

# ASHFORD

CONNECTIONS

*AU Alumni Magazine*

ISSUE 09 / Fall/Winter 2014

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 3/ WELCOME LETTER**  
Campus Director Dr. Charlie Minnick welcomes readers to the issue.
- 6/ STUDENT SPOTLIGHT**  
Service trips, Golden Key chapter honored, and athletics.
- 10/ FACULTY SPOTLIGHT**  
Dr. Karen Bakuzonis, Kathleen Kelley, and Matthew Bambrick are profiled.
- 16/ ALUMNI GUEST ARTICLE**  
A fellow alum talks about perseverance in pursuing goals.

## FALL 2014 COMMENCEMENT

**12/** For the first time, commencement was hosted in San Diego where alumni speaker, Regina Scott, brought her uplifting message to graduates.



### 4/ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Get inspired by Jeff Hobbs, and catch up with Josh Morgan in the Magic Kingdom.



### 14/ CAMPUS CHANGES

Say hello to new Deans and bid a fond farewell to a longstanding member of the Saints family.



### 20/ ALUMNI AND CAREER SERVICES

Read about the latest Industry Insight Tours and get tips on preparing for an interview.

ISSUE  
**09**  
Fall/Winter 2014

BELOW LEFT: Jeff Hobbs on the track at South Campus.  
For more, see page 4.  
BELOW RIGHT: Students from Clinton pause for a group shot during a service trip. For more, see page 6.



**SHOW YOUR ASHFORD PRIDE**

SHOP FOR APPAREL • ALUMNI GEAR ACCESSORIES • SALE ITEMS  
ASHFORD.EDU/GEAR-SHOP

**CONTENTS**

- 3/ WELCOME LETTER**  
by Charlie Minnick, Campus Director and Vice President
- 4/ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT**  
Jeff Hobbs and Josh Morgan are profiled.
- 6/ STUDENTS**  
Get the latest news from the student body.  
6/ Service Trips  
8/ Golden Key Chapter Honored  
9/ Spring Athletics Highlights
- 10/ FACULTY SPOTLIGHT**  
Meet Dr. Karen Bakuzonis and Kathleen Kelley. Also, an alum and adjunct faculty member joins the Faculty Senate.
- 12/ COMMENCEMENT**  
See highlights from the Fall 2014 commencement weekend in San Diego, CA.
- 13/ ALUMNI SPEAKER**  
Ashford alum and LAPD Commander, Regina Scott, brings her uplifting message to Ashford graduates.
- 14/ CAMPUS CHANGES**  
Meet new Deans and bid farewell to Flora Lowe.

- 16/ ALUMNI GUEST ARTICLE**  
Ashford alum, Paul Schmick, tells his story of perseverance and reward.
- 18/ HISTORY**  
Learn the history of Champ and meet some Mount St. Clare graduates.
- 20/ INDUSTRY INSIGHT TOURS & CAREER SERVICES**  
Visits to Amazon and Taylor Guitars. Interview preparation is a must.
- 22/ FORBES SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  
A recap of the 2014 Distinguished Speaker Series, and the winner of the Senior Project Scholarship.
- 24/ SOCIAL MEDIA CORNER**  
Visit the new social media page for inspirational graphics and more!
- 25/ PROGRAM LIST**

MAIN COVER PHOTO:  
Regina Scott, Ashford class of 2009, was invited to speak at the fall 2014 commencement ceremony held in San Diego, CA on October 5, 2014.

ASHFORD CONNECTIONS IS PUBLISHED SEMI-ANNUALLY BY ALUMNI RELATIONS.

Editor: Laurie Bianchi  
Art Director: David Dickey  
Designers: Brent Field  
Production: Jason Mandell  
Contributors: Dr. Charlie Minnick, Brian Burmeister, Larry Libberton, Audra Adams, Ben Gothia, Ryan Thomas, Laurie Bianchi, Kelly Dahlke, Eileen Piersa, Paul Schmick, Ron Gaschler, Mary Knowles, Richard Rathburn, Tamara Small, Christa Martin, Gillian Molina

The content of the articles does not necessarily represent the views of Ashford University or Ashford Connections, its faculty or staff members, or any other individuals associated with the organization or the publication. Ashford Connections reserves the right to edit or reject articles for space, style, and clarity.



Dr. Charlie Minnick became the Vice President and Campus Director of Ashford University in 2014.

by Dr. Charlie Minnick

**DR. CHARLIE MINNICK**

**Vice President/Campus Director**

**GREETINGS FROM ASHFORD UNIVERSITY!**

As I write this, the Clinton weather is changing from summer's heat to the cooler days of autumn. We are already in the midst of the fall 2014 semester; it's always exciting to welcome new students to the Clinton campus. Their fresh enthusiasm reinvigorates our staff and faculty.

As alumni, you are an important part of the heritage of our university. Whether you spent time on the Clinton campus or were an online student, we want our relationship to continue. As we move forward we would like to tap into your experience and your expertise in the "real world." How could you help our current students: mentoring, providing internships at your places of business, giving a presentation? We'd like to hear your ideas; please email them to us at [alumni@ashford.edu](mailto:alumni@ashford.edu).

We recently welcomed two new campus deans - Dr. Mike Burton and Dr. Lee Cartwright; read about them on **page 14**. And while we welcomed these two campus leaders, we bid farewell to Flora Lowe, who served as Library Director here for 34 years; I'm sure campus alumni from the past three decades will remember her. A story about Flora is on **page 15**.

“  
*As alumni, you are an important part of the heritage of our university.*  
”

We invite you to stop by and visit us to see the many improvements that were made to campus this summer. Campus grads will surely marvel at the changes. If you're an online student and have never been to Clinton, add "a trip to my alma mater" to your bucket list. We're proud of this place, and we're always glad to show it off to our alumni.

Always remember: this is your university.

Remember to visit our websites:  
[ashford.edu](http://ashford.edu),  
[go.ashford.edu](http://go.ashford.edu)  
[ashfordathletics.com](http://ashfordathletics.com)

And add your voice to the conversation! Share your stories at [facebook.com/ashforduniversity](https://facebook.com/ashforduniversity) and [facebook.com/ashforducampus](https://facebook.com/ashforducampus).

Go Saints!



Dr. Charlie Minnick  
Vice President/Campus Director

# JEFF HOBBS LIVES BY A CODE: "NEVER GIVE UP."

by Brian Burmeister

Like many children, Jeff fell in love with sports at a young age. He loved the camaraderie. He loved the competition. He loved the cheers of the crowd. Unlike most children, Jeff was born with spastic cerebral palsy.

Time and again, Jeff would be told sports weren't for him. Due to his cerebral palsy, Jeff's muscles involuntarily and continuously contract, impairing but not preventing his movement. In elementary school, Jeff was told he couldn't play on his Little League team. In high school, Jeff was cut from his school's "no-cut" football team.

It wasn't until his junior year that Jeff was finally given a chance. He was approached by his high school cross country coach with an offer to join the team. This opportunity was one he always wanted but had never been given. Jeff said yes and never looked back.

Since then, Jeff's love of running drove him to compete at the collegiate level, where he ran for our very own Saints cross country and track teams. After graduating with a BA in Liberal Arts in 2004, he coached high school boys and girls track and field. Most recently, he toured the country as a motivational speaker, sharing the importance of acceptance and the power of believing in one's self. Twice in the past year, Jeff has spoken at Ashford's Clinton campus, including delivering the keynote address for the Ashford University Junior-Senior Honor Society's annual induction ceremony.

"Having the opportunity to come back to Ashford and speak to the students is special for me," said Jeff. "Ashford is where I learned a lot of the skills necessary to achieve success. I'm forever grateful to be an Ashford alum and am proud to call myself an Ashford Saint."

*"Ashford is where I learned a lot of the skills necessary to achieve success. I'm forever grateful to be an Ashford alum and am proud to call myself an Ashford Saint."*



Jeff Hobbs, class of 2004

Ashford sophomore Emma Morris was inspired by Jeff's story. "I just felt this overwhelmed feeling to be in the presence of someone who I believe is a true fighter. We use the word hero too often these days, but I don't believe anyone could possibly say that Jeff isn't one. The amount of suffering and sheer pain he has gone through is really heart-breaking, yet the last thing Jeff wants you to do is feel sorry for him. He wants people to understand that there are different types of success, some come from winning a race, some from beating a certain time, but for Jeff, just crossing the finish line is a huge achievement."

