



**GRIT**  
**Drives Success**  
**at Lander**  
See page 3

**Bearcat Tennis Duo**  
**Make History**  
See page 12

You are invited to  
**Getting it 'Write'**  
**- the foundation of**  
**all communication**  
See page 6



"Feed Me" submitted by Jaine Restine

**"Bear (the Cat):**  
**Ready to be a freshman"**

submitted by Amanda Walkup.







# From Struggle To Strength: Grit Drives Success At Lander

By Siera Bouffard

College isn't meant to be easy, but that's the point. At Lander, challenges aren't just roadblocks but stepping stones



to growth, resilience and lasting success. With every obstacle a student may face, whether it be a tough exam, a packed schedule or the uncertainties of college life, those moments become opportunities to build grit and determination, the very qualities that students carry through their years at Lander and beyond.

For many first-year students at Lander, one of the first familiar faces they meet on campus is Michael Graham, director of first-year experience. Graham has been at Lander for three years, working closely with new students and helping guide

them through the challenges of college life, encouraging them to see obstacles as opportunities for growth.

"Grit is the perseverance to get through a challenge over a long period of time," Graham said. "And determination stems from intrinsic motivation."

Graham said those two qualities not only help students succeed academically, but also build confidence, strengthen relationships and prepare them for their future careers. While programs like LINK play an important role in helping first-year students begin their college life, Graham emphasized that true success comes from the persistence and drive students build within themselves.

"One of the bigger things that I've noticed here at Lander for grit and determination is students' ability to believe they can be successful," he said.

That belief has shown up in results. Over the past three years, first-year retention has increased 8% for the first time in the program's history. Over the last two years, first-year students have averaged a GPA above 3.0.

Graham knows the importance of resilience from firsthand experience. As a college student, he admitted he

struggled with the transition from high school to college, as many students do.

"I was a student who showed up and said, 'I was good in high school, I should be good in college,'" he recalled. "And I ended up on academic probation, went through suspension, came back... and I realized the importance of asking for help." That experience is part of what drives him to connect with Lander students today and help them see challenges not as failures but as different opportunities for growth.

"At the end of the day, we want Lander graduates to be able to look back and say, first, this was the right place for me, and second, I maximized what I was able to do academically and socially," Graham said. "We want them to walk across the graduation stage and know that they got a great return in a way that prepares them professionally moving forward in their career."

At Lander, grit and determination are developed through supportive programs, caring mentors and a campus culture that helps students be their best. What begins as the struggle of navigating the uncertainty of college life grows into resilience and persistence that continues to shape students long after graduation.

**Graham emphasized that true success comes from the persistence and drive students build within themselves.**

## Student Spotlight: Alexi Noriega, First-Year Lander Junior

By Keila Reyes

As an English professional writing major with a minor in history, Alexi Noriega enters her first year of college this semester as a junior with 72 credits and three jobs.

After the COVID-19 pandemic hit during Noriega's seventh grade of middle school, her mother decided to take her out of in-person school indefinitely. Spending her eighth and ninth grade of school online, she was able to finish high school in her sophomore year.

After coming to Lander University's Bearcat for a Day, Noriega decided it was where she wanted to go. To stay in high school, Noriega completed two years of dual enrollment with Lander as well as two

high school classes. She earned 30 credits in her junior year and 27 in her senior year, graduating high school in May of 2025.

Motivated by her passion for learning and her faith, Noriega works three jobs to pay for school. she says, "I take it one day at a time." Working for Lander at the print shop and at the writing lab, she keeps herself busy. Additionally, she's in her English professor's class three days a week for embedded tutoring. Noriega is the vice president of the English club and a social chair in the Honors College Leadership Council which helps with community outreach within the campus.

Noriega will be studying abroad next semester in Winchester, England and says,

"I've always wanted to go to England since I was a little kid." She will be taking two courses for her

history minor and two creative writing classes for her major. Her plans include going into graduate school and earning her masters in English to become an English professor or a writer.



Alexi Noriega

# How to Develop Mental Strength and Become More Successful: What Our Bad Habits Cost Us



Dr. Renee Love is an English Professor at Lander University. Her column, “Love Notes on Success,” shares reflections about universal lessons, the mysteries of human nature, and the quest for excellence. Please email her at [crlove@lander.edu](mailto:crlove@lander.edu), or write to her at Lander University in Greenwood, SC.

Like physical strength, mental strength requires training. And whether one is in college or in an established career, success requires mental strength. As a professor, I want my students to succeed both in the classroom and in the community. I want them to succeed in graduate school and in their careers, and, most important, I want them to succeed in life.

Recently, my students and I wrote papers about student success, and we watched Amy Morin’s TED Talk, “The Secret of Becoming Mentally Strong.” Morin, a psychologist and writer, discusses how having good habits alone is not enough for success. We must also elimi-

nate the bad habits that sabotage our success. This distinction is subtle but profound.

As an example, Morin recalls one of her patients who was losing his eyesight because of diabetes. The man knew what he needed to do to restore his health, which included good habits like exercising. But even with the knowledge of “the right things” to do, her patient was doing “the wrong things” and drinking three liters of sugary sodas a day – literally. Eventually, Morin persuaded him to make one small change, and he agreed to switch to drinking diet soda: he could not believe the immediate improvements. With this one change, her client was inspired to eliminate other bad habits, which also allowed his good habits to gain traction; eventually, he regained his eyesight. Morin’s point is that when we face challenges, doing the “right things” is not enough. We have to also stop doing “the wrong things” because our bad habits cost us.

Morin has several books related to the theme “what successful people don’t do,” including the international bestseller, *13 Things Mentally Strong People Don’t Do*. The book, which grew from an internet article that she developed into a TED Talk, was a best-seller on Amazon and reached #1 on *The Wall Street Journal* and *USA Today*. For those wondering, here is Morin’s list of “13 Things Mentally Strong People Don’t Do.”

**\*They Don’t Waste Their Time Feeling Sorry for Themselves.**

**\*They Don’t Give Their Power Away**

**\*They Don’t Shy Away from Change**

**\*They Don’t Waste Energy on Things They Can’t Control**

**\*They Don’t Worry about Pleasing Everyone**

**\*They Don’t Fear Taking Calculated Risks**

**\*They Don’t Dwell on the Past**

**\*They Don’t Make the Same Mistakes Over and Over**

**\*They Don’t Resent Other People’s Successes**

**\*They Don’t Give up after the First Failure**

**\*They Don’t Fear Alone Time**

**\*They Don’t Feel the World Owes Them Anything**

**\*They Don’t Expect Immediate Results**

After watching Morin’s TED Talk and considering some of the bad habits she outlines, my students and I reflected on how Morin’s framework applies to student success. By exploring research on success strategies, students can transfer this information to their own college experiences, which, in turn, will enhance their opportunities for future success.

