survey courses. **All proceeds support the Student Emergency Fund.**

EXPANSION

ASUMH Technical Center Expands

Nearly 6,000 additional feet of space is being added to the ASUMH Technical Center, thanks to Regional Workforce and Delta Regional Authority grants of \$1.5 Million. The space will increase the capacity to add a new marine manufacturing program and aluminum welding. The marine manufacturing program is in response to the nearly 2,000 boat manufacturing jobs in the 120-mile radius around Mountain Home. It will integrate basic tools, electrical, gel coat application, masking, and open and closed molded lamination into the manufacturing of boats and other composite based products. The skills taught in this program also apply to automotive, aviation and other industries. The welding program will see growth as a byproduct of the expansion and CDL truck driving will also be offered in the fall at the center.



LEADERSHIP

ASUMH students attend leadership academy

Emily Davenport, Mattie Belk, and Kinsey Taylor attended the ACC Student Leadership Academy in Little Rock. Since its inception in 2014, the ACC Student Leadership Academy has equipped over 450 Arkansas community college students with leadership skills. These students, nominated by their institution's leaders, participate in sessions aimed at understanding state government processes. This annual event attracts about 100 students.



NEW HIRE

ASU System President Appoints Dr. Bentley Wallace as New Chancellor of ASUMH



Dr. Charles L. Welch, President of the Arkansas State University System, announced Dr. Bentley Wallace as the new chancellor of ASU-Mountain Home. A native of Mountain View

with vast experience in executive leadership, higher education, workforce training and fundraising, Wallace will take over from Dr. Robin Myers, who is retiring on July 31 after 11 years as ASUMH chancellor.

Welch said, "I have known Bentley for a long time and think he is the right person at the right time for ASU-Mountain Home. His strong leadership, management and fundraising skills will

benefit ASU-Mountain Home and its constituencies."

A 12-member Chancellor Search Advisory Committee reviewed 47 applications for the position, and three finalists were interviewed on campus.

Wallace, who previously served at the University of Arkansas Pulaski Technical College and ASU-Newport, said, "I am thrilled to be able to serve students, faculty and staff as the next chancellor of ASU-Mountain Home. Building on a rich history of student success, I am excited to carry on important legacies and blaze new trails while working with the amazing team at ASUMH."

Wallace will assume his new role on Aug. 1.



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SCHOLARSHIP

Bank of Salem Announces New Annual Scholarship for ASUMH Students

The Bank of Salem is set to introduce a new annual scholarship of \$1,000 for a qualifying student in the fields of LPN, RN, Automotive Systems Repair, Machining, Welding, Marine Manufacturing or Mechatronics, says Mary Harris of the Bank of Salem. Eligible scholarship recipients must be current-year graduates from either Salem, Viola or Mammoth Spring, Arkansas. The award will also be available in the fall.

The scholarship will allocate \$500 (half of the total annual award) for the first semester of enrollment. Provided the student maintains the criteria established for receiving the scholarship, the award will continue into the next semester. The ASUMH Scholarship Committee will be responsible for selecting the scholarship recipient.

This is the second annual scholarship that the Bank of Salem has offered to students at ASUMH. The first annual scholarship is awarded to a student from Fulton County.

For further information, please contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid at ASUMH by dialing (870) 508-6100.

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— Kolton & Cheyanne Fraser

KEEP ON TRUCKIN

ASUMH launches CDL program



Victor Beck, ASUMH's director of workforce development in front of one of the semis on campus.

There are few industries as vital to the American standard of living than trucking. Trucking moves 71 percent of all the freight in America, per Market Insider, which in 2019 amounted to 12 billion tons. Freighttech.us goes one step further in describing trucking's importance by sector, noting that trucking logistics move 91 percent of lumber and wood, 83 percent of farming and agricultural produce, 92 percent of prepared dairy, foods and canned goods, and 65 percent of pharmaceutical essentials.

So when trucking sneezes, the nation catches a cold. And nothing has been infecting the industry of late quite like a driver shortage, which has been ongoing for at least a decade. According to the American Trucking Associations, the shortfall of drivers reached 80,000 in 2021. Worse, if left unchecked, the figure could double to 160,000 missing drivers by 2030.

Such statistics are one reason

ASU-Mountain Home has rolled out a new commercial driver's license (CDL) program to do what it can to help ease the pressure felt by local trucking companies as a result of the labor pinch.

"Local industries approached us about trying to get a truck driver program going," said Victor Beck, ASUMH's director of workforce development. "So, we wrote a proposal, and we were awarded a Regional Workforce grant in the amount of about \$500,000 last year."

The college invested the money in two rigs, a trailer and a simulator as well as secured teaching expertise, Beck said.

"We have two trucks and two semis. They're used, but they have less than 400,000 miles, which is not bad for a semi," he said. "Then we have a brand new 53-foot Great Dane trailer. They're all on campus."

The CDL class, available in the fall 2023 semester, is only seven weeks long, so Beck

is keeping the headcount low to afford each student maximum drive time.

