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Chancellor's Annual Report

Office of the Chancellor

2015

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THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

BUILDING *on* TRADITION

Chancellor's 2015 Annual Report





Painting the Rock at dawn. Ascending the Hill. Belting out “Rocky Top.” Sporting the Power T. Seeing the glow of a torch that forever unites us as Volunteers. These are the memories we treasure. They form traditions that tell our story and ignite the Volunteer spirit.

The intersections of our past and future traditions are visible everywhere. To the north, Sophronia Strong Hall is transforming from a residence hall to a modern academic facility. A block away, the College of Law celebrates 125 years, and to the south, Thompson-Boling Arena hosts science guru Bill Nye and one of his largest-ever crowds.

All of these traditions brand us as Volunteers. The impact Volunteers have on the state, the nation, and the world is immeasurable. Across all disciplines, students are engaging in hands-on learning through the new Experience Learning initiative. And faculty members such as Brian Wirth are receiving national accolades for outstanding achievements in their fields.

The highlight of my year was the Big Orange Bus Tour. We spent a week traveling across the state of Tennessee on a bus, meeting with prospective students, business leaders, and alumni. I had the privilege of giving out the first acceptance letter for fall 2016 to a student in Kingsport, Tennessee.

We honor the past as we continue to build for the future. It’s been six years since we began our journey to become a Top 25 public research university. We’ve worked hard and we’ve made great progress, but we are still striving toward our goal. Our stories reflect the progress we’ve made—whether it’s on Rocky Top or high above the earth, in space. I hope these stories will give you a glimpse of the great work that’s happening at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Jimmy G. Cheek
Jimmy G. Cheek, Chancellor



Architectural detail
inside Ayres Hall.

founded 1794

221
YEARS

Tradition speaks of a storied past. Held in high regard by the present, it forges a strong future. Our traditions fuel the Volunteer spirit and our culture at the University of Tennessee.



“The brain is stunningly complex, yet we know so little about it. We have to first understand how it functions at a basic level before devising effective diagnostic methods and treatment options for neurological disorders. The only way to do that is through research.”

—Sahba Seddighi, senior,
College Scholars Program

We are creating new experiences for our students...

Experiencing Learning

Getting dusty on an archaeological dig in Jordan. Studying brains to find treatments for neurological disorders. Wading into streams to analyze stormwater. Our students are more motivated than ever to graduate empowered and ready to contribute to a global society. Our new initiative, Experience Learning, is getting them there by providing resources and support to assist faculty in creating engaging opportunities for critical reflection, collaboration, and hands-on problem solving.

experiencelearning.utk.edu

“In your junior and senior year, the College of Social Work has field placement, which gives you a great chance to apply what you’ve learned. Working as a team tells you about yourself and about other people. That’s what we’re doing out here—working together.”

—**Conner McMillan**
serving as a counselor
at the Blue Ridge
Institute’s Youth
Leadership Academy



The four student
learning outcomes of
Experience Learning.

...and investing in sustainable infrastructure...

Photo courtesy of Bruce McCamish



A Campus in Transformation

Our campus is growing up—literally. And it's bringing smart technology and modern sustainable design with it.

Two new residence halls on the west end of campus are nearing completion, as is the exterior façade of a new residence hall, parking garage, and dining complex located at the former site of Gibbs Hall. The halls will welcome a combined 1,358 student residents and will include living and learning communities.

In the former footprint of Sophronia Strong Hall, a beautiful eight-story modern science class and laboratory facility of the same name is rapidly rising.

The doors of the Student Union opened to welcome visitors last summer, revealing a redesigned Vol Shop and new dining facilities. Construction on the second, larger phase of the multipart complex continues on track.

The removal of UT's 300-foot smokestack ends our reliance on coal-produced steam. Our environmentally sustainable switch to natural gas brings a 50 percent reduction in utilities emissions and a two-thirds reduction in carbon dioxide emissions. Saying goodbye has never been sweeter—or cleaner.

conezone.utk.edu



The naming of the Frieson Black Cultural Center was a historic moment for UT, thanks to a generous gift from sibling alumni Don and Ron Frieson.

Students ascend the stairs of the new Student Union.



...to support the needs of future Vols.