This year, Jeff trained to become the first person with spastic cerebral palsy to complete the Chicago Marathon. For Jeff, the road to Chicago wasn't been easy. Months into his training, Jeff suffered a collapsed lung. A few days into his recovery at the hospital, it collapsed for a second time. A significant setback for any athlete, this moment was one in which there were only two choices: give up or reaffirm his goals. The day Jeff was given medical clearance he was back to training, easing his body back on the path towards 26.2 miles. Unfortunately, he was unable to complete the 2014 marathon, but his inspiring story and his willingness to never give up will define him for years to come. **Watch his marathon experience.**

Jeff's life, the challenges he has overcome, and his quest to complete the Chicago Marathon are the subjects of the Comcast SportsNet documentary series "Guts - The Jeff Hobbs Story." For more information on Jeff Hobbs, please visit [www.jeffhobbs.org](http://www.jeffhobbs.org). //

# JOSH MORGAN STILL AT THE HAPPIEST PLACE ON EARTH

by Larry Libberton

When last we chatted with 2006 alumnus Josh Morgan (see page 12 of <http://www.ashford.edu/static/media/Fall-2010-AUCConnections-online.pdf>), he was spreading magic in Walt Disney World and climbing the ladder of success in that enchanted wonderland. That was four years ago; in September he transitioned into a new role at the theme park and still believes he has the best job in the world.

"I believe that I truly have my 'dream job.' I wake up every day and go to work and it doesn't feel like work. I am doing what makes me happy, and I have fun everyday doing it," Josh said. "Yes, there are days that it's stressful work like any other job, and there are the moments that I have to respond to an unhappy guest or a situation, but I wouldn't trade what I do for anything in the world."

In 2010, he was a full-time Leader (manager) in the Magic Kingdom's Adventureland and Liberty Square Operations and was on temporary assignment there. "I have now been a Leader for four years and have had the opportunity to be involved in many projects and build partnerships with many other teams in the Magic Kingdom," he said. "I worked alongside Walt Disney Imagineering to keep the standards of our show quality maintained and managed to keep up with some of our history and heritage of the Walt Disney Company by educating new Cast Members and my peers about why we do certain things the way we do in our company."

He explained: "We have what we call 'Disney's Four Key Basics' which consist of the following quality standards that we encourage our cast to uphold: safety, courtesy, show, and efficiency. As a Leader, it is my role to coach our Cast Members to know and demonstrate all four of those standards to preserve and present the show that is known by the Disney name."



Josh Morgan, class of 2006

Because the Disney organization wants to continually improve its employee Leaders, about every 3-5 years Leaders are moved to different locations so they can use their skills in new areas and expand their knowledge with new skills. "I am a unique Leader because I started in Adventureland and Liberty Square and worked my way up to be a Leader in that same area," Josh said. "I am surprised that I stayed in that area for the last 11 years (all of my Disney career) and I am excited to start my next adventure on the Main Street, U.S.A. Operations Team."

In this new role, he will oversee the operation of the Walt Disney World steam trains, parade, and crowd control during special events and fireworks and the theme park's Main Entrance Operation.

Josh leaves behind working in the Liberty Square area of Disney World, home of The Haunted Mansion; working there has been the highlight of his Disney career so far, he said. "After operating my own haunted house while in college and always having a love for Halloween and haunted houses, I truly enjoyed being a part of my favorite haunted house in the world. But I am really excited to learn how to operate the steam trains."

While an undergraduate on Ashford's Clinton, Iowa campus, Josh participated in the Walt Disney World College program in which college students can experience real world work while earning college credit. After he graduated, he returned to Florida and has been employed by Disney ever since.

"My Ashford education rounded me to be the person that I am today," he said. "I use my background in art every day by preserving the show quality of areas in our parks. My graphic design background allows me to assist with the design of signage and area communication both for the guests and for our Cast Members."

Where does he see himself in 2024? No one who knows Josh would be surprised at his answer: "In 10 years I still see myself working for the Walt Disney Company. My long term goal is to be on our 'Project Team' or to work for Walt Disney Imagineering. The Project Team is a small group that works on refurbishing our parks and works hand in hand with Walt Disney Imagineering. Ideally, I would love to become an Imagineer, and create and maintain the elements of our parks along with the rest of the Walt Disney Imagineering Team."

Finally, we asked Josh if he has any advice for others who would like to get hired by Disney or "general" career advice for recent Ashford graduates. "Have goals of what you want to do within the company and work toward them. But have FUN!" he said. "Network with many people, and the people you connect with will help you get ahead."

"Work hard, and your work will pay off. I think a lot of people go into jobs expecting things to be given to them. You have to work hard to prove yourself."

Ashford University salutes Josh Morgan for his outstanding commitment to fulfilling the Disney experience for the millions of people who visit Disney World each and every year! //

# SERVICE TRIPS TEACH LIFE LESSONS

by Audra Adams

We Serve. We Care. Look anywhere on the Clinton campus and you will see an Ashford student wearing a shirt with this saying printed on it. Service has become a way of life on campus and engrained into many aspects of campus life, from orientations to academics and athletics. This mindset was not always the case. The Office of Service and Leadership (OSL) was created in the fall 2011 and because of our dedicated faculty, students, and staff, it has grown and developed into something very special.

Ashford students volunteer many hours in the community, making a huge impact in the lives of residents in the Clinton area. Since fall 2011, through classroom service learning alone, students have volunteered over 15,000 hours. Combine this figure with all of the volunteer work that the athletic teams and Student Government Organizations volunteer annually, and the commitment and results become very impressive. But that significant number was still not enough for our students as they saw a need to provide service on a larger scope, reaching across the country to those in need.

When the OSL was developed, the goal was to bring service trips to Ashford by 2016. However, in 2011 three students were determined to start the initiative much sooner, and it was their passion that drove the first service trip forward on a quicker pace. Within that same year, 19 students and three staff members journeyed to Joplin, MO, to help with tornado disaster relief efforts.

As 2014 Ashford graduate Haley Fischer recalls, “The Joplin service trip really ignited my passion to serve. The most amazing part of the trip was watching a group of students from all backgrounds come together to help the people that had lost everything. It was touching to hear the stories of how people who lost their homes in the Joplin storm helped their neighbors before they even addressed their own needs; I will never forget how selfless they were. I still feel blessed that I was able to be a part of Ashford’s first service trip.”

Since that first trip, the OSL has reached out to a different community at least once every academic semester. Ashford students have traveled to wherever they feel they can make a difference to those in need, including: Chicago, IL; Toms River, NJ; Moore, OK; Washington, IL; New Orleans, LA; and Des Moines, IA. Students continue to show their support and enthusiasm for service trips, which can be a very humbling experience. Anywhere from 16 to 22 spots are available for students on the trips and many times more than 50 students apply.

Ashford leadership supports the service in many ways, including attending trips with the students and ensuring that the students can participate at no cost. “The service trip to New Jersey was one of the most impactful experiences of my life,” says Charlie Minnick, Vice President and Campus Director. “It was incredible to see not only how us being there impacted those we served but also the profound impact the experience had on our students who gave their time and talents to help others in need. Their passion and commitment to serving others made me incredibly proud to call them Ashford students.”

During Ashford’s service trip to New Jersey, the group had the opportunity to work with the Toms River Fire Department and made connections that will last a lifetime. Andy Goresh, ex-Chief/former President, and current Safety Officer for the East Dover Fire Company No. 4, had this to say about Ashford’s



When the 2013 service trip took Ashford students and employees to Toms River, NJ, one of the people they met was Andy Goresh, chief of the community’s fire department. Students stayed in contact with him and he traveled to watch some of those students – including Emily Ramsey and Connor Murphy (pictured above) – graduate on campus in May 2014.



*The service trip to New Jersey was one of the most impactful experiences of my life.*



service group, “The impact that this group of young women and men from Ashford University made and what they left us can never be measured or repaid. As we continue to recover from the devastation of Superstorm Sandy we remember them all and want them to know that they all made a difference in our lives.” The connection ran deep as Goresh made the trip to Iowa for Ashford’s Spring 2014 graduation to see these same students graduate and support them in their future endeavors.

Two of our alumni from the New Jersey service trip are now volunteering with the AmeriCorps program to continue their life of service. “There is no doubt in my mind that the service events that I participated in at Ashford have helped prepare me for my new role as an AmeriCorps VISTA at Buena Vista University,” states Jessica Henrichs, 2013 Ashford graduate. “I would not have even applied to become a VISTA had it not been for a group of individuals who served with ConservationCorps that I met while on the service trip in New Jersey. They inspired me to look for positions where I could spend a year in service.”