"It's all about time in the seat," he said. "If you have too many students, they won't get enough time behind the wheel to go out and pass their practical exam with the State Police. There is nothing by law that says how many hours specifically somebody has to have before they can go and take their practical exam, but the more time they have, the more confidence they have."

Beck said word has spread about the class, resulting in a sizeable number of names on a waiting list to get in. While this fall's small roster is not likely to eliminate the driver shortage any time soon, he's still gratified at the interest.

"We get calls about it all the time; we won't have any problems getting classes filled up for the foreseeable future," he said. "I really think that eventually we'll have to have more than one class going at a time." ■

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DR. ROBIN MYERS

STORY BY DWAIN HEBDA /// PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES MOORE

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The measure of a person's life, it is said, can be seen in what they create and how those creations endure after they have passed from the picture. It is the closest human beings come to immortality to build something so fundamentally solid that future generations benefit from their vision, creativity and hard work.

By this standard — or, frankly, any other — Dr. Robin Myers' place in the historical lexicon of ASU-Mountain Home, to say nothing of the city and region, is solidly assured. As he takes his leave of the chancellor position he has so aptly served for more than a decade, he leaves behind a campus of academic diversity, educational relevance and progressive vision.

Not that you'd know it from talking to him, as he is loathe to take the credit for anything save to spread it around.

"Coming to ASU-Mountain Home was a very alluring opportunity," Myers said. "In my time here, I have been privileged



ACHIEVEMENTS OF ASUMH UNDER DR. ROBIN MYERS' CHANCELLORSHIP

2012

■ Dr. Robin Myers named Chancellor of ASUMH

2012

■ Received \$25,000 Eaton Corporation grant for Technical Programs

2013

■ Gaston Photography Book published for Scholarship Fund

2013

■ Haley Cultural Arts donation received

2013

■ Received \$6,000 SouthShore Foundation grant for Technical Programs

2013

■ Rembrandt etchings display added at Vada Sheid Community Development Center

2014

■ Art Gallery opens
■ New logo adopted for ASUMH

2014

■ Opening of Technical Center and approval by AR Higher Ed Coordinating Board

2015

■ American Apprenticeship Initiative/US Department of Labor grant for \$400,000

2015

■ Second Synthetic Cadaver added to ASUMH Funeral Science Program

to be involved with some very exciting projects, which came to fruition thanks to a lot of work by a lot of people.

"The key to that was, I didn't accomplish anything on my own. I had a lot of help from a lot of very talented and dedicated people on campus and in the community, and what we've done together has benefited the university greatly."

A native of Blytheville, Myers came to ASUMH from his hometown Arkansas Northeastern College, where he'd served as president since 2005. Topping a field of 69 applicants interviewed over a period of three months, he took office as chancellor on Aug. 1, 2012. He leaves 11 years later almost to the day, replaced by Dr. Bentley Wallace, formerly president of South Arkansas College in El Dorado.

"There are a number of new things that are going to develop over the next few years for the college, and as those come to bear, there are things that will take three, four or five years to work through," Myers said of his decision to step down. "I knew I didn't



(Clockwise) Dr. Myers with student ambassadors by the fountain on the ASUMH campus; Dr. Myers with the Bacon Brothers and Vada Sheid Community Development Center; Dr. Myers golfing with Dr. Martin Eggensperger and John Davidson; Dr. Myers running at the 2019 Whoo's Gettin' Dirty fundraiser event at ASUMH.

have that much more time that I wanted to work, so this will enable somebody new to come in and begin doing those things. It was just the right time for me.”

Myers’ tenure can be summed up the same way: The time was right for the kind of steady leadership and bold, audacious thinking by which he is known and from which the institution benefited greatly. It’s difficult to spend any time on campus at all without seeing Myers’ impact, right down to the school’s logo which was redesigned on his watch.

“The impact that Dr. Robin Myers has had on ASUMH and on the Twin Lakes area cannot be overstated,” said Christy Keirn, associate vice chancellor for marketing and community relations. “While

“Dr. Myers has provided extraordinary leadership to the ASU-Mountain Home campus the past 11 years. **His steady guidance has allowed the college to continue to grow and advance, and his gentle nature and highly ethical manner have endeared him to so many on campus and in the community.** Dr. Myers will certainly be missed, but we are all much better for his friendship and leadership.”

— **DR. CHARLES L. WELCH**, *President, Arkansas State University System*

“During my tenure as Mountain Home’s Mayor, collaborating with Dr. Myers was invaluable. **He filled big shoes as ASUMH Chancellor, leaving even larger footprints.** Our achievements together include the quick execution of a Holiday Light Drive-thru show, and the near completion of a trail project linking ASUMH Campus to McCabe Park. As he steps down, he leaves a significant legacy for the next Chancellor.”