Big Orange Road Trip

In Big Orange Country, we take our road trips seriously. Logging more than 1,300 miles, the chancellor, provost, and staff from student life, alumni affairs, communications, and admissions traveled across Tennessee as part of the Chancellor's Big Orange Bus Tour. The tour group met with alumni groups and business leaders as well as students at nine high schools in eight cities. At each school, Chancellor Cheek and others spoke to students about the value of a UT education and our Volunteer traditions. Many schools welcomed the tour group with bands playing "Rocky Top," cheerleaders, and color guards.

Cheek presented acceptance letters to fifty prospective students. "Meeting more than 4,000 high school students and visiting with alumni was so rewarding," he said. "It reminds me of the Volunteer Spirit our students and alumni all share—it's a special thing to be called a Vol."

tiny.utk.edu/bustour



"You know that @utknoxville is your future home when they come to your school to hand deliver your acceptance letter and your smile is ear to ear #newvols Congrats to everyone else accepted today!"



KINGSPORT
CHATTANOOGA
MURFREESBORO
MOUNT JULIET
NASHVILLE
JACKSON
MEMPHIS
KNOXVILLE

The Power T celebrated its
50th anniversary in 2015.

Our traditions keep us united and energized...



Electrified by a stadium bursting with orange-clad fans belting out “Rocky Top,” the Vols dominated the Northwestern Wildcats at the Outback Bowl on New Year’s Day. The 45–6 win over Northwestern marked the largest margin of victory ever for the Vols in a bowl game.



Fifty Years of the Power T

The anticipation in Neyland Stadium builds. When the Pride of the Southland Band breaks open to form the Power T, the fans erupt as the Volunteers take the field. There are few more electrifying moments in college athletics, and it’s difficult to imagine a time when this tradition did not exist.

In 1965 coach Doug Dickey and band director WJ Julian joined forces to hype up Vol fans in the season opener at Neyland Stadium against Army. The plan worked—the Vols won the game 21–0, and the entrance stuck. The only change came in 1983, when the Vols’ locker room moved under the north stands and the Power T began forming from north to south instead of east to west. Celebrating its golden anniversary in 2015, the Power T opens all home games and has been named one of the top ten entrances in college football. It’s a key UT tradition, with a capital T.

tiny.utk.edu/traditions





...as we share knowledge to help others near and far...

Since 1993, students in Professor Robert Heller's advanced photojournalism course have focused their lenses on LaFollette, Tennessee. An ongoing project, "Eyes on LaFollette" has captured thousands of poignant moments and sparked conversations about the lives of the townspeople.

Photo courtesy of Andy Ashby

Rewarding Engagement

Nothing better embodies the Volunteer spirit than when our researchers and students engage with our communities. Some of our partnerships have been in place for decades and have positively impacted thousands of lives.

These efforts have been recognized by the Carnegie Foundation, which awarded UT Knoxville and the UT Institute of Agriculture the joint designation of Community Engaged Institution. With the classification, UT joined a group of 240 institutions—of which only forty-seven are public universities. As we continue our journey to the Top 25, we are deepening the impact of our engagement with new programs such as the Smart Communities Initiative, which selects one Tennessee community each year and brings together dozens of faculty and students from multiple classes to help address its particular needs. It is truly the Volunteer spirit in action.

Clockwise from top: A) Since 1993, the Biology in a Box program has partnered with K-12 schools to enhance their life sciences curriculum and encourage student interest in STEM disciplines through hands-on experience. **B)** Since 1946, the nation's longest-running legal clinic has served the community, encouraging future pro bono service and educating law students to become thoughtful, skilled, and ethical attorneys. **C)** Since 1991, students and faculty have worked to research biodiversity, help stem the spread of invasive species, and preserve the natural and cultural history of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Read about these and other partnerships at engagement.utk.edu.



A photograph of three diverse women walking together on a paved path on a university campus. The woman on the left is wearing a green shirt, blue jeans, and a pink patterned scarf. The woman in the middle is wearing a teal shirt and black pants. The woman on the right is wearing a dark blazer, white top, black pants, and a yellow scarf. They are all smiling and appear to be in conversation. In the background, there is a large, multi-story brick building with many windows and a prominent arched entrance. Green trees and bushes are visible around the path, and a black metal bench is on the right side of the frame.