If you ever lose faith in the “young people” of today, attend a service trip with a group of Ashford students. During the trips the students get little sleep, usually only on a cot or air mattress, and have to take 5-minute showers, sometimes at the local YWCA...but they never complain. The entire experience can be life changing as the students enjoy pushing themselves out of their comfort zones to help others. The growth of the OSL and Ashford’s service trip initiative should definitely make every Ashford alumni proud to be a Saint. //

## WHERE ASHFORD HAS SERVED

Spring 2012 – Joplin, MO

Fall 2012 – Chicago, IL

Spring 2013 – Toms River, NJ

Fall 2013 – Moore, OK

Fall 2013 – Washington, IL

Spring 2014 – New Orleans, LA

Fall 2014 – Des Moines, IA



Ashford’s Joplin, Missouri Service Team helped with tornado disaster relief efforts in that city.



Students helping in New Jersey, along with Dr. Charlie Minnick.

## S.T.A.R. VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

The world is your campus, and it presents your opportunity to impact change. Every alum, student, faculty member, and administrator can make a positive difference in the community.

AshfordU University’s Sharing Time And Resources, or S.T.A.R., Program provides you with the opportunity to give back to your communities through volunteering and service. Through the S.T.A.R. Program platform, you can search for organizations or specific volunteer opportunities. Once projects are completed, you can track your time and even share experiences with the S.T.A.R. volunteer network.

Volunteering helps to improve critical thinking, provide opportunities to learn new skills, allows for connections with individuals you may not otherwise meet, and – just as important – makes you feel great that you are changing the world in a positive way.

Access the S.T.A.R. platform directly from the “Popular Links” section of your Student Portal. If you have questions on how to get started on a volunteer project in your own community, please contact us at [volunteer@ashford.edu](mailto:volunteer@ashford.edu). //

# GOLDEN KEY HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTER RECOGNIZED

by Ben Gothia



Ashford University President, Dr. Rich Pattenau, speaks at the Golden Key event.

Ashford University's Golden Key (GK) International Honour Society Chapter is making a name for itself in the arena of Golden Key's North American Chapter Standards Program. The 2013-2014 Ashford University Golden Key Chapter's campus based students, co-advised by Dr. William Woods, took leadership to new heights by earning a Gold standing and being awarded the Key Chapter Award, Golden Key's highest accolade.



A large crowd was on hand to celebrate the Golden Key event on October 4 in San Diego.

Of the chapters that receive the Gold chapter standard, only 25% of those achieve the Key Award. The standards are awarded to chapters that exemplify outstanding achievement in the areas of Golden Key's three pillars: Academics, Leadership, and Service.

This year, Ashford students participated in the following Service projects:

- Good Neighbor Day: Students cleaned the neighborhood around the campus located in Clinton, Iowa. The event was held in conjunction with Golden Key's Make a Difference Day.
- Literacy Pledge: Students pledged to read with a child.
- Better World Books Drive: Students conducted a book drive to bring literacy to the world.
- Jefferson Elementary After School Education Program: Students volunteered their time to learn and interact with elementary school students.
- Toys for Tots Drive: Students collected toys for children of families in need during the holidays.
- Washington, Illinois Disaster Relief Drive: Students collected coats and raised money for victims affected by the tornado that impacted the area.

- Global Youth Service Day: Students volunteered at the local Children's Discovery Center to help children explore the arts. They also pledged to plant flowers with local children.
- The Ashford Leadership Summit hosted by the Golden Key Chapter.

Giving back to the community is only one facet of leadership for Ashford's Golden Key students. They also invested in their own development by attending Golden Key's International and Regional Summits. Participants had the opportunity to attend workshops where they learned chapter specific lessons and personal/professional development techniques.

The chapter also hosted several events on campus as well, including a mock interview session organized through the Student Affairs Department, an honorary and alumni dinner, and a New Member Recognition Event, where new members receive their certificates and are officially inducted into the Honor Society.

Congratulations, Golden Key at Ashford, on your amazing achievements! //

# ASHFORD ATHLETICS SPRING 2014 HIGHLIGHTS

by Ryan Thomas

When it comes to sports at Ashford University, there is no lack of exciting plays or wins in the land of the Saints! Alumni are encouraged to watch games by live stream or live on the road whenever possible. Here's an update on some of the major sports happenings:

- Ashford men's track and field athlete Mike Malone became a three-time NAIA All-American on May 24 when he recorded a top-10 finish in the pole vault at the 2014 NAIA Outdoor Track & Field National Championship in Gulf Shores, Alabama. After snapping his pole on his first attempt, the Country Club Hills, Illinois native would go on to clear the 5.0 meter mark and record a fourth place finish in the event. It was the first time that Malone has earned All-American status at outdoor nationals in his third career try in the pole vault. He also added the award to his personal trophy case that includes a pair of All-American awards in the pole vault at the indoor national championships.



The Ashford women's basketball team poses with the championship banner after defeating Indiana Northwest to win the 2014 Division II A.I.I. Women's Basketball Championship

**Tune in and follow along with all Ashford games.** Check [www.ashfordathletics.com](http://www.ashfordathletics.com) for schedules and keep in touch with your amazing Ashford Saints! //

- 2013-14 was also a banner year in the classroom for all Ashford University student-athletes. A total of 14 Ashford athletic programs earned NAIA Scholar-Team Awards with the Ashford men's golf team being named the NAIA Scholar-Team of the Year after leading all programs in the country with a 3.84 grade point average. Ashford would also collect 28 Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athlete awards for the year, recognizing those juniors and seniors that recorded a minimum 3.5 GPA on the year.

- With the Fall 2014 sports season underway, one Ashford University team has already recorded the biggest upset in program history. On September 13, the Ashford volleyball team recorded a five-set win over #4-ranked Viterbo University, marking the first time head coach Micah Cewe and the Saints beat a team ranked in the top-five of the NAIA Coaches' Poll.

- Additionally, Clinton played host to a trio of Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.) conference championships in November. On Nov. 8, the A.I.I. Cross Country Championships was held at South Campus while the A.I.I. Men's and Women's Soccer Championships will take place on Nov. 14-15 with a berth in the men's and women's national tournaments up for grabs. Go Saints!



Tim Krautheim (#20) celebrates his game-tying goal against Cardinal Stritch in the opening round of the 2013 NAIA Men's Soccer Championship in Clinton.



## KAREN BAKUZONIS

by Laurie Bianchi

Karen Bakuzonis had already been a teacher and moved on to research when she discovered that teaching was in fact her life-long calling. She taught at the college level for several years and then accepted a full-time research associate faculty position as a Co-Director of an external quality review organization. As she recalls, “We prepared a full day training session for managed care organizations, and I realized my heart was more for teaching than research.” As they say, the rest is history...

Karen, now the remote Assistant Professor and Content Chair, Health Information Management, has worked at five higher education institutions and has found the College of Health, Human Services, and Science at Ashford University to be “creative, forward thinking, and willing to think outside of the box.” Teaching remotely is also a unique experience as Karen explains, “The more you teach online, the more you improve in the ways you engage your students.” When she taught on campus, she made it her priority to be very hands on, and she is now creating new ways to continue that level of care and interaction remotely.

How Karen came to teaching is part of her wonderful and diverse journey. Her roots run deep in health information management, but she expanded her educational experiences and continued to grow her opportunities. Karen worked in numerous education-related capacities to gain breadth of knowledge, including: department head, consultant, researcher, administrator, and educator. As an administrator for a 500+ university based physician practice, one project she recalls was opening a multi-specialty clinical site in an economically challenged area that involved the community, four university colleges, and the hospital. The project took four years to reach consensus and funding, but the clinical site was successfully opened.

Karen’s first teaching position was with a program that was threatened with elimination by the college for the third time. The department Dean asked if she would take over as Program Director and she agreed only with the understanding that if she could not turn it around in a year she would recommend deleting the program. By the time she left the college, the program was flourishing with the addition of day, evening, and online sections, an accredited coding program, and a health informatics certificate.

In the end, Karen admits that she “really is a student advocate” and that she “continues to maintain a connection with many of my former graduates.” She speaks of them as if they are family, and the passion behind what she does each and every day shines through. “When you teach a course, there is a wide spectrum of students and abilities. It is not uncommon to encounter students with family, health, or financial challenges. When you challenge the students to learn and do their best, most students will rise to the occasion and make themselves and their families proud.”