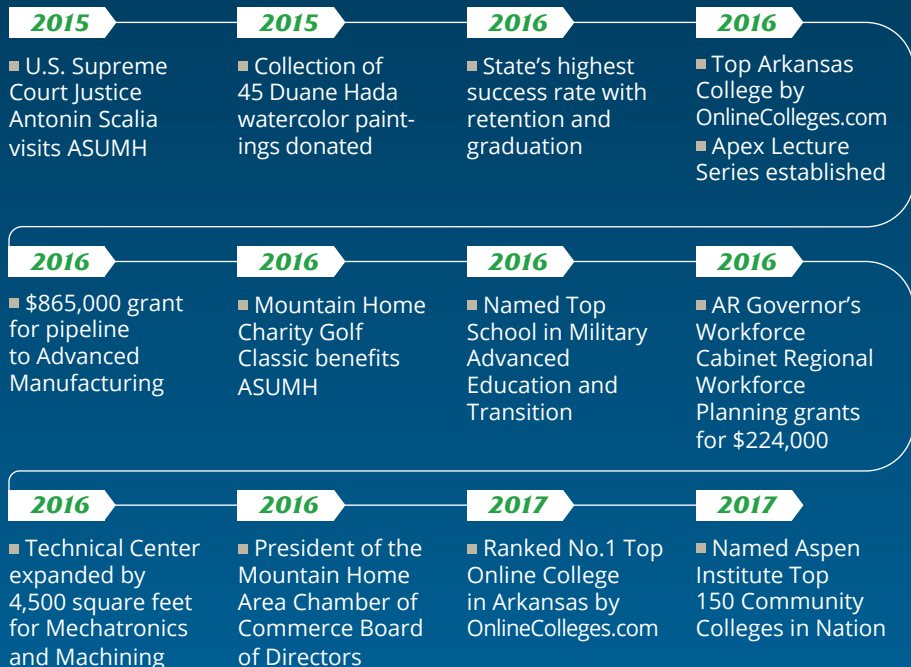
— **HILLREY ADAMS**, *Mayor, City of Mountain Home*



he is humble, his accomplishments and those of ASUMH while he served as chancellor have been truly astounding. The college has grown its footprint, expanded its programming and raised millions of dollars, particularly through grants, thanks to his guidance and leadership.”

A standout among Myers’ achievements is the creation of the Technical Workforce Center in 2014 and the related expansion of workforce training programs. Since 2012, ASUMH has been awarded millions to fund this area of operations, including a \$400,000 American Apprenticeship Initiative/U.S. Department of Labor grant in 2015 and an Arkansas Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Regional Workforce Planning grant for \$224,000 in 2016. That same year, the school received an \$865,000 grant for Pipeline to Advanced Manufacturing.

Following a 4,500-square-foot expansion of the Technical Center in 2016, the

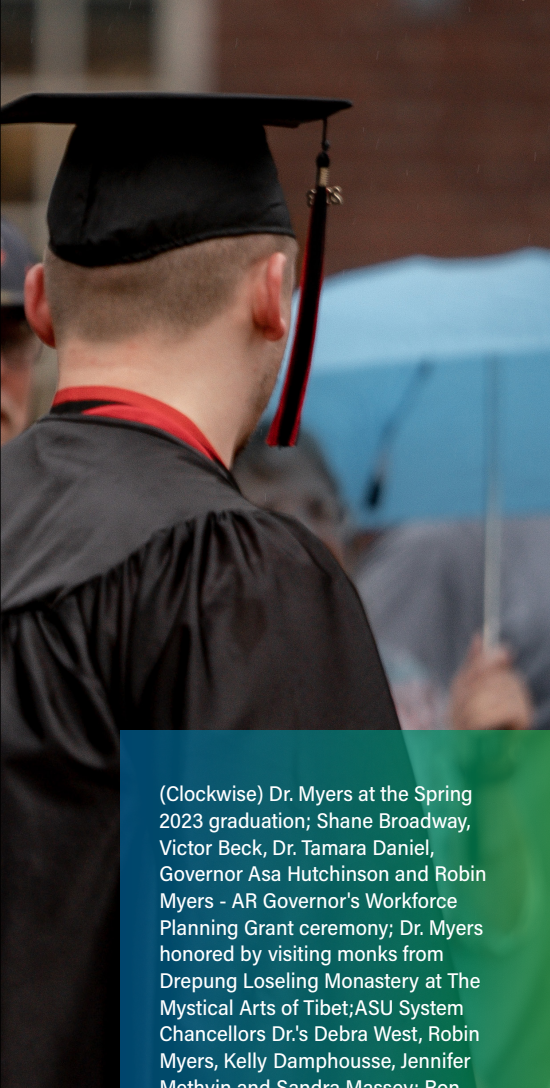


facility was expanded again this year, adding 6,000 square feet to welcome a new marine manufacturing and aluminum welding curriculum. The latter project was funded by \$1.5 million in Regional Workforce and Delta Regional Authority grants.

“When I think of the things we accomplished during my time here, I think for sure it would start with our Technical Center,” Myers said. “Working with our area businesses and industries to define the kinds of training programs that were needed and getting those put together and in place here are a center point of what I’m most proud of.

“I consider that part of being involved with economic development in general, which is something I’ve always done in my career wherever I’ve been and something that I’m glad to have taken part in here.”