As I thought of Morin’s list of “13 Things,” I developed my own list about behaviors that sabotage our success in the classroom. My goal in sharing this list is not to criticize but to bring awareness to some of the “bad habits” that we could change to increase our success. I also understand

that it’s impossible to “know what you don’t know,” and I want to help you reach the next level of success by sharing this information. The majority of these habits can be changed easily, but we need to be aware of “bad habits” that could derail success. My list is not in order of importance, but I hope you will consider whether any of these habits might be areas for improvement.

Dr. Love’s List of 13 Things Successful Students Don’t Do

**They don’t miss class unless it is essential.** Part of passing a class is attending the class because this is where the instruction, discussions, active learning experiences, and collaboration occurs. College courses progress rapidly, so being absent for several days will cause students to quickly fall behind. Successful students also avoid asking the question, “When I was absent, did I miss anything important?” Each class is important. If the information was unimportant, we would not need to meet as a class.

**They don’t stop working when the class ends.** Unlike in high school, considerable work in college occurs outside the classroom. Successful students understand that the class period is only the beginning of studying, the proverbial “tip of the iceberg.” Students must invest significant time outside of the classroom to master the materials.

**They don’t miss assignments.** Successful students

*Continued on page 5*



# Success Strategy

recognize that college is not like high school or middle school where students are sometimes allowed to “catch up” on missed assignments (or even attendance). While in *Continued from page 4* high school, one of my children had experiences where he had failed to turn in so many homework assignments that, eventually, he was failing the class (and rightfully so). He was allowed to submit all the missing work, which (miraculously) elevated his grade. I told my son that if he had been in college, he would have failed the class because we cannot submit all our assignments at the end of the semester. To use Stephen Covey’s analogy from *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, you can’t cram on the farm: you have to work on the “crop”—or in this case the grade – all season long. Successful students realize that each assignment must be completed on time because we cannot learn the content of an entire semester in a few weeks.

**They don’t ignore problems.** Successful students address difficulties immediately. As soon as the first paper or test problem emerges, find a tutor; seek help; ask questions; determine where errors occurred so the next assignment will be better. The longer a problem persists, the bigger it becomes. Everyone at Lander wants you to succeed, and if you let your teachers or advisers know that you are struggling, we can help you find the resources you need to make improvements. Please ask for help. We care about you.

**They don’t forget their class materials.** Successful students understand that it

is essential to bring course supplies to class. Most college classes meet for 50 minutes or 75 minutes two or three times a week. When students forget to bring laptops, notebooks, books, computer chargers, or other items, students sabotage their learning opportunities. These supplies are not “extra” supplies, like bringing a bottle of water to class. I can easily give a student paper or a pencil, but there are no extra laptops or books. Further, if students leave class to retrieve the forgotten items, they miss instruction time. Organize class materials the night before to avoid rushing the next day. Charge laptops the night before class, and keep computer cords and “mouses” with the laptop, so these items remain together. Break the cycle of forgetting supplies because this “bad habit” hurts academic success.

**They don’t talk at inappropriate times.** I love it when students participate in class discussions and answer questions. I am not asking students to be silent. However, there are appropriate times to talk in class. Successful students understand that when the teacher is talking, they need to listen (rather than talk). Likewise, when a classmate is answering a question or giving a presentation, we need to listen. At times, some students will fall into the unfortunate habit of chatting socially while the professor is teaching. These side conversations disrupt class, make it hard for others to hear the teacher, and cause those chatting to miss instructions. The practice of listening when others are speaking applies in all professional contexts.

**They don’t work on the**

**wrong things in class.** Successful students know which class they are attending. They are working on English assignments in English class or Speech assignments in Speech class. They are doing the right tasks at the right time. There is just no way to learn the content of a class if a student is completing homework from another discipline during class time.

**They don’t take breaks at the wrong times.** Class periods are short. I understand that we sometimes have classes back-to-back. My schedule includes this challenge, as well. But if we need longer breaks between classes, we need to create a schedule that allows for more time between classes. I sometimes have students arrive for class on time and then leave as soon as I start the class in order to get a coffee, make a phone call, or complete another errand. What these multi-taskers are not realizing is that every minute of class time is important, and 15-minute coffee errand has caused them to miss valuable instruction time. I understand that sometimes we must excuse ourselves from class, but be strategic. It would be better to excuse ourselves from class during independent work or during a video (that can be re-watched at home) rather than when the teacher is giving directions (which cannot be “re-played” later).

**They don’t miss the directions.** Successful students understand that the directions are important, and they take notes on the directions. Some details of an assignment may sound nonessential, like the formatting, but “the small things” are “the big things.” In an inspiring graduation speech by Admiral William McRaven, former commander of the United States Navy SEALs, he

emphasizes that if we can’t get the small things right in life, we will never get the chance to get the big things right. Put differently, if you were prescribed medication, there is a big difference between getting the right dose, which could improve your condition, and getting the wrong dose, which could make you gravely ill.

**They don’t ignore feedback.** Successful students view feedback as helpful suggestions about how to improve in a class. Rather than being defensive or ignoring feedback, review teachers’ feedback on assignments. Even better, ask for feedback if you don’t understand something. On each assignment, the feedback is designed to help students improve. Take time to look at grades, and review the comments made by your professors. If we are not looking at the feedback and trying to understand mistakes, how will we correct our errors? Successful students realize that feedback is a gift that will help them succeed on future assignments.

**They don’t use their phone in class.** Successful students are able to put their phones away during class time. I cannot emphasize strongly enough how phone usage during class time sabotages students’ learning opportunities. I prompt my students repeatedly, politely, to put away their phones. Phone usage during class time hurts students’ academic performance, and this is not just my opinion. There are increasing studies related to how smart phone usage damages academic performance; it distracts students’ attention from class and becomes a constant interruption. While texting or scrolling through social media, students cannot

*Continued on page 19*



# Getting it 'Write': tips from a communication professional

By Siera Bouffard

In an era where AI can write your essays and caption your photos, Lander alumnus Adam Myrick still believes nothing beats a human writer. To demonstrate



Adam Myrick

this, the veteran journalist and public information officer for the Lexington County Sheriff's Department will visit Lander University on Nov. 11 to discuss strong and

concise writing.

In his breakout session, "Getting it 'Write,'" Myrick will focus on the foundation of all communication: the written word, along with the importance of strong writing in every form of communication. From social media posts to more professional writing, Myrick will show attendees how to craft messages that are clear and easy to understand.

Lander University Journalism Professor and Forum newspaper advisor Dr. Robert Stevenson is hosting Myrick's return to Lander. "Adam worked as section editor for the Forum all four of his years as a Lander college student," he said. "It was evident to me early on that Adam would

for the human touch. No matter the platform, strong messages start with strong writing."

Driven by his love for writing and his passion for helping others communicate effectively, Myrick will present tips he has found most useful in his career and share them in a way that students can easily understand and apply.