Finishing her PhD is perhaps her proudest personal success story: “It was something I always wanted to do but when I graduated from college, the advice from everyone was to work awhile. I started my master’s when my second son was an infant and, since he was a night owl, he was often up from 11:00 pm to 1:00 am listening to me reading the economics textbook to him. I initially was going to complete a certificate in higher education administration, but the first class was on the same night I taught a class. The administrative assistant suggested I apply for the doctoral program. Two weeks later, with a lot of effort, I was accepted. Without realizing it at the time, I was raising a family, working full time, and finishing my PhD in four years.”

Resting on her laurels is something Karen simply does not do well. She, of course, complies with all certification requirements, attending professional development courses and seminars to complete CEUs in the subject areas that she teaches. But Karen believes in doing more, “In health care, there is always something changing so I read multiple industry journals, belong to several list services, and I love researching topics in the library. I also stay active in professional organizations and volunteer for various committees.”

For those who desire to teach online, she warns, “If you teach full-time online, you need to be dedicated to working full-time, learning how to engage other faculty that reside in different states, and – most importantly – you must modify your teaching style to meet the varying needs of the students while you engage them and create a sense of trust and respect.”

Karen also has some sage advice for health students and alumni in terms of the challenges of finding jobs in the field upon graduation, “As an undergrad, I volunteered at a local hospital to learn first-hand about the field. Within the BS in Health Information Management program at Ashford, the students simulate activities that take place in health care and students will be required to prepare a portfolio to share during interviews. This is all terrific, but dressing and acting professionally – and all of the fundamental details of presenting a professional image – cannot be overlooked. Time spent volunteering or participating in a professional practice experience may lead to a job offer but you still need to look and act like you want that job!” //

## KATHLEEN KELLEY

by Kelly Dahlke



Kathleen Kelley currently serves as a faculty member in Ashford’s College of Education where she teaches educational theory and helps students prepare for life beyond the classroom.

Although her interests and passions are diverse, Kathleen gets the most joy from mentoring her students and witnessing them pursue their goals of educating others. She recalls education always being an important part of her life and affectionately remembers asking her parents, when she was very young, to buy her seven siblings each a desk so that she could teach them in a classroom setting.

In elementary school, Kathleen was lucky to have a supportive principal who served as a powerful advocate for her and her ambitions. Under his mentorship, Kathleen found herself helping in the classroom and starting a reading program as a fourth grader. She was always acutely aware of the power of education and explains, “Teachers change lives, you never know the impact you will make.”



*Teachers change lives, you never know the impact you will make.*



Kathleen’s rich experience extends beyond her time at Ashford as she has also taught elementary school, middle school, and currently teaches for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in the Department of Middle and Secondary Education. Her advice for students pursuing a career in teaching is to “seek out diverse perspectives and talk to everyone! If anyone is willing to share what they know, take it!”

She currently resides in North Carolina and, when not grading student work, she enjoys watching her two sons grow up and volunteering at her local elementary and middle schools. Her oldest son

currently attends North Carolina State and plays in the University’s marching band. Her younger son enjoys swimming and is currently in eighth grade.

Kathleen says that the University’s mission and its students set Ashford apart from other institutions with which she has worked. She adds, “The difference is our diverse students and the level of dedication and commitment that I witness daily among faculty, employees, and the students.” //

## ASHFORD ALUM JOINS FACULTY SENATE

by Laurie Bianchi



Matthew Bambrick, who earned his Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Management in 2008, is the first Ashford alum to join the University’s Faculty Senate board as an Associate Faculty senator. The Faculty Senate is the sole faculty-elected, representative, and deliberative policy-proposing body of the University representing the four colleges and their various faculties. The Faculty Senate operates as one body in a larger shared governance system with respect to Ashford University, including, but not limited to, academic programs, policies, and curricular matters.

Since 2011, Bambrick has held the position of Adjunct Instructor specializing in curriculums including Homeland Security and Emergency Management and Social and Criminal Justice. He is certified to instruct twenty courses in multiple curriculums.

The primary purpose of the Ashford University Faculty Senate, which meets one a month with members from Clinton, San Diego, and all over the US via teleconference, is to provide governance to the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are or are not implemented. Faculty governance refers to all faculty activities, formal and informal, related to determining the curriculum, subject matter, methods of instruction, and other academic standards and processes.

In this capacity, faculty bodies which include college specific faculty groups, content areas, faculty forums, and the Ashford Faculty Senate and its Standing Committees, have the responsibility to make collective recommendations to college leadership, Ashford administration and the Ashford board of trustees. Governance is a vital part of academic life at Ashford University and this opportunity allows all Ashford Associate Faculty members to participate in this essential part of academic life.

Each elected senator serves a two-year term with no limit to the number of terms. “I am very quickly becoming aware of truly how hard the Ashford Faculty Senate works for the University,” stated Bambrick. “Dr. Alexander Cohen’s leadership as President is strong, and I am impressed with the senators and with the quality and depth of the issues the senate initiates, discusses, and resolves.”

When reminded that he is the first alumni to hold a seat on the Ashford Faculty Senate, Bambrick emphatically responds, “It is hard to believe I am the first Ashford alum to serve, and for me that is the ultimate honor.” //

*“It is hard to believe I am the first Ashford alum to serve, and for me that is the ultimate honor.”*

# MOMENTS THAT CHANGE AND CONNECT US

*For the first time, San Diego, California hosted the Ashford University fall commencement activities. Graduates from near and far came with family and friends to celebrate this momentous achievement. Plus, they got to experience the same life-changing moment with their fellow classmates, many of whom met in person for the first time.*

These photos represent miraculous moments shared by graduates and their families, faculty, Ashford employees, and the countless people who help to make commencement happen. Each person present was changed in different ways, but all now share this life-changing moment. Congratulations, Ashford University graduates! //



Ashford alum and LAPD Commander, Regina Scott

## SUCCESSFUL ASHFORD ALUMNI DARES TO DREAM

by Eileen Piersa



*When there is no role model, you can become the role model!*



Regina Scott is a dreamer. She always dreamt of being a police officer. Little did she know that her degree in organizational management, earned in 2009, from Ashford University would help her achieve that dream.

Born and raised in New Jersey, Regina went into the military directly after completely high school. In the late 70s being a female in the Army was not easy. There weren't many female role models nor was the Army integrated at that time for male and female roles. Regina persevered and became part of that change as more opportunities became available for women. She reflects on that time by simply stating, "When there is no role model, you can become the role model!"

Regina continued to be a role model when she ventured west to Los Angeles as a single mom with two kids to pursue that dream of becoming a police officer. She often told her kids, "Do as I say and NOT as I do," regarding earning her college education. Regina first tried attending a traditional college but could not maintain the schedule while working and raising two children. She became disheartened but continued to hold hope that she would be able to achieve her dream.

Suddenly her outlook began to change when her daughter, while in the Air Force, told Regina about a non-traditional solution - Ashford University. Regina credits finding Ashford University as the reason she is able to discuss her academic success today. The flexibility of online courses allowed her to have it all - a family, profession, and academic dreams! Without her degree, she knew it would be difficult to advance beyond lieutenant. With her degree, Regina has achieved heights well beyond that.

As the first African-American female to achieve the rank of commander in the LAPD, Regina is a role model and champion for women throughout the law enforcement community. She is President of the Los Angeles Women's Police Officers Association where her goal is to lead and leave a legacy for the next generation of women who strive to achieve new heights in law enforcement.

Regina's Ashford University degree helped her to expand her vision and recognize that every act she performs well has an impact - and how important it is to consider the long-term impacts to everyone involved before acting. She lives her philosophy of "dare to dream big" each and every day, in everything she does. Regina was able to share that philosophy at the fall 2014 Ashford University commencement ceremony where she was featured as the alumni speaker.