Myers balanced the technical programs with improvements in the arts, in campus recreation including a walking trail and disc golf course, and through the creation



(Clockwise) Dr. Myers at the Spring 2023 graduation; Shane Broadway, Victor Beck, Dr. Tamara Daniel, Governor Asa Hutchinson and Robin Myers - AR Governor's Workforce Planning Grant ceremony; Dr. Myers honored by visiting monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery at The Mystical Arts of Tibet; ASU System Chancellors Dr.'s Debra West, Robin Myers, Kelly Dampousse, Jennifer Methvin and Sandra Massey; Ron Peterson, Dr. Myers and Dr. Julia Gist explain the new partnership between MHHS, ASUMH and Baxter Health to help with the nursing shortage in the community.

of intercollegiate sports teams in baseball, softball, cross country, fishing and eSports. These improvements and more spurred interest in ASUMH as part of the highly competitive drive to recruit students to campus.

"Dr. Myers has done a lot of positives on campus without getting any additional funding from the State of Arkansas. It's been pretty impressive to watch," said Sara Zimmerman, a local businesswoman and member of the college's Board of Visitors. "He's maintained the buildings, and the campus looks great. He's added some stuff that other people in the community can enjoy, like the disc golf, which is a good thing.

"Everybody in the community has

"Dr. Robin Myers' time at ASUMH has been marked by quantum leaps. Acknowledging the school's crucial role in economic development, he led a strong push toward readying a workforce through the introduction of several essential vocational programs at the first-class Technical Center established during his incumbency. **His focus on improving student experience introduced intercollegiate sports and an alumni association, initiatives certain to garner loyal support from the school's student body and its graduates.** It has been a pleasure to work alongside Dr. Myers to witness his visions being realized to the benefit of ASUMH and the community."

— JOE MILES, *chairman*
ASUMH Foundation Board of Governors

"Jan's service on the Board of Governors and your shared time with us led to significant achievements during your tenure. Wishing Tracy and you a long, healthy retirement."

— PETER AND JAN PEITZ





enjoyed knowing him and working with him. I never heard a bad word about him or Tracy, his wife, who's also just a super person. They're just good people, and they've been a really good addition to the area. I hate that he's retiring."

The college's steadily expanding curriculum and improved amenities also caught the attention of ranking organizations which brought more positive attention. ASU-Mountain Home topped national rankings overall by OnlineColleges.com (2017) and WalletHub (2018; second in 2019 and 2020) and placed first in multiple categories by Affordable Colleges Online (2018). In addition, ASUMH was named to the Aspen Institute Top 150 Community Colleges in the Nation list (2017, 2019, 2021, 2023).

These accolades alone would be accomplishment enough, but Myers wasn't content to improve the institution in a vacuum. By strengthening relationships and building coalitions throughout the community, he developed cohesive strategies and innovative programs that serve a wider constituency. In one recent example, he was a key driver for the creation

of a career path program that knitted together the college, Mountain Home High School and Baxter Regional to provide a seamless, cost-effective way to expose prospective students to the nursing field, educate them and retain them in Mountain Home after graduation.

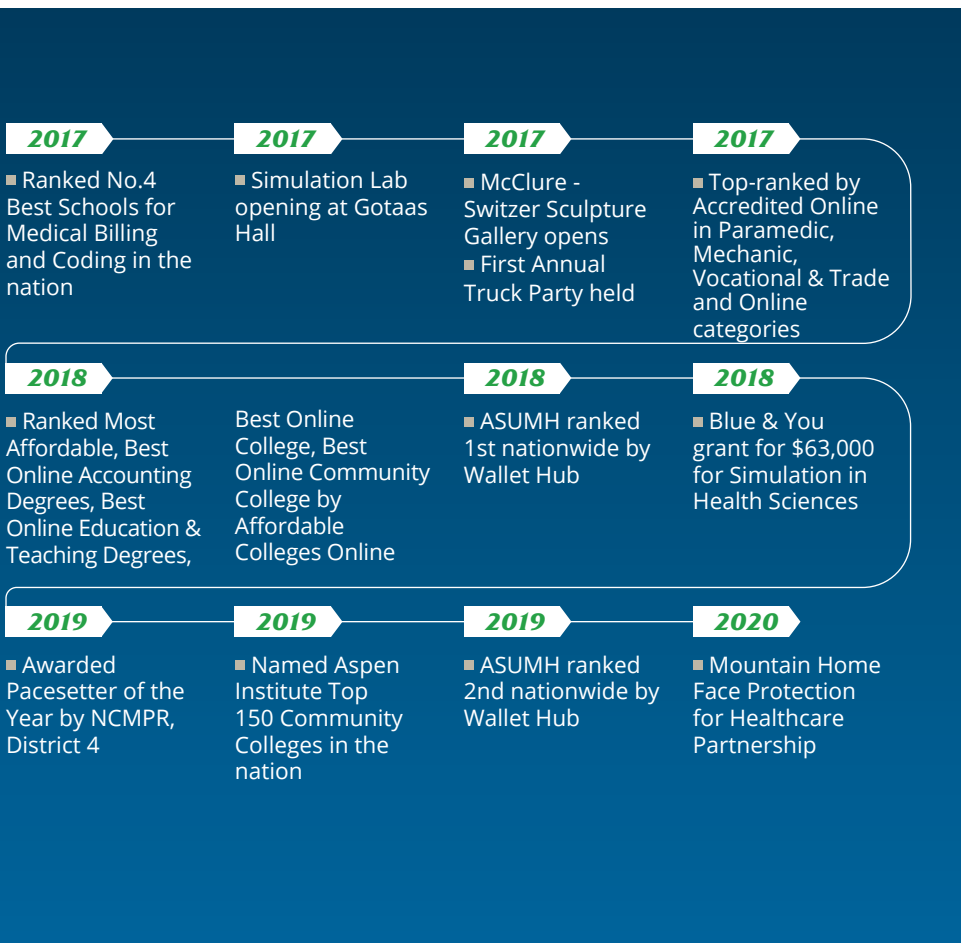
Ron Peterson, president and CEO of Baxter Health, worked alongside Myers on the nursing program as well as other initiatives related to their time on the Mountain Home Chamber of Commerce board. He said Myers' leadership always sought to build consensus rather than dictate orders,