Myrick has more than 20 years of experience in strategic communication, including nearly a decade in print and broadcast newsrooms. Since 2015, he has served as public information officer for the Lexington County Sheriff's Department in South Carolina, where he leads media relations, social media strategy and crisis communication. He is also a Lander University graduate and is a frequent speaker and panelist on media relations.

This session will provide practical writing tips that cut through the noise, avoid unnecessary jargon and communicate ideas in ways that are easy to understand. Myrick will also address why government communication often can be hard to comprehend and how students can avoid sounding stiff or robotic in their own writing.

"Government communication has a reputation for being verbose and robotic," he said. "The best writing is usually the

ties and their future careers.

While the session will benefit students studying communication, journalism or media, Myrick said strong writing skills are essential in nearly every field.

"No matter what your targeted field might be or what your everyday duties will end up being, writing is a necessity because it's about communication," he said. "There isn't a position out there into which any Lander graduate will step that won't require communication and specifically, some kind of writing."

## Communication & Languages Alumni Lecture Series

Oct. 23: Jeremiah Johnson Zoom Presentation on his 8 years teaching ESL in Vietnam

Nov. 11: Adam Myrick: Getting it 'Write'. the foundation of all communication.

Nov. 18: Allison Blanks Coomes: Journey from Lander to Speech Pathologist and Freelance Feature Writer. (See page 9)

The session takes place Tuesday, Nov. 11, in LC 200 from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. Anyone is encouraged to attend to gain practical writing skills that can help them stand out in any career and to hear from a seasoned communication professional who knows the value of the written word.

Myrick's session is the second of three presentations by communication alumni this semester. Stevenson explained that on October 23, Lander mass communication alumnus Jeremiah Johnson presented via zoom from Vietnam, discussing his eight years there as an ESL instructor. On November 18, Allison Blanks Coomes, who graduated from Lander in 2003, will discuss her



be an outstanding journalists." Stevenson explained Myrick career path includes leadership positions in print, radio, television and motivational public speaking.

"Strong writing is fundamental to good communication," Myrick said. "Even with AI and other tools, there's no replacement

most conversational writing. Tight writing breeds understanding."

In addition, Myrick will explain how professional writing differs from academic writing, emphasizing the importance of clarity to communicate effectively in ways students can apply to numerous opportuni-

ties and their future careers. Stevenson explained that on October 23, Lander mass communication alumnus Jeremiah Johnson presented via zoom from Vietnam, discussing his eight years there as an ESL instructor. On November 18, Allison Blanks Coomes, who graduated from Lander in 2003, will discuss her

"All three presenters served as section editors for the Forum," Stevenson added. The series is sponsored by the Department of Communication and Languages.



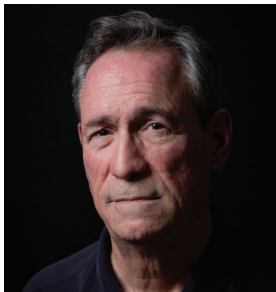
# Long Shadows To Premiere In Greenwood

Due to Greenwood ties, the feature film Long Shadows has a one-night-only premiere in Greenwood on November 6, 2025 before its



Grainger Hines

William Shockly. In addition to Hines, the cast includes Dermot Mulroney, Jacqueline Bisset, and Dominic Monaghan. Reid also makes a cameo appearance.



Shelley Reid

career spanning five decades and numerous film and TV roles. Reid, screenwriter, producer and

prolific stage performer, along with Hines, both have strong ties with Lander University.

Reid and Hines served as short-film judges and presenters in the 2024 and 2025 Lander University Film Festivals.

As a veteran screenwriter, Reid shared with the Lander community insights into his creative journey, detailing the transition from script to screen for Long Shadows. His presentation covered key elements of storytelling, character development and the challenges of bringing a script to life in the film industry.

Hines, who portrays Sheriff Wesley Tibbs in Long Shadows, provided first-hand accounts of his experiences on set and offered valuable perspectives on the art of screen acting.

The Lander Department of Communication and Languages together with the Lander Forum student newspaper purchased the first screening of Long Shadows, and tickets were then given to members of the Lander community, according to Journalism Professor and Lander Film Festival Director Dr. Robert Stevenson. Stevenson will serve as master of ceremonies for the premiere showing.

"Greenwood Mayor Brandon Smith will proclaim November 6 as "Long Shadows Day in Greenwood," said Stevenson.

"Grainger and Shelley will hold a question and answer session after the screening," he added. Hines and Reid will also hold a Q&A after the second and third showings.

Lander's screening of Long Shadows begins at 6:45, and the public screenings begins at 7 pm for the second showing and 7:15 for the final showing. All three showing will be held in Greenwood's Premiere Cinema on Bypass 72. Tickets are available online or at the theater.

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## Lander Speak Easy Club Promotes Oral Communication Skills

By: Peyton Henson

While some Lander students may fear public speaking, a new club called Speak Easy helps ease those concerns. This organization offers an opportunity where students come to share their ideas and platforms without the added pressure of being in the classroom.

The club was co-founded by professors Monique Sacay-Bagwell and Paul Cadenhead who have been actively involved in the creation of the club and plan to

work alongside members, making Speak Easy different from other student organizations. Sacay-Bagwell stated she started



Speak Easy as an outlet for students to come and exchange feedback and help students strengthen their oral communication skills.

The club meets once a week to collaborate and practice, but students can freely come independently to obtain individualized feedback all throughout the semester.

In addition to creating a

supportive space to practice speaking skills, Sacay-Bagwell said she hopes members will be able to attend events such as Carolinas Communication Organization as well as South Carolina Speech and Theatre Association. These opportunities are to help build up students' resumes, but also reflect Lander's push on experiential learning, said Sacay-Bagwell. The club is also an EYE approved organization, allowing students to gain EYE credits through participation.

On-campus events are still being planned, however Sacay-Bagwell mentioned having TED-style talks and inviting guest speakers to come speak.

Cadenhead highlighted the importance of refining students' communication skills in both formal and informal settings for success. He stated, "Public

speaking is important because it is a facet of everything we do in life." This club prepares students with lifelong skills that will help them when searching for jobs after leaving Lander University.

Sacay-Bagwell echoed that message, mentioning fear fades when people speak about what matters most to them. "Everybody's scared of public speaking, but it's funny because once you choose a topic that you are really passionate about, your desire to communicate is so much stronger than anything that's going to hold you back."

The professors hope that Speak Easy will give members more than just skills, including the opportunity to meet new people and build memories students can carry with them throughout the rest of their lives.



# Lander Career Services Celebrates Career Development

In celebration of National Career Development Month!