With the help of Ashford University, Commander Regina Scott has achieved well beyond her dream first dreamt all those years ago. She now has new dreams and goals to strive for - and those will lead her and the women who follow in her footsteps to places she has yet to imagine. //

# TWO ASHFORD PROFESSORS PROMOTED TO IOWA CAMPUS DEANS

by Larry Libberton



**DR. AUBREY (LEE) CARTWRIGHT**

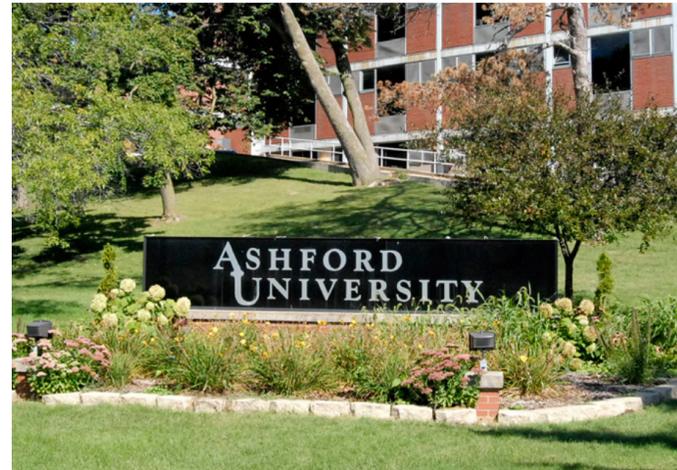
Dr. Aubrey (Lee) Cartwright, who joined Ashford University in 2009, was appointed as the Clinton Campus Dean of the College of Health, Human Services, and Science. Prior to his tenure at Ashford, he served for 18 years as an Associate Professor at Texas A&M University in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. Before that he was a Research Leader and Laboratory Director for the USDA, Agricultural Research Service in Georgetown, Del., and a Research Physiologist with the ARS in Athens, Georgia.

“The students, faculty, and staff of Ashford University have enriched my life,” Dr. Cartwright said. “The Dean’s office now allows me to work with the University community at a different level. My objective and my promise to this community is that I consistently will work for their benefit so that everyone recognizes Ashford University for the quality institution we all know it to be.”

Dr. Cartwright has numerous research publications and has received national and regional recognition for his work. He earned an Associate of Science degree from College of the Albemarle at Elizabeth City, North Carolina and a Bachelor of Science, Master of Science, and PhD from North Carolina State University at Raleigh. He also earned an MBA from the University of Maryland at Salisbury.



*The Dean’s office now allows me to work with the University community at a different level.*



**DR. MIKE BURTON**

The Forbes School of Business also welcomed a new Clinton Campus Dean - Dr. Mike Burton. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Notre Dame and his Doctorate of Jurisprudence from Valparaiso University. Prior to his promotion to Dean, Dr. Burton taught campus courses in Business Law, Marketing, and Sport

Management for over nine years. He also has instructed Ashford online classes since 2006.

Before his tenure at Ashford, Dr. Burton worked in the field of sales and marketing. Part of this experience includes representing companies that were based in Japan and Germany. He also has a background in law serving as a trial lawyer and deputy prosecutor in the State of Indiana.

“I am honored to be in a leadership position that will influence not only the Forbes School of Business, but the entire University,” Dr. Burton said. “I believe that Ashford has only just begun to tap into the possibilities that exist for shared learning opportunities between a traditional campus and online education. The ability to be a part of this process that benefits our students is very exciting.” //



Flora Lowe stands in the library at Ashford University which was renamed in her honor.

# LIBRARIAN FLORA LOWE RETIRES

by Larry Libberton

## Ashford University renames campus library in her honor

Ashford University’s campus library was renamed The Flora S. Lowe Library to honor the person who spent the past 34 years in that facility helping students, faculty, and staff as Library Director.

Flora and her husband Dr. William “Curt” Lowe both began working at Mount St. Clare College (Ashford’s predecessor) in 1980. Curt is currently Campus Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

During a retirement reception in her honor in September, Dr. Charlie Minnick, Ashford University Vice President and Campus Director, announced the library name change. “I’m utterly astounded.” Lowe said afterwards. “I really can’t remember any other time that I’ve been so surprised and humbled.” A formal renaming ceremony is being planned for the spring of 2015. During the summer of 2014 the library underwent a complete renovation with new lighting, carpeting, furniture, and reception/circulation desk and paint.

“When I was hired to work in the library, my ‘title’ was Library Director. The Sisters of St. Francis (then owners of the college) never seemed to insist that we use traditional library titles,” Lowe remembered. “Prior to my arrival, I was told that there were at that time at least five Sisters of St. Francis working in the campus library, only one of which was a librarian, and I became the first non-Sister of St. Francis to manage the library.”

After Lowe was hired, one of the Sisters developed some medical problems and resigned her library position while another Sister who had some library credentials settled in as the assistant librarian.

Another part time staff member was added to manage the 8-10 student workers. “To my knowledge, I’m not aware of any Sisters of St. Francis who were salaried workers,” Lowe said.

“The campus has always been a friendly, welcoming, and helpful place to be for students, staff, faculty, and others,” Lowe said. “Sr. Theresa Ruggle was always quite willing to show me the ropes when I had a question, and Sr. Coralita (Schwiderski) was always happy to ‘mind the store,’ as she described it. Sr. Coralita had a quite encyclopedic knowledge of the Sisters and how things worked on campus and was very willing to share information.”

During her early days as Library Director, Lowe was asked about her foreign language knowledge. “Quite soon after that discussion occurred, I was advised that I would be not only the Library Director but also the faculty member who taught our English as a Second Language courses. That situation continued for several years, and indeed, I still hear from those students now.”

The Lowes have always been very visible on the Clinton campus, regularly seen at student events – athletic matches, concerts, plays, and other activities.

“Curt and I have enjoyed knowing and working with faculty, staff, students, parents of students, and many other special groups of people,” she said. “We have always enjoyed encouraging our students, whether they are campus students or online students.”

When asked what she has planned for her retirement after working in the campus library for more than three decades. Lowe’s response was: “It will certainly take me quite a while to become accustomed to that word.” //



Flora Lowe cuts the cake at her retirement party hosted by Ashford University.

*“I really can’t remember any other time that I’ve been so surprised and humbled.”*

# KEEP PURSUING YOUR GOALS

by Paul J. Schmick, Bachelor of Arts in Homeland Security & Emergency Management – Spring 2012

*“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”*

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Nearly all who have pursued an education can reflect on moments of challenge when the doubt of success crept into their psyche. And while I am an absolute advocate of advancing career ambitions through higher education, pursuing my associate's degree was a challenging journey that began in 1993 and lasted some 14 years. There were many false starts, mainly due to balancing personal relationships, family obligations, career ambitions and responsibilities – a good reason always seemed to derail my goal of completing my education, as if I had conveniently labeled my education an “inconvenience” and “last priority.”

Experiences and exposure to unexpected events create new paths in life. Living in a suburb of New York City, the events on September 11, 2001, created a new path for me. Serving as a District Manager for a telecommunications equipment installation firm, the organization I served was contracted to restore Manhattan telecommunication services for Verizon Communication's West Street Central Office located next to Tower Seven of the World Trade Center complex. Deployed to the site only days after the attacks, I can tell you firsthand the magnitude of destruction in lower Manhattan and loss of life was mentally searing from the moment I entered the World Trade Center complex. And while my deployment to the complex was brief in tenure, the smells and sights of carnage and mental pictures of mass destruction will remain with me until my last breath.

Having the effects of 9/11 hit so close to home, I decided to pursue a career where I could contribute to the front-line efforts to preserve freedom and defend democracy, and decided to commit my energies to a role in public service. On March 17, 2008, I was sworn in as a part-time Transportation Security Officer (TSO) for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Transportation Security Administration at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. While having respectable success in private industry for nearly a decade, I knew nothing of aviation security or the disciplines it would demand but I was committed to public service.

Serving as a front-line officer for the TSA, I quickly learned there is an unexplainable gratification when you serve a purpose greater than one's self. And while I relished my time serving as a front-line counterterrorism professional, my ambition was cut short by the diagnosis of stage IV colorectal cancer shortly after my completion of TSA basic training. While the diagnosis of any cancer is incredibly dark and at times physically and mentally overbearing, for me, it was also a time to seriously consider what I wanted to accomplish when I got well, and get well I did.



Paul Schmick, class of 2012



*Each challenge will test your determination, focus, and purpose through your journey to achieve all you pursue.*



Upon returning to my role in public service after a clean bill of health, life had new meaning on many fronts. Realizing a renewed vigilance alone would not serve as the only component to achieving higher career objectives; I began to survey educational opportunities that would help me advance my professional pursuits. And while working two jobs and attempting to complete a Bachelor's education as a cancer survivor was not recommended, I felt the wind against my back and decided to spread my wings. I began the journey by attending my first class at Ashford University as a remote student in the new Homeland Security & Emergency Management BA program. With accelerated classes and a 100 percent online option, Ashford's flexibility was a perfect fit for my busy lifestyle.

I would not be truthful if I did not acknowledge the challenges and struggles of balancing two careers, my marriage, health, family, and my education. Constantly reflecting on my failures to finish my associate's degree in a timely manner always seemed to give me the motivation to stay-the-course. And while I stumbled during my second journey like my first, on April 30, 2012, I successfully completed my BA program two years and five months after my journey began at Ashford University.