...and broaden the diversity of our campus community.

Betting on Winners

Mario Grant had his life changed by a Pepsi bottle—or, more specifically, by learning about the processes for making the bottle, filling it with soda, and shipping it to stores for purchase by thirsty consumers. The rising high school senior from Memphis once envisioned a career in aviation, but after that visit to Pepsi, he realized supply chain management was his calling and UT's top-five program would help him get there.

Grant, now a sophomore at UT majoring in supply chain with an information management collateral, had his career-changing experience while attending the Business Education for Talented Students program (BETS), run by the Haslam College of Business. BETS has become a valuable recruiting tool—more than 40 percent of attendees enroll at UT, with the majority choosing to pursue a business degree. The program is funded by several corporate sponsors committed to developing a diverse workforce.

tiny.utk.edu/BETSProgram

BETS, which began in 2008, introduces high school students to the dynamic world of business and business careers. It's open to high-achieving students from underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic groups, first-generation students, and those from lower economic backgrounds.

“The BETS program introduced me to what businesses actually do. Going on site visits, meeting professionals, having those conversations, I got a chance to see how business was actually done. I saw the bigger picture.”

—Mario Grant



Our faculty are leaders in their fields,



Brian Wirth is the Governor's Chair for Computational Nuclear Engineering.

The Nuclear Component

With matters concerning nuclear energy, it's best to leave things to the experts. At UT, we are proud to call Brian Wirth—one of the nation's leading researchers in the performance of nuclear fuels and environments—a Vol.

Wirth's research uses high-performance computing, materials science, and nuclear engineering to study every aspect of nuclear energy, from reactors to containment. Ultimately, he and his team of researchers are working to develop radiation-resistant high-performance materials for advanced nuclear fission and fusion energy applications. In 2015 Wirth was awarded the highest honor a US Department of Energy midcareer researcher can achieve when he received the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award.

tiny.utk.edu/wirth

Wirth wears the medal he received with the Ernest Orlando Lawrence Award.



“I have the best faculty position in the world. The award is an affirmation of the time and energy committed to this research and that my group's work is valued as an important contribution to national interests.”

—Brian Wirth

Bill Nye the Science Guy
prepares to greet his audience
at Thompson-Boling Arena.

Photo courtesy of Saul Young/
Knoxville News Sentinel



...yet we are enlightened by knowledge brought by others.

A Moment of Science

When more than 8,000 people get pumped up about science, you know something's working. Speaking to one of the largest live audiences of his career, Bill Nye the Science Guy brought the geek speak up several notches at Thompson-Boling Arena. Nye's lecture was the first in the Ken and Blaire Mossman Distinguished Lecture series, part of an alumni estate gift from the late couple. The Mossmans, who met as students in 1968, established the series to share the power and wonder of science with the campus and greater community. Nye certainly accomplished that by discussing climate change and space exploration while repeatedly prodding the audience: "With your brains, you can—dare I say it?—change the world."



 **@MassSpecMaven**

"If you're working on #energy, especially #renewables, you're going to CHANGE THE WORLD." Hey @BredesenCenter, that's us!! #billnyeutk"

"I want millennials, the people in the audience today, to be the next great generation."

—Bill Nye

Our mission to educate is born from humble beginnings...

COLLEGE OF LAW

125 Years of Justice

From its humble origins with nine students and one instructor, the College of Law has grown to become one of the nation's top law schools, with its clinical program ranked in the top 20 for both public and private schools. The college celebrated its 125th anniversary in the fall and launched an ambitious fundraising campaign to help ensure its continued vitality for years to come.

Looking toward the future, the college also finalized a new advanced degree—a Master of Laws in US business law. The program, which welcomes its first students in fall 2016, will prepare attorneys with specialized knowledge for practice in a global marketplace.