**LANDER UNIVERSITY**



## PHOTO CONTEST

Submit by 11/14

**OFFICE OF WORKFORCE & CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

**What to do?**

- Submit a photo from your job, internship, or from a conference presentation
- Provide a date and location
- Wait for the winners to be announced on 11/19!
- \*winners will receive a small gift & their photo will be professionally printed and displayed at the Career Center

Submit photos to: [careerservices@lander.edu](mailto:careerservices@lander.edu)



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LANDER UNIVERSITY

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## RESUME COMPETITION

A PART OF NATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT MONTH

### FOR ALL STUDENTS



**WHAT TO DO:**

- Complete your resume
- Submit it to: [careerservices@lander.edu](mailto:careerservices@lander.edu)
- Top 3 Winners will receive - an award & gift
- All participants will receive feedback from 3 employers

APPLY BY: **NOV. 5TH**

CONTACT US AT: [CAREERSERVICES@LANDER.EDU](mailto:CAREERSERVICES@LANDER.EDU)

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*La Mesa*  
WHERE FRIENDS GATHER

**ONLY 25 SPOTS AVAILABLE, REGISTER NOW!**



**November 13, 2025**  
**11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**  
**Lois Grier Room, Student Center**

**WORKFORCE & CAREER DEVELOPMENT**  
LANDER UNIVERSITY

**WORKFORCE & CAREER DEVELOPMENT**  
LANDER UNIVERSITY

## CONTEST!!!



### POETRY & ART

To celebrate National Career Development Month, Lander will have a poetry and art contest! Open to ALL students!

THEME: The evolution of work: Careers in the past, present & future

Due Date: Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> 4:30pm

Winners Announcement: Nov. 24<sup>th</sup> 10am

Prize: for best artwork 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> & best poetry 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>

SUBMIT POETRY/ARTWORK IMAGE TO: [CAREERSERVICES@LANDER.EDU](mailto:CAREERSERVICES@LANDER.EDU)



# Communication Alumna Returns to Inspire

By Siera Bouffard

When Allison Blanks Coomes first enrolled at Lander University, speech-language pathology wasn't even on her radar.



Allison Blanks Coomes

Her time at Lander would lead her to uncover a passion for understanding writing and communication on a deeper level.

Now, more than 20 years later, she's returning to campus to share that journey with the next generation of

**Lander alumnus Allison Blanks' Career Presentation will be Nov. 18, from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in LC 200. All students are invited.**

speech-language pathologist while also pursuing free-lance feature writing.

Before discovering her passion for speech-language pathology, Blanks Coomes had plans to major in dance performance at another university out of state.

When her plans changed, she found herself enrolling at Lander just a few weeks before the start of the fall semester and found a new creative outlet through communication.

During her time as a student, she was a member of the Lander Dancers and Blue Key Honor Society, and she also served as a writer and section editor for The Lander Forum.

"The communications program appealed to me because of the creative mindset it requires," Blanks Coomes said. "My time with The Forum fine-tuned my writing and editing skills. The tight timelines and quick turnaround time for articles developed the speed of my critical thinking and planning."

A career in speech-language pathology wasn't something Blanks Coomes had considered until after graduation. After her mother's suggestion, she observed a pediatric speech-language pathologist and realized it was something she wanted to do. She later earned her graduate degree from the University of South Carolina and has now worked in the field for 16 years.

Working with children has shaped Blanks Coomes' view on communication. She sees communication not just

as words, but as a connection.

"My experience in pediatrics has given me a better understanding and appreciation of interpersonal communication," she said. "Communication entails so much more than what we say and write. Communication can be functional or creative, and we are all capable of both in unique ways."

Blanks Coomes also has a passion for writing feature stories on topics such as language development, literacy and overcoming adversity. Not only that, but she is currently pursuing her second master's degree in library and information science with a focus on children's literature.

Returning to Lander as a speaker, Blanks Coomes hopes to inspire students to value their communication skills in any career.

"During my time as a student at Lander, a career in speech-language pathology was not even on my radar. I just knew that writing, creating and

communication came natural to me," she said. "Effective communicators and efficient communication skills are needed in every career field and niche you could pursue. Effective, capable writers are trending towards rare as technology advances."

Blanks Coomes also

shared advice she would give to her younger self and current students, highlighting the importance of developing skills like teamwork, collaboration and a keen sense of attention to detail. She also emphasized the importance of trusting your professors and leaning on them for mentoring needs.

Her talk will feature how her experiences at Lander laid the foundation for her career, despite not having everything planned during her time as a student, and how current students can use their communication skills in their future.

"I am looking forward to speaking to students about how my time as a student at Lander served as a springboard for my professional career," she said. "I hope the story of my academic journey conveys that you do

***"I am looking forward to speaking to students about how my time as a student at Lander served as a springboard for my professional career."***

**Allison Blanks Coomes  
Lander University (2003)**

not need to have all of the dots connected in terms of your career path before you graduate. Being an effective communicator will open doors in the niches that interest you."

Blanks Coomes will share more of her experiences and advice with students on Nov. 18, from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. in LC 200. Her talk will be open to anybody who wants to learn how communication skills can create new opportunities and guide career paths.



## Excellence in Action: Lander Teachers Honors Society

By Mileigha Carter

Kappa Delta Pi Honors Society, also known as KDP, is a program for teachers at Lander University. This specific Honors society, according to Lander University's KDP website, has as its mission is to inspire and equip teachers to thrive. In this program, their vision is to build thriving commu-



*Kappa Delta Pi Honors Society*

nities and create lifelong opportunities by providing quality, equitable education for all. There are over 20,000 active teacher members, 650 university and college chapter members, and over 1 million distinguished alumni.

Lander University's chapter advisor, Lauren Brown, was excited to share that KDP's, "Vi-

sion is to create thriving communities and provide quality education for all." KDP aims to support educators through resources, networking opportunities, and a commitment to its excellence in education.

Brown, who grew up in York, S.C., stated, "I chose to come back and teach at Lander because it always felt like home to me. My experience here at Lander, as a student, was amazing. [...] all my experiences helped shaped me into the person I am today."

She also explained that, "When afforded the opportunity of this assistant professor position, I was honored to be able to give back to Lander and the College of Education because they have given so much to me."

## Campus Safety At Night: Keeping Students Protected

By Addison Leonard

As the sun sets over Lander University, the commitment to student safety doesn't dim. Through its multi-layered emergency systems, proactive police departments, and growing student awareness, Lander continues to strengthen its approach to keeping campus secure, both day and night.



*Chief Greg Allen*

The Lander Alert System is one of the university's key safety tools, designed to quickly notify students, faculty, and staff of emergencies via text message or email. Whether it's a weather warning, a campus threat, or an urgent situation, the system ensures that information spreads fast. Lander's safety

measures also extend to strict policies, including a no-tolerance stance on drugs and alcohol, and clearly outlined emergency procedures for situations like active shooters, bomb threats, hazardous spills, and severe weather.