In respect to Ashford's program and its influence on my success, the curriculum relevance and academic rigor instilled during the program absolutely enhanced my capabilities. In fact, the program was both current and forward looking, and in contrast to my career, provided me the tools to craft and execute practices and initiate programs that have had real-world relevance. As my credibility and education advanced, so has my career. In July 2010, after only seven months into the Ashford program, I was selected for an Assistant Training Instructor (ATI) position to support TSA training programs at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York. Continuing to employ many of the skills I learned at Ashford in my new role, I developed respectable consideration with the agency and in September 2011, I was promoted to a Lead Transportation Security Officer (LTSO) where I supervised checkpoint security screening operations and personnel. After I was presented with several local awards as well as a national award positioning me as the highest decorated officer in a single calendar year since the inception of the TSA at John F. Kennedy International Airport, in August 2012 I was again promoted to the position of Transportation Security Training Specialist with the responsibilities of supervising training personnel, programs, and security equipment and technology deployments.

While promotions and compensation are personally and professionally satisfying and solidify a great return-on-investment from completing an education, perhaps even more rewarding is when we are making a difference in whatever role we serve and such efforts are acknowledged by an employer and our peers. Receiving awards for my service with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security – TSA has by far exceeded anything I thought I was capable of professionally and only cements my feelings of gratitude for being able to overcome tough challenges to achieve my academic dreams.

As I survey the landscape of my past endeavors and future possibilities, I directly relate the educational disciplines I learned from Ashford University as “the foundation of my current success and future potential.” Perhaps Connections Magazine is the best forum to communicate to those individuals at Ashford who served as architects of the Homeland Security & Emergency Management program. If so, I say to them, “Well done, and thank you!” Because of the discipline and confidence I acquired at Ashford University, I decided to pursue even higher educational goals as I began my master's degree program from one of the leading institutions in the homeland security field of study and, in May 2014, I graduated with my Master of Science in Homeland Security Management.

*“...the curriculum relevance and academic rigor instilled during the program absolutely enhanced my capabilities.”*

With degrees in hand, I now believe it is my responsibility to share my education, professional experiences, and exposure to events of significance to educate the next generation of leaders in the homeland security and emergency management fields of study. So in August of 2014, as I continue to serve and dedicate myself to the homeland security mission, yet another milestone and career ambition was achieved when I was contracted as an Adjunct Professor to instruct homeland security and emergency management coursework at a reputable higher learning institution in New York. I teach with vigilance and passion as the field is thirsty for educated, dedicated, and steadfast professionals with a need that is both urgent and absolute to protect human life, national treasures, and infrastructure.

While my words paint a picture of the many challenges and struggles I encountered during the pursuit of my education and professional advancement, I prefer the takeaway of my story to be about goals, dreams, and aspirations. We each have the ability to overcome considerable challenges and achieve all that we pursue. I choose to often share with those who are at the beginning of their pursuit, or struggling midstream, wanting to serve as a beacon of hope that possibilities are endless through the innate and universally human gifts of determination and purpose. While all struggles are unique, we should expect false starts and realize that a stumble and fall are inevitable. Each challenge will test your determination, focus, and purpose through your journey to achieve all you pursue. //

Ashford University is proud to feature articles written by our alumni in Ashford Connections, the Ashford alumni magazine. If you have an article to submit or an idea that you would like to write about, please contact Alumni Relations at [alumni@ashford.edu](mailto:alumni@ashford.edu).

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of Ashford University.



Ashford mascot, Champ

# CHAMP'S ROOTS RUN DEEP

by Ron Gaschler

If you have attended an Ashford University event or followed Ashford University online to some degree, you may have witnessed the University mascot Champ, the Saint Bernard, making appearances among attendees. He is hard to miss since crowds typically form around him for photo opportunities, hugs, and the chance to brush-up against his luxurious coat and his formidable history.

Champ is the mascot of Ashford University's diverse athletic teams, The Saints, and a live version can be spotted in group photos as far back as the days of Mount Saint Clare Academy with the Sisters of St. Francis. It was not until 2006 that the Saint Bernard was designed into a character costume (by an Ashford alum) that would make appearances at Ashford University events throughout the country. The loveable Saint Bernard would be named "Champion," and soon after nick-named and referred to daily as "Champ."

The name 'Champ' was selected in a naming contest and submitted by faculty member Sister Theresa Judge who heard about the contest when attending the Ashford athletics orientation program to speak regarding the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) Champions of Character program. "I thought 'Champion' would be a great name for the mascot," she said. "It's both feminine and masculine; it can be shortened to 'Champ;' it's positive, not negative; and we have our own song. Plus, I love Queen (referring to the rock music group's song 'We are the Champions.')

The Ashford University Saints, the teams for which 'Champ' is the mascot, compete as an NAIA school in the Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.) conference which includes about 34 colleges and universities across the United States and Canada.

Champ's roots in the Saint Bernard breed are significant in that the breed represents Ashford University's robust international student and alumni community and the spirit of guardianship... whether of self or others, family, community or the world. Saint Bernards share a history with the Swiss Mountain Dogs or Swiss Cattle Dogs, all breeds that were known and used for hunting, herding, search

and rescue, and watchdogs. The earliest documented records of the breed are from monks at the traveler's hospice at the Great St. Bernard Pass in 1707. The pass, the traveler's hospice, and the dogs were all named for Bernard of Menthon, the 11th century monk who established the hospice.

Although Champ is fairly famous among the Ashford community, he's not the first Saint Bernard to enjoy widespread notoriety. The most famous Saint Bernard who reportedly saved between 40 and 100 people at the treacherous Great St. Bernard Pass was Barry (sometimes spelled Berry). Today there still remains a monument to Barry at the pass and his body is preserved in the Natural History Museum in Berne, Switzerland.

Champ's grandparents may have looked a bit different than him, primarily due to cross-breeding that occurred to preserve the breed after severe winters led to increased numbers of avalanches that killed many of the dogs used for breeding while they were performing rescues. In an attempt to save the breed, the remaining Saint Bernards were crossed with Newfoundlands in the 1850s, and the breed was changed forever.

True to this day, Saint Bernards are intelligent and adaptive dogs. Just as Champ excels and flourishes in higher education environments, Saint Bernards have an amazing ability to learn intuitively from their elders. It is commonly known that the dogs do not require special training, and younger dogs, in fact, learn how to perform search and rescue operations from older dogs.

Champ has great reason to celebrate...besides being the beloved mascot of winning sports teams at Ashford University and adored by tens of thousands of alumni and students around the globe, he proudly represents a long history of bravery, guardianship, and service to mankind. //



Painting by John Emms portraying Saint Bernards as rescue dogs, with the apocryphal "brandy barrel."

# MOUNT ST. CLARE COLLEGE REUNION

by Richard Crum, Mount St. Clare Alumni

*Mount St. Clare College alumni and past students gathered at Ashford University's Clinton, IA, campus in July to spend a day reconnecting and reflecting on their time at the school. Although the reunion took place on a Saturday, numerous staff and faculty members were on hand to meet and tour the group, including those who worked on campus during the Mount St. Clare era as well as currently in the Ashford University era.*



Mount St. Clare College, 1970

The reunion began with a tour of Ashford's campus which recently underwent numerous renovations, an afternoon watching the Clinton LumberKing's baseball game, and time spent together at local establishments. Also attending the reunion were: Kellee Forkenbrock - Iowa City, IA; Rebecca Roling - Maquoketa, IA; Laura Grotelueschen - Clinton, IA; Kenneth Ray Young - Clinton, IA; Tiffany Lange - Clinton, IA; Tara Schuster Flesch - Larchwood, IA; Andrew Luett - Clinton, IA; and Ryan Steines - Clinton, IA.

The rich history of Mount St. Clare lives on through its alumni, faculty, and legacy on campus at Ashford University. The Ashford University Alumni Association (AUAA) was founded to bring each unique generation of the university's alumni together as one alumni community. For more information, visit the website or email [alumni@ashford.edu](mailto:alumni@ashford.edu). //



A group of Mount St. Clare College students and graduates took a tour of the campus in July during an alumni reunion event. Pictured above (left to right): Laurie Bianchi (staff), Emily Ramsey (staff), Curt Lowe, (faculty), Waunita Sullivan (staff), McGlauthon (Mac) Fleming III (alum), Shelly Mohr (staff and alum), Tommaso Camilleri (alum), Christina Mahoney (staff), Ron Gaschler (staff), Flora Lowe (staff), Kelsey Munck (staff), Richard Crum (MSC student) and John Zimmerman (faculty).