"As Dr. Myers retires, we celebrate his exceptional leadership and the incredible kindness and compassion that have defined his tenure as Chancellor. His unwavering commitment to academic excellence and tireless pursuit of our collective goals have left an indelible mark on ASUMH."

—TAMARA DANIEL, *Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs ASUMH*

an approach predicated on trust.

"Robin is so effective working outside the college or outside the organization, and I think what makes him such an effective leader is his integrity, his honesty and his work energy," Peterson said. "One thing that I've really learned from him is that even if you have a shoestring of a budget, it doesn't mean you shouldn't



(Top Left) Robin Myers and Greg Hunter of Hunter Capital Wealth Advisors; Chris Robinson, Tami Barrow, Robin Myers, Justin Howell, Nathan Lueck, and Sara Zimmerman.

Happy Retirement!

Congratulations on being a great leader in our community. We wish you the best as you enjoy your retirement years.

ED AND LUCRETIA COULTER



What an honor and privilege it was to serve with you on ASUMH Board of Governors. You have accomplished much during your tenure here and will be truly missed. We wish Tracy and you many happy, healthy years of retirement, headquartering out of Mountain Home!

Peter and Jan Peitz

Photo above, celebrating Peter's 85th birthday.

THANK YOU

Dr. Robin Myers

Thank you for your visionary leadership and unwavering dedication.

Your impact on our university community will be cherished and remembered for many generations to come.





dream big and figure out ways to achieve and make things happen.

“It would have been very easy for him to say, ‘The college is on a very tight budget. There’s no way we could build a walking trail for the community.’ And yet look at the beautiful walking trail that’s out there. There are all kinds of things like that on campus with which he’s been so intimately involved, while still being willing to participate in the community.”

The ultimate test of a leader, of course, doesn’t come in good times but rather in how well they execute during periods of adversity. Myers’ reasoned, steady approach in shepherding ASUMH through the COVID-19 pandemic is a vivid example of this fact. Looking back, he reflects less on the challenges of those days — and there were many — than what the period taught faculty and staff about innovation and critical thinking.

“I think COVID taught us a new way of performing some of the functions that we perform as an institution,” he said. “It obviously gave us a much greater ability to provide virtual or on-demand education for people when they need it, where

they need it. Our ability to adjust really enabled us to bring technology to bear and some teaching methodologies to bear that will forever change education. I think we made a 10-year leap in where we are now and what we would have been had it not been for COVID.”

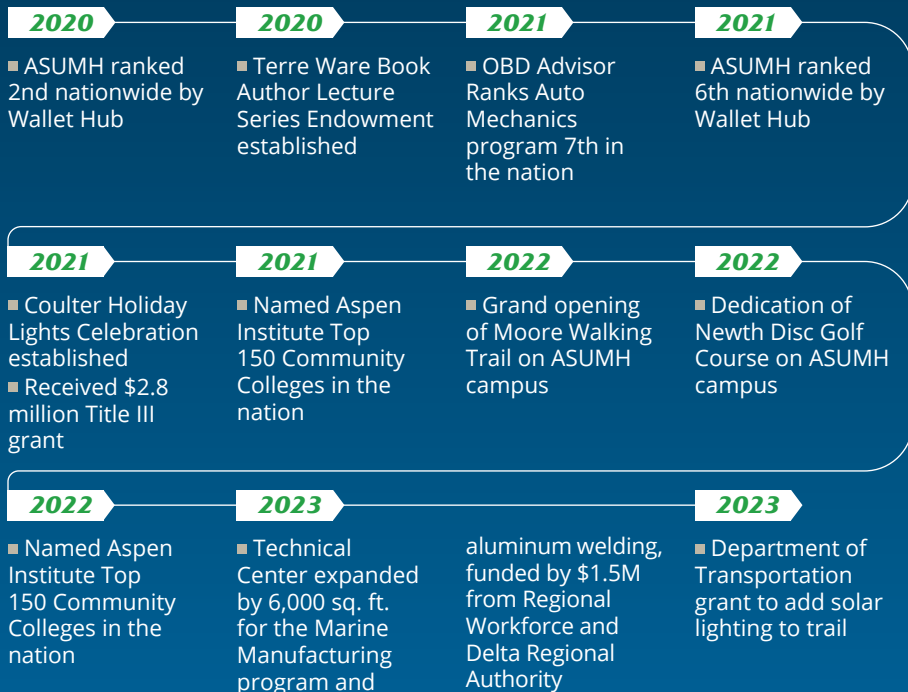
Myers’ next chapter remains fluid, save for the time he plans to spend with family and taking advantage of the area’s natural spaces.