Behind the scenes, the Lander University Police Department (LUPD) operates around the clock. Officers are certified by the state of South Carolina and have full arrest of powers under state and local law. They patrol campus 24/7, responding to calls, investigating incidents, and maintaining a visible presence in and around residence halls and campus hot spots.

"Lander's police have kept me feeling safe since I got here," said student Aren Kelly. "They perform a lot of actions to protect everyone on campus."

Chief Greg Allen emphasized that visibility and communi-

cation are key to prevention. Officers patrol both on foot and by vehicle to stay visible, especially during times of increased student activity. He explained that information from day patrols is shared with night shift officers to ensure continuous coverage and awareness.

The department also monitors daily communication logs of campus reports and responds immediately to emergency call boxes stationed around campus. They work closely with departments such as Student Conduct, Student Affairs, and the Wellness Center, to discuss behavioral trends and address any concerns that arise.

"When I first started," Allen noted, "The big thing was people driving up, trying to impress students with money or cars."

"Now its technology. Students meet people online without knowing much about them, so we've had to adapt," Allen said. LUPD has helped educate students on digital safety.

Allen also shared personal experiences from his time on night shifts, recalling instances where he stopped to warn students, especially young women, about unsafe behaviors like jogging alone at night with earbuds in. "I can't stop you from running at night," Allen told one student, "but at least go without earbuds and be aware of your surroundings." His approach blends authority with care. By keeping communication open across departments and continually updating their strategies, Lander University's police and administrators remain focused on ensuring every student feels secure.





# Nursing Student Charts New Path at Lander

By Karen Petit

Jameah Killingsworth transferred to Lander University with an impressive 3.5 GPA.



*Jameah Killingsworth*

The opportunities for personal interaction with

faculty and the reputation of Lander's nursing program led Killingsworth, of Abbeville, to believe that the University would be a good fit for her future goals; and would enable her to pursue the studies that she needed for a career as a nurse anesthetist or a labor and delivery nurse.

"I like caring for people," said Killingsworth, who admired the care that her grandmother gave to her grandfather when he was ill. "As a nurse, I can help people feel better. I have a purpose."

## From Transfer to Triumph

The transfer to Lander also had another vital benefit. Killingsworth was one of 14 students to be awarded a scholarship through the Self Regional Scholars Program.

This highly sought-after scholarship is offered annually to Lander's highest performing nursing students who demonstrate exceptional academic performance, community involvement and career potential, among other characteristics.

"I've always wanted to work at Self Regional," Killingsworth said. "I realized I would have good networking opportunities at the hospital through my studies at Lander." **Lander Makes Transferring Easy**

Dr. Holisa Wharton, dean of Lander's College of Nursing, Human Performance and Health Sciences, said the transfer process is not as difficult as students may think.

"At Lander University, we strive to make transferring as smooth as possible. We

encourage students to begin the transfer process to nursing school early during the freshman or sophomore year to ensure they meet all of our major prerequisites and that all nursing clinical courses are completed at Lander," Wharton said, noting that Killingsworth followed this path.

Further, Lander is committed to supporting students through every step of the process.

"We recognize that transferring can be a difficult decision," Wharton said. "To make the transition easier, each prospective transfer student is paired with a dedicated transfer advisor to help them navigate the application process. Once enrolled, students are connected to a nursing faculty advisor who will guide

*Continued on page 18*

# Art Sculptures: Bringing Life to the Lander Campus

By Inman Rikard

No matter where you are on campus, you are greeted by intricate sculptures. These student sculptures bring to life otherwise unremarkable areas of the school grounds.

Since their onset 16 years ago, these public sculptures have become a staple of campus life. Originally created to be an opportunity for students to experience public art making as a career, it has expanded over the years.

"The larger contribution to campus is to create a more beautiful and vibrant Lander environment while preparing students for a lucrative career with public art making," says Sculpture Professor Douglas McAbee.

McAbee further stated that the artwork displayed throughout campus has been the driv-

ing factor for some students' decision to come to Lander.

"Another goal is to create unique, beautiful and thoughtful experiences for students, staff and visitors as they walk across campus," he said. This goal was achieved by the delicate designs of the various sculptures.

Computer Science major Sawyer Cruce believes, "They do a great job of repurposing an area that would otherwise be seen as empty and lifeless."

While these sculptures are an

incredible display of talent to those who see them, they are more than just art to those who create them. They are much more than just another

school assignment.

From sketching out the sculpture, choosing the right materials, and organizing the creation of the sculpture, 3D BFA major Shine Kim said she believes that the impact is impossible to ignore.

"I felt seen and noticed when I displayed my sculpture, and I'm sharing my thoughts and feelings with everyone" she said.

"A sculpture is more than just a three-dimensional form, it's a way to show your talent and express yourself."

The sculptures are rotated every 12 months to spotlight different students and their labor-intensive sculptures.

With a growing interest in the displays of creativity and the quality of the sculptures, they are sure to leave a lasting impact.





# Lander's New Pre-Law Society Set To Begin

By Katelyn Grizzle

Lander University's new Pre-Law Society gives students a chance to explore the legal system, prepare for law school, and better understand how laws shape everyday life. The group, founded by Professors David DiMatteo and Elizabeth Floyd along with Department Chair Ashley Woodiwiss, is open to students of all majors.

Floyd said the group's mission is not limited to future lawyers but includes anyone interested in understanding how law affects society. "Our goal is to prepare students



Elizabeth Floyd

for law-related careers and help students become more informed citizens," she said. "What you learn when you study law applies to everyone in every walk of life," she added. "Understanding how government functions, what your rights are, and how the court system works, all citizens need to be informed about that," she said.

"It was Professor DiMatteo's idea, said Floyd, but I wholeheartedly approved because we didn't have anything like it."

"Law is a professional degree, and we feel that requires some mentoring," she added.

Floyd said the society may expand into two tracks. "There is a strong possibility that we may be able to offer two options," she said. "The first would be a student-led organization, open to anyone interested in legal or legal-adjacent careers and legal issues where students can gather for discussion and education," she said. "The second would focus on pre-law minors through faculty-led speaker events and off-campus experiences for students planning to attend law school."

DiMatteo said the society will remain open to anyone interested in legal topics.

"Some students want to learn about law as a career, others are drawn to topics like freedom of speech or Supreme Court decisions," he said.

"We want to create both career-oriented and general-interest sessions that help peo-

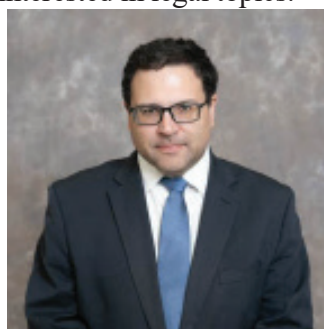
ple learn more about the law and current issues," he added.