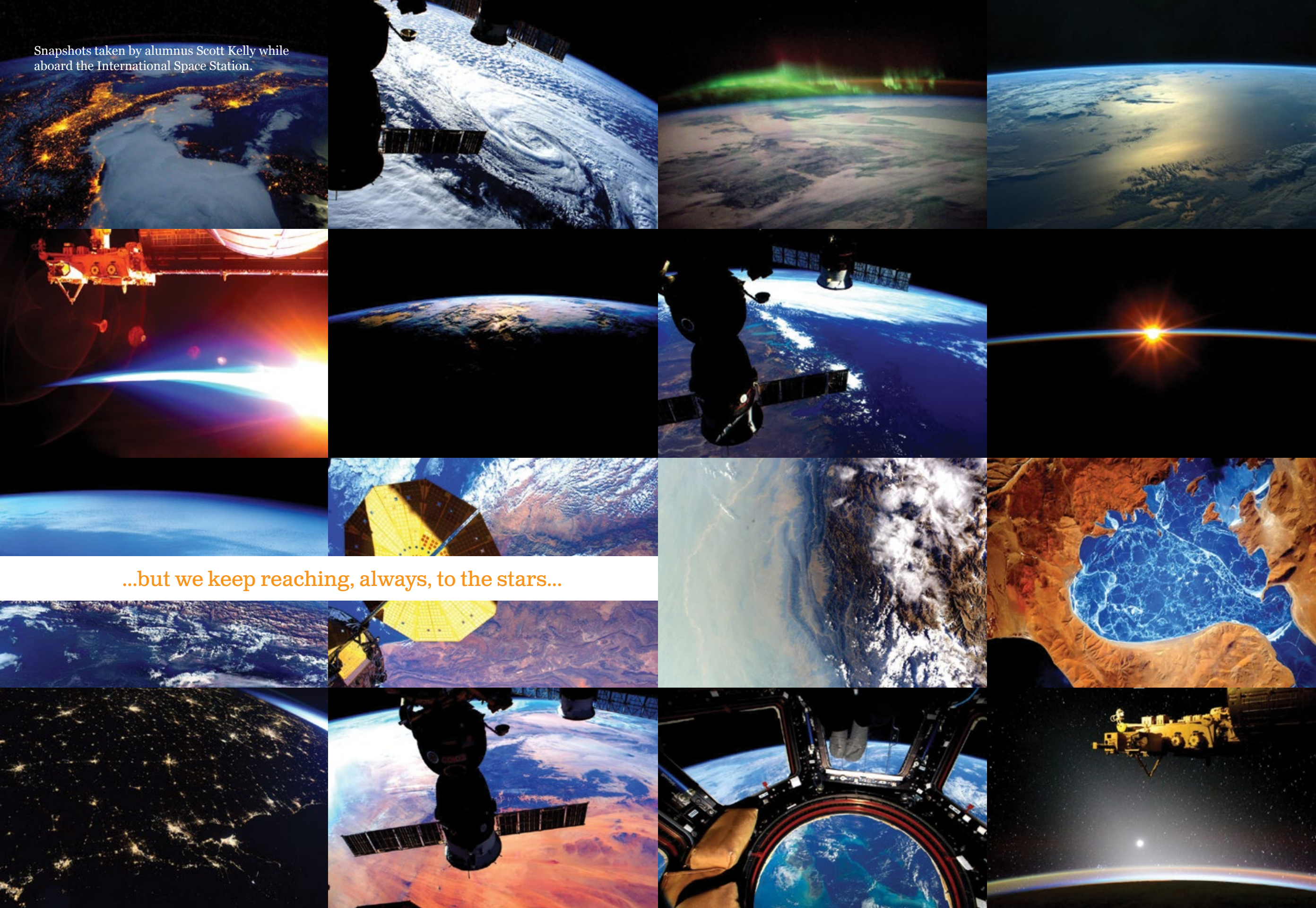
UT Law alumna and adjunct faculty member Regina Lambert played a significant role in the historic US Supreme Court ruling that legalized same-sex marriage, representing two of the plaintiffs.

law.utk.edu

Right: The College of Law was housed in Tennessee Hall from 1927 until 1950, when it moved to the Taylor Law Center. Below: The Law Library in its former location in the building named Old College, now the site of Ayres Hall.



Snapshots taken by alumnus Scott Kelly while
aboard the International Space Station.



...but we keep reaching, always, to the stars...

The Final Frontier

The year 2015 was arguably one of the most significant in space exploration since the end of the Apollo era, and much of that news had a Big Orange tint. Alumnus Scott Kelly set a record for the most days spent in space by an American and was named Scientist of the Year by *R&D Magazine*.