*Industry Insight Tours were created to open doors and connections for Ashford alumni as they learn about companies and career opportunities in their regional market areas. Please share your ideas for future Industry Insight Tours by emailing Alumni Relations at [alumni@ashford.edu](mailto:alumni@ashford.edu).*



Ashford alum take a moment from their tour of the Amazon distribution center in South Carolina.

## AMAZON

by Mary Knowles

On September 10 a group of Ashford University students, alumni, and faculty had an opportunity to tour Amazon's state-of-the-art distribution center in West Columbia, SC. Ashford was given the opportunity to walk the 1.3 million square foot facility and see the systems and technology that Amazon utilizes to bring products in, fulfill the countless orders, and ship the products to the doors of millions of consumers annually.

After the tour, Ashford Industry Insight Tour guests were able to meet several of the facility managers and learn about employment opportunities. //

## TAYLOR GUITARS

by Richard Rathburn

As you walk into Taylor Guitars' display room, you walk past walls lined with beautiful wooden masterpieces, perfectly lit, each with a unique aesthetic quality. Some are adorned with abalone inlays shaped like extended pieces of a fleur-de-lis and others with swirled ebony fret boards. Most of the tour group did not play guitar, but every person in the room appreciated the beauty of each piece of art hanging delicately from the felt hooks. And almost everyone enjoys music from many artists who play Taylors including Jason Mraz, Taylor Swift, Lindsey Buckingham, Rascal Flatts, and the Rolling Stones.

Charlie Redden, Supply Chain Manager, led the tour and set the tone with his passion for doing business ethically and responsibly in regards to both the environment and the rural communities his industry directly impacts. During each phase of the tour, he discussed different components to Taylor's overall sustainability strategy and how they are changing the deeply rooted ideological landscape within their industry.

Taylor Guitars is an industry innovator that focuses each team member's deep commitment to continual improvement and growth on every possible level. Taylor broke the mold when it came to making a guitar neck with two pieces of wood instead of a single piece. Historically, guitar necks were made with one block of wood, shaving away the excess until they had a single guitar neck while leaving the shavings behind. By investing in research and development, they created a process by which a

single block of wood now produces three guitar necks instead of only one, increasing the yield and significantly reducing the waste product while not sacrificing quality - the Taylor Guitars way of doing business!

Taylor Guitars also traditionally employed a single craftsman to spray coat a finished guitar with varnish which resulted in wasted varnish ending up on the floor and potential "bald" spots on the guitars. For answers to this challenge, Taylor looked to innovators in the automotive industry: they invested in a robotic arm system confined to a sealed room where little to no paint is wasted because they now use positively charged paint particles that are attracted in a magnetic fashion to negatively charged guitar surface areas to literally attract the majority of the varnish to the guitar.

The innovations are endless but how is Taylor Guitars changing the landscape of an industry? In late 2011, Taylor Guitars made a huge investment in an ebony mill in Cameroon, the last place to legally source this rare black wood. When Bob Taylor visited Cameroon he realized that only one out of every ten ebony trees cut down had the flawless solid black wood - the other nine trees featured black and vanilla colored swirls that did not meet the standards for the wood and certainly would not be desirable to the extent of the pure black ebony wood.

With the purchase of this mill, Taylor guitar now owns 75% of the legally sourced ebony in the world. This asset means that Taylor can dictate the industry standard for sourcing and using ebony. All ebony is paid for equally to those men and women who harvest it in Cameroon! No ebony is being wasted because the tree with the swirled coloring is now worth just as much as the pure black tree. Further,



Charlie Redden, Supply Chain Manager, leads the Ashford Industry Insight Tour at Taylor Guitars.

Taylor uses the swirled ebony in its new flagship 800 series of guitars and controls the supply of ebony to most other guitar manufacturers. This excellent example shows how Taylor Guitars is using its "supplier power" not only to shift the purchasing habits within its industry, but also to sway the consumer mindset by encouraging and promoting ethical, eco-conscious sourcing.

This Industry Insight Tour opened my eyes to the possibilities that exist in unexpected places for Ashford graduates with regards to careers in supply chain management, business, and other disciplines. There are companies that are changing the way people do business and the impact they have on the world as they continue to grow and produce results. //

# LAY THE GROUNDWORK AND DO YOUR HOMEWORK

by Tamara Small

*"It's never too late to start practicing and preparing for your next interview."*

It may go against what you have been taught or your deep beliefs about the job search process, but your resume alone generally will not get you a job. This assumption in no way means that a resume is not an essential tool in finding a job, but it's only one of many tools that you can effectively use to succeed in the process.

Hundreds of students and alumni contact Ashford University's Career Services department weekly to have their resume critiqued or to ask questions about where they can find a job.

However, it is not as common to have someone ask Career Services to help them prepare for an interview. The interview is one of the most important steps in the job search process. You can be 100% qualified for a job and have an amazing resume, but if you bomb your interview, it is likely you will not be offered the job.

After spending several years of your life completing your degree and developing a career goal and plan, why skip or take so little time to prepare for an interview? There are many reasons why people spend little to no time preparing. They don't know how important the interview is, don't know how to prepare, or don't like to practice interviewing with others.



Kelly Dahlke (Career Services), Jolynn Pangerl, a star student from the second Career Planning Series, and Sara Headden (Career Services), finally met in person at October Commencement in San Diego. Jolynn had great energy and was one of the students highlighted at the national NCDA Conference presentation made by Ashford University last summer.

There is good news for you! It's never too late to start practicing and preparing for your next interview. Career Services offers a number of interview preparation resources that are available at your fingertips.

Career Services offers a center of robust self-directed resources and tools called My Career: Career and Professional Development Center which is available 24/7. For instance, My Career offers a few different resources to help you develop or improve your interview skills. Optimal Interview is a virtual interview software program you can use to conduct a mock interview from the comfort of your home. Prior to your mock interview, check out the Resources page in My Career for tips on how to prepare for your interview. Want to practice your interview skills even more? Career Services hosts a Mock Interviews blitz each quarter which allows you to schedule a one-on-one mock interview with a Career Services Specialist. During your scheduled mock interview, you will have the opportunity to practice commonly asked interview questions and receive immediate feedback on your interview skills. Please don't solely rely on your degree or resume to get you that job; practice your interview skills so you can tell employers why they should hire you!

To explore these tools and more, visit your Ashford Student Portal, and click the My Career: Career and Professional Development Center link under Career and Alumni Services. //

# DISTINGUISHED SPEAKER SERIES

by Christa Martin

## STEVE FORBES



*The Forbes™ School of Business at Ashford University is committed to preparing students for success in business while promoting an entrepreneurial spirit leading to business innovation and growth. The Forbes alliance with Ashford's business students brings benefits to them, as well as alumni, businesses, and the community.*

What do you think about when you hear the name Forbes? Top leadership approaches to business? Global perspectives on business and entrepreneurship? Or perhaps innovation and intrapreneurship?

One way in which the alliance provides a unique opportunity to personally interact with top thought leaders is through the FSB Distinguished Speaker Series. Embarking on its second year of speaking events in 2015, audiences in San Diego, California; Clinton, Iowa; and Los Angeles, California have heard thought provoking topics discussed by industry leaders and visionaries such as Steve Forbes, Ken Fisher, Rich Karlgaard, and John Tamny.

## JOHN TAMNY



## KEN FISHER



At the most recent presentation on October 22 in San Diego, John Tamny, editor of Forbes Opinion, joined a standing room only audience of Ashford University alumni, students, faculty, and San Diego business leaders to talk about "Perspectives on the Current Economy."

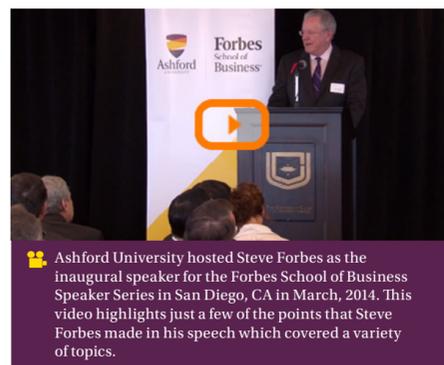
These events foster critical thinking about today's business climate, global economic trends that deeply impact regional and local industries, and the future. Presentations are live streamed and elements and thoughts are utilized in curriculum for relevant business courses so that all students benefit from the shared knowledge. An archive of previous live presentations can be accessed online in the Student Portal.