***The Pre-Law Society meets at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesdays in LC 371. The next meeting is scheduled for Nov. 5.***

Drawing from their own backgrounds as attorneys, both professors said they hope to offer students honest insight and mentorship. "My law experience informs every piece of advice I give, the upsides and downsides," Floyd said. "There are certain realities to such a career that I would not avoid sharing," she said.

Once recognized as an official organization, the professors said they hope to expand activities and provide additional learning opportunities for students interested in the law. "We already have an attorney lined up to speak at our next meeting, and we're reaching out to law students to share their experiences," DiMatteo said. "Eventually, we'd like to explore things like trial competitions or law-school Q&A sessions," he added.

DiMatteo said the professors are excited to see the organization take shape. "We're thrilled to be able to offer an opportunity like this," he said. "Anyone interested in the law or some aspect of it should come join us," he said.



David DiMatteo

## Lander Players Unveil Murder Mystery: "Her Dead Interns"

By Kaitlyn Beaudreau

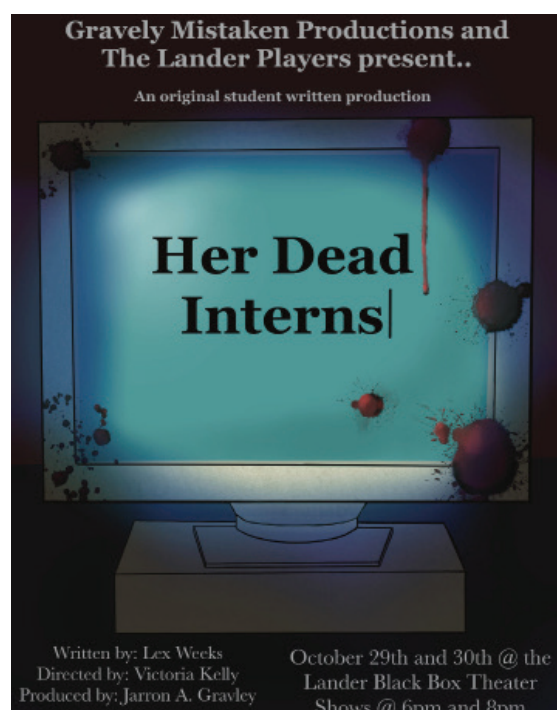
A few actors, a small stage, and one deadly office party — the Lander Players' new production, "Her Dead Interns," proves that even in a black box, secrets can't stay buried for long.

The one-act production will debut on Wednesday, October 29, with performances at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. in the Black-box Theater. A second showing will be held the following day at the same times and location.

Written by Lander students Lex Weeks and directed by Victoria Kelly, "Her Dead Interns" tells the story of a murder mystery that unfolds during a workplace party. Both sophomores have collaborated with fellow Lander Players members on the production since the start of the semester.

This semester marks the revival of Lander Players, a student-led theater club returning to campus life. The club welcomes students with no prior theater experience, offering opportunities in both acting and stage management.

"Our goal is to provide students with exciting opportunities to experience the fun of theater," said junior



club member Jonathan Campbell. "We have roles for everyone — acting and dancing ensemble roles for those who want to be on stage, and positions behind the scenes for those interested in production work."

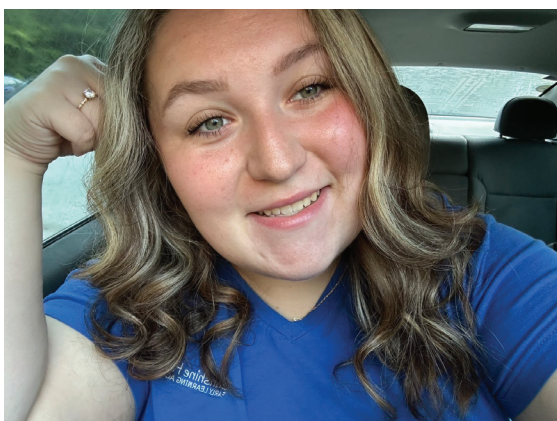
Students interested in joining the club can contact club president Kierstin Skinner or secretary Victoria Kelly via email.



## Signs of success: Student Embraces Creative Outlet

By Siera Bouffard

When a high school classmate asked her to make a banner for a project, she grabbed a brush and gave it a try. That moment, although simple at the time, sparked what would



later grow into a greater passion and a small business making custom signs.

Sarah Reynard, a senior childhood development and education major, designs and paints signs for just about any occasion. From football games to wedding receptions to classroom décor, her work adds a personal touch to every event.

Her love for lettering goes back further than the high school project that started it all. As a child in elementary school, she was drawn to the cursive writing lessons and

was fascinated by the different loops and swirls of each letter. That same curiosity eventually would develop into her love for calligraphy, a skill she continues to use in her designs.

"All of my coworkers and family members always praised me for my work," Reynard said. "I never thought it was good enough, but their support pushed me to keep going."

What began as a simple hobby of bow-making and calligraphy grew into something more. Reynard now begins each project by sketching a design on her iPad before turning it into paint on the chosen canvas. She admits the process isn't always easy, but it's one she has come to enjoy, even through the difficulties.

"I've never been the best painter," she said. "But with time and a little frustration, I've grown to love the work I do."

Reynard draws inspiration from all over, though many of her creations are tied to sports or weddings, two occasions

where custom signs can help capture the moment.

Through the creative process, Reynard said she has learned a lot about herself beyond lettering and design. She has also learned about the importance of leaning on others when challenges arise.

"I get frustrated really easily," she said. "Thankfully, I have an amazing support system that helps me through that. My fiancé especially helps with finding ideas and solutions when I'm stuck."

For Reynard, what she does goes beyond just creating. She hopes her work shows other students that creativity can grow not only into self-expression but also opportunity.

"The advice I would give would be to keep pushing for yourself," Reynard said. "Don't

let go of your dreams and don't stop because of the negativity in people."

She said she wants others to see the opportunity for business not only as a service, but as a reflection of self-expression and identity. "I love to express myself through my projects, and having people experience that too will mean the world," she said.

With every new creation, Reynard makes more than just a decoration. She builds confidence, perseverance and inspiration for others who may be hesitant to share their talents. What started as a simple project for a friend has grown into a passion, and a reminder to everyone that even small beginnings can lead to something lasting. Pictured (below) is her latest project.



## Lander Political Science Assoc. Promotes Respectful Dialogue

By Sumaya Winter

Following a yearlong hiatus, Lander University's Political Science Association (PSA) is back for the 2025–26 school year. The revival was initiated by student president Elias Carls.

Malone, who has

advised the group since 2019, said Carls' interest was the driving force behind its return.

The club provides an opportunity for students to join open discussions about politics at the local, state and national levels in a

structured, nonpartisan environment.

While members are free to share partisan views, the organization itself focuses on facts and respectful dialogue. "We present the issues without any sort of bias, and then the members discuss," Malone said.