“In this location, there’re plenty of things to do with your time,” he said. “I do like to play golf. My wife loves to fish, so we’re going to fish more and travel a

“It’s been an honor to work with you, my friend. Your leadership, focused on student success, has expanded the college and intertwined it with the community. Now, as you embark on the next chapter, enjoy your well-earned time with Tracy, traveling and experiencing new joys. Best wishes.”

— LAURA NEWTH

little bit. Our son lives in Birmingham, Alabama, and another reason for doing this now is to be able to see him more. I’m sure there are other things that will present themselves, but for right now, we just want to enjoy some of the fruits of having worked 40-plus years.” ■



(Top Left) ASUMH Secondary Center director Nathan Lueck, Senator John Boozman, Dr. Robin Myers; former instructor Aaron Fouraker, local physician Dr. Allison Booth, and Dr. Robin Myers at the ASUMH Tech Center with samples of the 3D printed face shields.

Dr. Robin Myers

You are an inspiration! We wish you the very best in your next life phase and thank you for all of the good works you have contributed to our Mountain Home students and community.

"A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way."



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Play Ball

Chicago transplants launch scholarship to support athletes

by DWAIN HEBDA



Tom and Janie Robbins in front of the main entrance of the ASUMH campus.

Tom and Janie Robbins' introduction and subsequent relocation to Mountain Home mirrors that of many local residents, attracted from colder climates to spend their post-retirement years in the warm, lush Ozark Mountains.

It's what the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, natives did after they arrived here from Chicago, where they'd spent much of their working lives, that sets them apart from the herd.

"We feel like we are part of the community. We've made a lot of good friends here. We're close to a lot of people not only through things at the college but the hospital and the library as well," said Tom. "Janie and I are not wealthy, but we're well off, and we don't mind giving back. When you give here (in Mountain Home), you're giving back to your community, and you see what can happen as a the result."

So it was that after hearing a presentation by Spencer Adcock, ASU-Mountain Home's baseball coach, the couple was inspired to fund their latest philanthropic endeavor.

"The coach talked about how these kids get up early in the morning, and they get the tarp off the baseball field. They practice for a few hours. They go to class. They come back after class and they practice again," Tom said. "So, at the end of it, I said to the coach, 'What kind of scholarships

“

There are about 20-40 kids that are on the baseball team, and every one of them is just so very glad to be here. It is so wonderful to be able to give to younger people who are just getting started.”



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are you giving these kids?’ He said, ‘We don’t have any scholarship money for these kids.’

“I thought, ‘You’re kidding.’ I understand they’re not necessarily pro baseball guys, but that doesn’t matter. If they come and play for us, they’re doing something for the college, and we ought to have a way to give back to those kids.”

The couple’s solution was to launch the Trailblazer Baseball Scholarship to be used for the program. Despite having no previous connection to the school, the Robbins took this initiative as a way to support the next generation, Janie said.

“We started it with \$3,000, but we’re actively looking to raise money from others to help support the team,” she said. “There are about 20-40 kids that are on the baseball team, and every one of them is just so very glad to be here. It is so wonderful to be able to give to younger people who are just getting started.”

This isn’t the first time the couple has given back to the community in such a way. Janie sits on the board of the Schliemann Center for Women’s Health Education through Baxter Health, through which she and Tom donate money to help fund scholarships there.

To the Robbins, whatever impact they can make to improve the lives of others is time and money well spent — a message they frequently share with others.

“If you care about this community, if you care about the future of the country as a whole, then you’re going to support these young people. You have to,” Tom said. “It’s in everybody’s interest to do this. This is something we need to support as a community, and it’s not just supporting baseball. This is supporting young men who are going to be influenced by what happens here. They’re going to be educated, and they’re going to give back to the community at large. I think there’re so many merits to that.” ■