## RICH KARLGAARD



In 2015, the Forbes School of Business at Ashford University Distinguished Speaker Series will continue to offer cutting edge information and critical thought around timely business topics that characterize the Forbes spirit. By using real world examples from Forbes, the Forbes School of Business successfully creates a direct link between authentic business practices and the student environment. Students benefit from investigating, analyzing, and implementing concepts and viable solutions in the classroom.

Join Ashford University in experiencing the ideas behind globalization, leadership, entrepreneurship, intrapreneurism, and innovation through the Forbes School of Business Distinguished Speaker Series. To share your ideas on future speakers and topics, email [alumni@ashford.edu](mailto:alumni@ashford.edu). //



# FIRST SENIOR PROJECT SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

by Laurie Bianchi



Scholarship recipient, Kyle Baucum, with Ashford University President, Dr. Rich Pattenau.

*Kyle Baucum had planned to make the long journey from Scottsbluff, NE, to San Diego, CA, to attend his Ashford University Commencement on October 5. What he had not planned on was that he would receive the first Forbes School of Business Senior Project Scholarship while visiting America's Finest City.*

The 2014 Senior Project Scholarship opportunity was open to Forbes School of Business students who completed their Bachelor's degree capstone course or senior project and alumni who graduated within one year of the July 7, 2014 entry date. The scholarship award winner receives \$5,000 applied to future tuition in the Forbes School of Business Master's degree program of his choosing.

Judged by a committee of Forbes School of Business faculty members and Forbes Media leadership, finalists were selected based on their applications and letters of intent to pursue a Master's degree.

Dr. Jorge Cardenas, Associate Dean of the Forbes School of Business, oversees the scholarship program and takes great pride in the opportunity it offers motivated individuals who understand that learning continues long after commencement. Cardenas stated, "The purpose of the Forbes School of Business scholarship program is to elevate the academic experience for the individuals who desire that challenge and continuing commitment." He adds, "The relationship between Ashford University and Forbes enhances the reputation of the school and the faculty, and ultimately benefits our students as they take the knowledge and skills learned at Ashford into the working world."

There are two types of scholarship paths within the program, one for entrepreneurs and the other for senior projects. Up to five scholarships may be awarded in each path annually, depending upon how many applicants meet the stringent standards and requirements of the scholarships. "We want our graduates to fulfill as many of their professional and life aspirations as humanly possible," remarked Cardenas.

"My goals in completing my MBA are to expand my horizons in the business world, to gain the necessary working knowledge to be successful in business, and to provide myself with the opportunity to change my career path and enjoy a greater quality of life for my family," Baucum said.

Baucum graduated summa cum laude in 2013 and received an offer to join the management team at his local rail terminal. Baucum's Leadership Priorities & Practice capstone course, led by Dr. Ashish Godbole, challenged him to apply insights from his education into his work environment. In his presentation, "The Great Recession at BNSF," Baucum explored economic influences on the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad from 2007-2009. He analyzed the current situation and offered management and leadership ideas to meet future demands of the business.

**Learn more about the Forbes School of Business Senior Project Scholarship.**

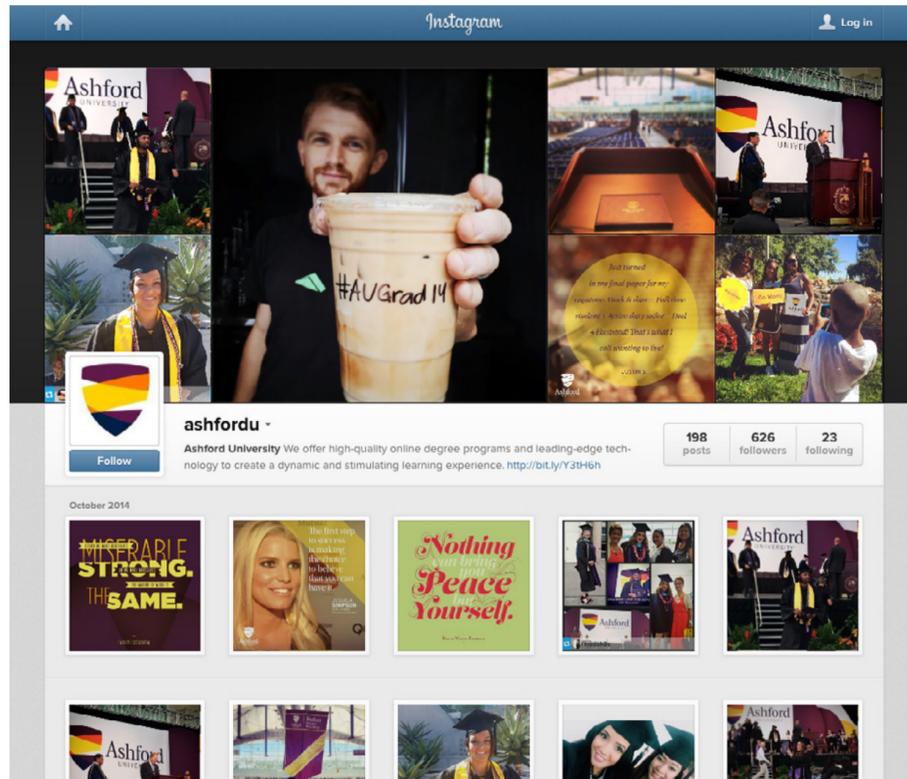
**Get information about the Forbes School of Business Entrepreneurship Scholarship. //**

# DISCOVER ASHFORD'S SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNITY!



Join the conversation with your fellow Ashford alum. Use the links on the left to get started.

We have a brand new social media page for you to visit! You'll find a lot of inspiration, plus alumni stories and our latest videos and blog posts. Be sure to check it out!



## CHECK OUT A COUPLE OF OUR FAVORITE STUDENT COMMENTS.

*My education is my future. I am ready to keep pushing through - to keep learning.*

-Tina M.

*Work hard, and look toward the prize.*

-Jana L.

Discover Ashford's social media communities at [ashford.edu/social](http://ashford.edu/social), and join the conversation.

## Forbes™ School of Business

### Bachelor of Arts

- Accounting\*
- Business Administration\*
- Business Economics
- Business Information Systems
- Business Leadership
- Computer Graphic Design\*\*
- Consumer & Family Financial Services
- eMarketing
- Entrepreneurship
- Finance
- Human Resources Management
- International Business
- Operations Management & Analysis
- Organizational Management
- Project Management
- Public Administration
- Public Relations & Marketing\*
- Real Estate Studies
- Service Management
- Sports & Recreation Management\*
- Supply Chain Management
- Sustainable Enterprise Management

### Graduate Degrees

- Master of Arts in Organizational Management
- Master of Business Administration
- Master of Public Administration

## College of Education

### Associate of Arts

- Early Childhood Education

### Bachelor of Arts

- Child Development
- Cognitive Studies
- Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Education Administration
- Education & Public Policy
- Education Studies
- Elementary Education (grades K-8)\*\*
- English Language Learner Studies
- Instructional Design
- Library Science & Media
- Physical Education\*\*

### Graduate Degrees

- Master of Arts in Education
- Master of Arts in Teaching and Learning with Technology

## College of Health, Human Services, and Science

### Bachelor of Arts

- Applied Behavioral Science
- Complementary & Alternative Health
- Gerontology
- Health & Human Services
- Health & Wellness
- Health Care Administration\*
- Health Education
- Psychology\*

### Bachelor of Science

- Biology\*\*
- Computer Science and Mathematics\*\*
- Health Information Management
- Health Science Administration\*\*
- Natural Science\*\*

### Graduate Degrees

- Master of Arts in Health Care Administration

## College of Liberal Arts

### Associate of Arts

- Military Studies

### Bachelor of Arts

- Applied Linguistics
- Communication Studies
- Cultural Anthropology
- English
- English and Communication\*\*
- Environmental Studies
- History
- Homeland Security & Emergency Management
- Journalism & Mass Communication
- Law Enforcement Administration
- Liberal Arts\*
- Military Studies
- Political Science & Government
- Social & Criminal Justice\*
- Social Science\*
- Sociology

\*Offered on campus and online.

\*\*Offered on campus only. All other listed programs are offered online.

For more information about on-time completion rates, the median loan debt of students who completed each program, and other important information, please visit [ashford.edu/pd](http://ashford.edu/pd).

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED THIS EDITION OF ASHFORD CONNECTIONS! WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK – PLEASE SEND ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS TO: [CONNECTIONS@ASHFORD.EDU](mailto:CONNECTIONS@ASHFORD.EDU).



VISIT [ASHFORD.EDU](http://ASHFORD.EDU) >