The PSA equips students with networking and leadership experience, as well as opportunities to practice re-

spectful collaboration, skills Malone said are essential for both future careers and civic life. "We can go beyond rhetoric and actually find commonalities to better ourselves and our society," he said.

The club meets every other Tuesday at 3:30 p.m., in LC373. Membership is open to all students.

More information is available through their Instagram, @psa.landeruniversity.





## CONGRATULATIONS on your outstanding service!

### Employee of the Month:

Courtney “You are informative, specific, and helpful in communicating steps to complete documentation and scheduling appointments to finalize processes with each student, modeling patience in answering the many questions and concerns students have in gathering their needed documentation.”



Courtney Carpenter  
October 2025

As a reminder, Nomination Forms are located on the HR Forms site and should be delivered to Human Resources no later than the last day of the month for consideration for the following month’s award. Currently sitting members of Staff Senate are not eligible to be nominated or to nominate others during their term.

## Behind The Scenes At Lander's Print Shop

By Kaitlyn Beaudreau

When faculty, staff, or students at Lander University need professional



print materials in a hurry, they turn to Stacey Hart.

As the head of Printing Services, Hart keeps the presses running behind the scenes, ensuring that everything from brochures to posters reflects the university’s brand with accuracy.

Hart’s day begins at 7:30 a.m., as her and her team answer emails and get professor’s their needed materials, such as tests or assignments, before classes start for the day.

“We have a door that is opening and closing all day long,” states Hart, “We’ve got about 10 machines here that we run at different times.”

Hart explained that for the rest of her day she balances multiple tasks – lamination, business cards, folding brochures, making books and booklets – as well as answering to the individuals that walk into her office daily. She is

also over laying out designs for posters, helping the school’s resident assistants get the materials they need for housing, and answering to whoever else may need help that day.

Her day ends at 5:00 p.m. when Printing Services closes, but she is back the next day to do it all over again.

Despite her busy schedule, Hart loves what she does. She has been at Lander University for the past eight years and has been in the printing business for almost 35 years.

“I just enjoy what I do,” emphasized Hart, “I’ve been doing it all my life, and I love Lander.”

You can find Hart and Printing Services in Suite 110 in the Carnell Learning Center on campus, or by emailing them at [copyservices@lander.edu](mailto:copyservices@lander.edu).

## GCT Readies For The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

By Jaina Ingram

The holiday season is here! As Greenwood citizens swap out their jack-o'-lanterns with figures of Saint Nick, the Greenwood Community Theatre is transitioning from the upbeat musical Hairspray to the Christmas comedy play, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. On their website [www.greenwoodcommunitytheatre.com](http://www.greenwoodcommunitytheatre.com), they provide a brief synopsis of the

play: "In this hilarious Christmas classic, a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids – probably the most inventively awful kids in history. You won't believe the mayhem – and the fun – when the Herdmans collide head-on with the story of Christmas!"

Ryan Hewitt, Artistic and Technical

*Continued on page 19*





# Lander University's Old Main Singers to Perform

By Armani Canty

The Department of Music at Lander University invites the Greenwood and Lander communities to attend a concert performed by the Old Main Singers Sunday, Nov. 16, at 4 p.m. The concert



will take place in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church of Greenwood, and is free and open to the public.

The Old Main Singers are under the direction of Prof. Keith Jameson, director of choral activities at Lander. Over a 30-year performing career,

Jameson sang over 14 seasons with the Metropolitan Opera in New York City, opportunities and roles that opened to him after two summers in the Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program and six seasons at New York City Opera.

Jameson has also performed with groups including the New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl, Phoenix Symphony, Berkshire Bach Society at Tanglewood Music Center, Seattle Opera, San Francisco Opera, Houston Grand Opera and Lyric



Opera of Chicago. Please visit [www.lander.edu/events](http://www.lander.edu/events) for updates and to confirm event times and venues.

For questions, please contact the College of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at 864-388-8323 or [hass@lander.edu](mailto:hass@lander.edu).

## Somos Lander University: Keeping culture Alive



By Micaela Pallette

At Lander University, SOMOS LU is more than just a student organization, it's a celebration of heritage, unity, and pride. Founded in 2016 by a group of passionate students who wanted to create a space that honored Hispanic and Latin@ culture, SOMOS LU has grown into a vibrant community that welcomes everyone, regardless of background, to learn, connect, and celebrate together.

The club's mission is simple yet powerful: to promote cultural awareness, inclusivity, and community involvement across campus.

Through its events and outreach, SOMOS LU creates opportunities for students to embrace their roots while building bridges of understanding with others. Every semester, the organization hosts a variety of events that bring Latin culture to life, from fundraisers selling delicious

Latin food and drinks like agua fresca and conchas with hot chocolate, to elegant galas that raise scholarship funds for future students.

But at its heart, SOMOS LU is about family, a place where students can find friendship, belonging, and pride in their identity. Whether you grew up celebrating Día de los Muertos or you're simply curious to learn about Latin traditions, SOMOS LU invites you to join in.



# Bearcat Duo Makes History with ITA Cup Finals Run

By Graeme Simpson

**Lander's Pugh and Jay-aprakash fall just short of a national title after thrilling tiebreak finish in Rome, Georgia**

On a cool October morning in Rome, Georgia, two Lander Bearcats stepped onto the national stage — and nearly conquered it.

Harry Pugh and Brendan Jay-aprakash, both sophomores, represented Lander University at the 2025 ITA Cup, the only individual national championship in NCAA Division II tennis. Against the best doubles teams in the country, the pair fought their way to the national final, marking one of the most impressive postseason runs in program history.

## A Duo Destined for a Deep Run

The road to Rome began weeks earlier at the Southeast Regional Championship, where Pugh and Jay-aprakash were seeded thanks to their



regional ranking from their freshman season. The two cruised through a gauntlet of elite competition — taking down duos from Carson-Newman, North Georgia, Wingate, and Columbus State — before falling in the regional final to the No. 1 team from Catawba.

"We had a great run at the regional, beating some very good teams,"

Pugh said. "They're all the best teams from each school, so every match was tough."

We were a bit disappointed to lose in the final, but it was a great performance and allowed us to gain entry into the Nationals."

*Continued on page 17*

## WOMEN'S SOCCER:

# Goalkeeper's Miracle Kick Lifts Lander to Thrilling 3–2 Victory

By Giacomo Sartori

With just seconds left on the clock, Lander University goalkeeper Leah Hayes Coen sprinted from her own goal to take a desperate free kick and made history. Her stunning strike into the top corner sealed a 3–2 comeback win over Georgia Southwestern on Wednesday night at Van Taylor Stadium in Greenwood, S.C., sending the Bearcats and their fans into a frenzy

during the final sprint of the Peach Belt Conference season.