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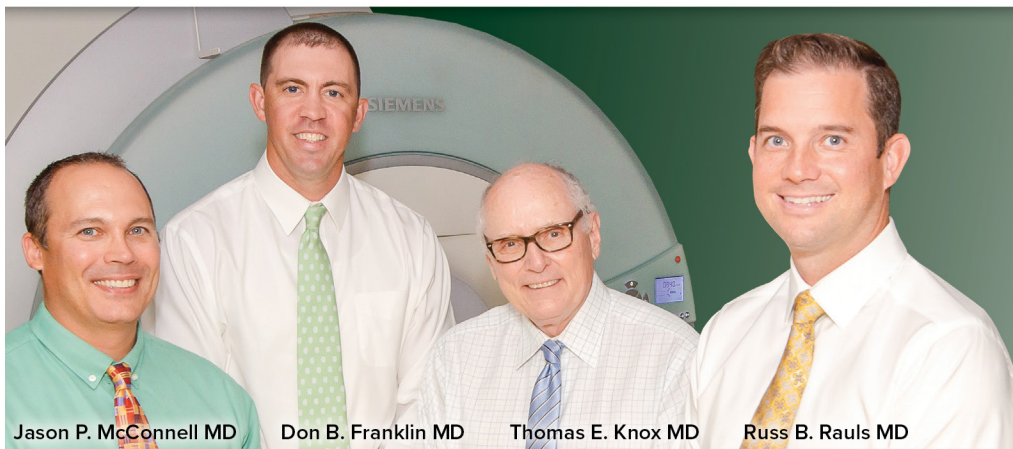
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TWO OF A KIND

A chance meeting in a classroom at ASUMH led to a fruitful professional and personal life together

by DWAIN HEBDA

Collin and Marlie Oxford are as similar as two peas in a pod; both grew up locally, both are just starting their careers as educators and both share the same wonder over having become parents for the first time in February 2023.

And it all started with an Introduction to Education course they both took while pursuing their teaching degrees at ASU-Mountain Home.

“On the first day of class, I was the first one in the classroom, and Marlie was the second one in the classroom,” Collin said.

“I think by the second month, we’d become friends. We did all of our homework and studied together,” Marlie said. “Then, two to three months later, we started dating.”

Growing up in nearby Flippin, Marlie always wanted to be a teacher. Meeting Collin rounded out a longtime dream she’d had for what she wanted to do with her life professionally.

“I think I decided to be a teacher when I was in elementary or middle school. I think it was just because of the impact my teachers had on me and because I loved working with kids,” she said. “I’m not really sure what led me to ASU-Mountain Home but I know, partially, because it was close to home. And it was also easy to transfer to Jonesboro later, which I ended up doing.”

Collin wasn’t as single-minded about his academic or professional path. After



graduating from Mountain Home High School, he spent a year at ASU-Mountain Home, then transferred for a year to the University of Arkansas, still searching for the right fit.

“I really wasn’t sure what I was wanting to major in or anything like that,” he said. “After a long conversation with my parents, I decided to go back to ASU-Mountain Home to do teaching, and I also wanted to be a coach. My second time at ASU-Mountain Home, I stayed and I’m super glad I did.”

ASU-Mountain Home not only played a pivotal role in the couple’s professional development, but throughout their personal relationship as well. After the meeting in class led to a period of dating and courtship, Collin proposed at the flagpoles in front of McLain Hall. The couple was married at the campus amphitheater in April of last year and held their reception at The Sheid.

The two are now happily settling into



their new careers as teachers and as new parents to little Calvin John. Marlie teaches first grade at Nelson-Wilkes-Herron Elementary School while Collin teaches physical education at Mountain Home Kindergarten and is also the assistant basketball coach at Mountain Home Junior High.

“I think it’s really beneficial to be in the same profession,” Marlie said. “In school, it was beneficial because we had some classes together, and we held each other accountable to do our homework. Now, I think it’s beneficial because if something happens during my day, I can come home and talk to him about it, and he understands on a different level what I go through during my day.”

“It’s really awesome to have that support system,” agreed Collin. “Just being in your own home and knowing exactly what it takes to do your job and understanding the demands of your spouse’s job just makes for a happier home life.” ■

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CLASS OF 2004

LeQuita Foster, a 32-year veteran at ASUMH, has earned various degrees and numerous awards, including ASUMH Outstanding Employee of the Year and recognition as a top Arkansas State Employee. Besides her professional contributions, she is also known for her community involvement, serving in organizations like Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and 4-H. Married to David Foster since 1973, she is a proud parent, grandparent and great-grandparent.



CLASS OF 2004

Abijah Kratochvil, a 2004 alumnus of ASUMH, graduated with his Juris Doctorate from the University of Arkansas Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law on May 13th, 2023. Following his graduation, he and his husband Frankie moved to Northwest Arkansas. Kratochvil is slated to sit for the Arkansas bar exam in July.

CLASS OF 2010

David McBea, Executive Vice President at Arvest Bank, is an esteemed ASU graduate. Recognized as "Arkansan of the Week" and a Modern Woodmen Hometown Hero, he is a dedicated public servant. He has served as a Bull Shoals City Councilman and currently sits on the boards of School of New Hope and Arisa Health.

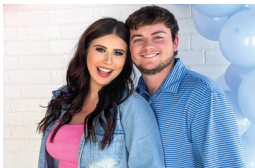


CLASS OF 2013

Audrey Pace enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 2019 and while stationed in Germany, used her ASUMH Business Associate degree to quickly complete her bachelor's in Management Studies. After graduation, she transitioned from Staff Sergeant to Second Lieutenant through a commissioning program. Now a graduate of Officer Training School, Pace is stationed at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas.