When NASA had its flyby of Pluto, senior geology student Chad Melton was among the first to see the historic images beamed back to Earth. Melton was working at the New Horizons Mission Operations Center as part of his undergraduate research experience with Assistant Professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences Josh Emery, a leading authority on Kepler Belt objects.

NASA finally confirmed evidence of flowing water on Mars. That finding built upon the discoveries of the Mars Curiosity rover, whose team has included several UT researchers over the years.

Follow Scott
Kelly's tweets:
[@stationcdrkelly](https://twitter.com/stationcdrkelly).



 @stationcdrkelly

“Today is a new
day with limitless
possibilities to do
great things.
#GoodMorning from
@Space_Station
#YearInSpace”

Rendering of the Ken and Blaire Mossman Building, a state-of-the-art laboratory and classroom facility scheduled to open by fall 2018.

...so our torch may shine brightly for those who follow.

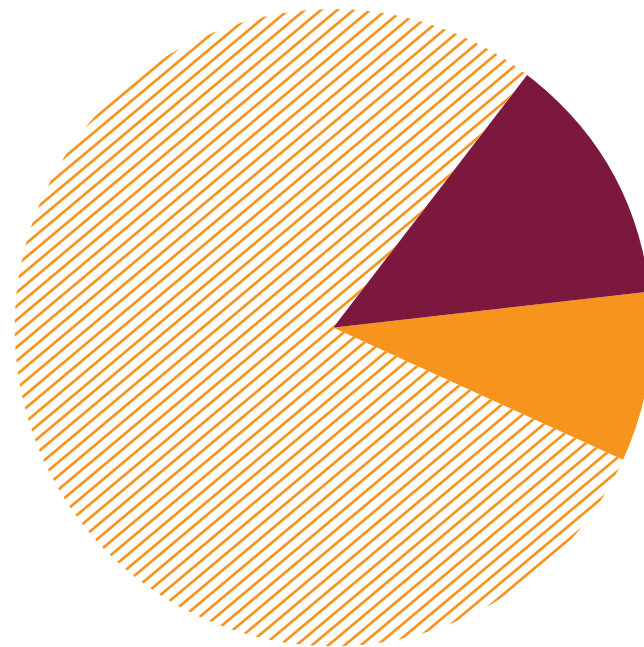


Shared Successes

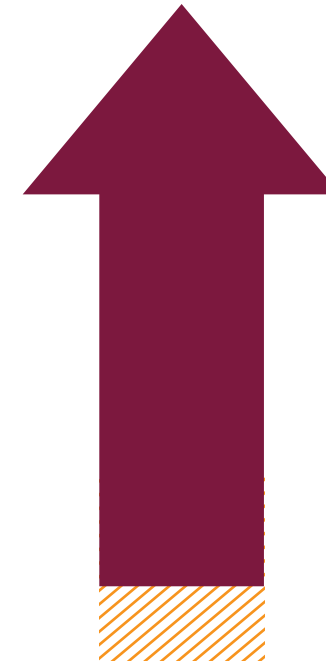
The stories within this report explore the engaging learning experiences of our students, the far-reaching impact of our research, and the award-winning work of our faculty. We would not have such stories to tell without the donors who helped us achieve a record year for fundraising with nearly \$235 million in contributions. About half of all gifts were less than \$100. This record reflects the excitement our alumni and friends feel about investing in our future. They are committed to and believe in our journey to become a Top 25 public research university.



Almost \$235 million donated—more than \$100 million above the previous year



\$20 million for new scholarships and \$30 million for new faculty awards



3,100 new donors in 2015



Contributions from more than 39,000 alumni, friends, and corporate donors

**52 PROJECTS
RECEIVED MORE THAN
\$57,000
THROUGH UT'S
CROWDFUNDING SITE,
VOLSTARTER**

Ruth Hagler, a sophomore studying social work, used VOLstarter to help fund her trip to England with the UT Chamber Singers in 2015. “Canterbury Cathedral, St. Paul’s Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey were grandiose places of worship.

It was an amazing challenge to be able to sing in those spaces,” she says. The experience brought to life her UT musicology courses, where she learned about the composers and musicians who had performed at the same sites.

volstarter.utk.edu



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

BIG ORANGE. BIG IDEAS.

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