CLASS OF 2014

Brandon Barnes, co-owner of Mountain Home Laundromat and Arvest Bank Commercial Lender, is a devoted father and husband. Besides his professional pursuits, he actively engages in real estate and enjoys lake time with his family. A proud attendee of the Real Life Church, Barnes embodies the balance of work, family and faith.



CLASS OF 2017

Brooke Barnes Grissum and her husband recently discovered that they are expecting a baby girl this fall. Additionally, Brooke has just celebrated her one-year work anniversary at Ultimate Auto Group, where she serves as their Marketing Specialist.

CLASS OF 2023

Paul Stepp is currently pursuing a Master's in General Psychology in the fall of 2023 and looking forward to the opportunities this new academic journey will offer.

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Leading By Example

Dr. Myers' dedication to students and faculty alike cultivated an atmosphere of growth, community and achievement on campus by DR. REBECCA BAIRD

On their first day of classes, many students met a quiet, unassuming man at the campus fountain. He asked, "How can I help you?" Then, more often than not, he escorted the students to their classrooms. Most of the students thought he was a kind staff member and never knew the Chancellor of ASUMH just took time from his day to do what he always does—put students first.

He puts all students first, GED, technical, or transfer. Working with local industries and businesses, he created the ASUMH Technical Center for students who needed workforce training. Recent additions are marine technology and truck driving. Cassie Jankowski Jones, an ASUMH student, summed him up as someone who sees what needs to be done and does it — "a man of quiet work and progress."

Dr. Myers is a direct advocate for

student life. Kelly Baker, an ASUMH student, noted that Dr. Myers personally purchased candy for booths at the Haunted Trail and Treat event when booths ran out. She said, "He puts students, staff, and faculty before himself and is always willing to get his hands dirty and help wherever needed." Students feel heard, supported, and encouraged to excel academically, personally, and now athletically. Under his guidance, ASUMH is one year in to offering athletics on our campus.

Dr. Myers is also committed to faculty. Lucy Haun, in our nursing program, said, "Part of his devotion to the university is providing educators with what they need to be able to do their jobs so that students can be successful." For example, when Covid affected our campus, he championed initiatives in technology to enhance teaching and content

delivery. "Zoom" quickly became a verb everyone on campus understood.

By promoting a supportive work environment and investing in staff training and advancement opportunities, Dr. Myers has nurtured a dedicated team committed to providing quality education and services to students. As he once told a Leadership class, his inclusive leadership style means, "Hiring the experts and stepping back to let them function in their areas as the experts they are."

Under his leadership, ASUMH has consistently been named a top 10 college by WalletHub. That is a national achievement led by the unassuming man who walks across campus looking for opportunities to engage and to serve. He will always be welcome to come home to ASUMH—we'll have donuts brought in, especially for him. ■

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There are periodicity limits on covered services. Cosmetic procedures are not covered under this benefit. *Ohana Health Plan, a plan offered by Wellcare Health Insurance of Arizona, Inc. Wellcare is the Medicare brand for Centene Corporation, an HMO, PPO, PFFS, PDP plan with a Medicare contract and is an approved Part D Sponsor. Our D-SNP plans have a contract with the state Medicaid program. Enrollment in our plans depends on contract renewal. Arizona D-SNP plans: Contract services are funded in part under contract with the State of Arizona. New Mexico (NM) Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP) Members: As a Wellcare by Allwell D-SNP member, you have coverage from both Medicare and Medicaid. Medicaid services are funded in part by the state of New Mexico. NM Medicaid benefits may be limited to payment of Medicare premiums for some members. Louisiana D-SNP prospective enrollees: For detailed information about Louisiana Medicaid benefits, please visit the Medicaid website at <https://ldh.la.gov/medicaid>. Notice: TennCare is not responsible for payment for these benefits, except for appropriate cost sharing amounts. TennCare is not responsible for guaranteeing the availability or quality of these benefits. Any benefits above and beyond traditional Medicare benefits are applicable to Wellcare Medicare Advantage only and do not indicate increased Medicaid benefits." Indiana D-SNP prospective enrollees: For detailed information about Indiana Medicaid benefits, please visit the Medicaid website at <https://www.in.gov/medicaid/>. Wellcare by Allwell (HMO and HMO SNP) includes products that are underwritten by Superior HealthPlan, Inc. and Superior HealthPlan Community Solutions, Inc. Wellcare (HMO and HMO SNP) includes products that are underwritten by Wellcare of Texas, Inc., Wellcare National Health Insurance Company, and SelectCare of Texas, Inc. Washington residents: Health Net Life Insurance Company is contracted with Medicare for PPO plans. "Wellcare by Health Net" is issued by Health Net Life Insurance Company. "Wellcare" is issued by Wellcare of Washington, Inc. "Wellcare" is issued by Wellcare Health Insurance Company of Washington, Inc.

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