The matchup carried major weight as Lander looked to maintain its second-place

position in the standings and strengthen its record ahead of the conference tournament. The Bearcats entered the game at 9-2-2, favored to win, but the contest quickly

became a test of grit and resilience.

Georgia Southwestern stunned the home crowd by taking a 1–0 lead in the 51st minute, then doubled its advantage in the 69th, leaving Lander trailing 2–0 with just over 20 minutes to play. The Bearcats refused to fold, and their comeback began in the 76th minute when the sophomore midfielder Peyton Bibbee of Fairfax, Va., scored to cut



*Continued on page 17*



## Men's Tennis Pair Chase History

*Continued from page 16*

In a twist of fate, the pair's very partnership was a product of circumstance.

"The ironic part of all this," Jayaprakash said with a grin, "is that Coach Simpson wasn't even planning to play us together. But because we had automatic entry into the regional as a ranked team from last year, we could get another Lander pair into the draw." She added, "Coach kept us together — and it worked out pretty well, I'd say."

### Defying Expectations on the National Stage

The ITA Cup, hosted October 16–19, didn't deal Lander any favors. Pugh and Jayaprakash drew the fifth-ranked national team from the University of Texas at Tyler in their opening match.

"The guys played a great match against one of the top doubles pairs in the nation," said Coach Brett Simpson. "It was very impressive to see them dominate such an accomplished team for most of the match. It did get close in the end, but they came through with the win, 6–3, 7–6."

From there, the Bearcat duo became the story of the tournament. They toppled Azusa Pacific (7–6, 6–1) in the quarterfinals and stunned the top-seeded Saint Leo University team (7–5, 6–3) in the semifinals — a tactical masterclass that showed their maturity and chemistry.

"We really had to think and mix things up," Jayaprakash said. "They returned and rallied extremely well, and we couldn't let them find a rhythm. Both of us served great — we were only broken once the whole match."

### A Final to Remember

In the championship match, Pugh and Jayaprakash faced Sebastian Rondon

and Diego Duran of West Florida, the reigning No. 1-ranked doubles team in Division II.

What followed was a heavyweight battle — a showcase of pace, precision, and pressure that had the crowd holding its breath.

After two sets, it came down to a deciding third-set tiebreak. Lander even held two championship points at 5–4, but the title slipped away in a heartbreaking finish.

"It was one of the best doubles matches I've ever witnessed," Coach Simpson said. "It's disappointing not to get the title, but the boys should be extremely proud of how they represented Lander. Their effort, their energy — it was special."

Jayaprakash called it the most thrilling match he's ever played.

"It was such a great experience," he said. "We had our chances, and that's the toughest part. But I'm proud that we put ourselves in that position. Hopefully next year, we can finish the job."

Pugh echoed the sentiment. "This was the biggest doubles final of my life. We gave it everything. The other guys played so tough when it mattered most — but it's a huge accomplishment for us."

### Looking Ahead

For a pair that nearly wasn't, the chemistry and belief between Pugh and Jayaprakash now anchor a Lander program with its sights set squarely on national glory.

"This result gives us confidence," Pugh said. "We know we can compete with anyone in the country. Now it's about using that momentum for the spring season."

If their run in Rome is any indication, the Bearcats won't just be chasing matches this spring — they'll be chasing history.

## Coen's Kick



*Leah Hayes Coen*

*Continued from page 16*

the deficit in half.

The pressure mounted, and in the 88th minute, freshman forward Paige Bailey of Myrtle Beach, S.C., scored her team-leading fifth goal of the season to tie the game at 2–2, reigniting the crowd's energy.

Then came the unforgettable finish. With only 10 seconds remaining, Lander earned a free kick just outside the penalty area.

Hayes Coen, a junior from Limerick, Ireland, raced upfield and struck the ball with precision and power, sending it soaring into the top left corner for the game-winner.

The stadium erupted as teammates and fans celebrated a victory that will be remembered as one of the season's defining moments.

The rare sight of a goalkeeper scoring the decisive goal perfectly captured the drama and unpredictability that make soccer so beloved and kept Lander's momentum alive heading into the final stretch of the season.

The women's soccer team will play their next game at home on November 1 against Georgia College from 1 – 4 pm.

# Proud To Be A Bearcat



Past Meets Present:

## Lander Men's Soccer Launches Annual Alumni Tradition



By Giacomo Sartori

A piece of history was made Saturday morning at Van Taylor Stadium in Greenwood, S.C., as Lander University hosted its first-ever Men's Soccer Alumni Game. The event, played at 10:30 a.m. on Oct. 25, celebrated the legacy of the Bearcats' program and brought generations of players back together for a day dedicated to tradition, pride, and connection.

Head coach Dale Parker opened the morning with a

speech that set the tone for the event. "The badge that we all are wearing and this program is bigger than every one of us," Parker said. "We are only custodians. Events like these remind us of the history and greatness of this program and the responsibility we carry every time we step on the pitch."

The game featured the men's soccer development team facing off against a talented group of alumni. Experience prevailed, as the alumni team earned an impressive 5-0 victory. Among the standout performers were former players Luis Tuttle and Julien Sagnol, who both found the back of the net, while alumni-turned-coaches Michele Zucchi and Rashawn Kellman showcased their class with strong performances, Zucchi recording two assists and Kellman impressing with his composure and skill.

Several program legends were also in attendance, including Lander soccer icon Van Taylor, along with All-Americans David Tompkins, Jamie Ramm, and Paul Dodd, whose presence underscored the program's deep roots and long-standing excellence.

The celebration continued throughout the day, as Lander's current first team followed up the alumni game with a 3-1 win over Clayton State. The festivities concluded that evening at Sled Dawg Brewery in Greenwood, where alumni, players, and fans gathered to cap off a memorable day.

Coach Parker and the program plan to make the alumni game an annual tradition, strengthening the connection between past and present Bearcats. The inaugural event not only honored those who helped build Lander soccer but also reinforced the shared pride and responsibility that define the program's enduring legacy.

(Pictured from left: David Tompkins, Van Taylor, and Paul Dodd)

## Spotlight: From Transfer To Trailblazer

*Continued from page 11*  
them through the remainder of their academic journey."

### Dedicated to Patient Care

Even before her transfer, Killingsworth's passion for nursing was evident. She took courses to become a Certified Nursing Assistant and works weekends at a care facility. "I

love bedside nursing. You are there to help people with their daily needs, and I like doing that. It's also a good way to begin your future career."

Although she admits to having some trepidation initially in taking care of patients, "you get into a routine, learn about your patients, and eventually you feel more comfort-

able. I realized 'I can do this,'" Killingsworth said. "Patients' families appreciate what we do, and the patients themselves are like family to us."

Time management is critical to Killingsworth as she divides her time among classes, studying and working. "I've been working since

I was 16 years old, and I've learned how to balance my time. The academic demands of nursing can be intense. As a nursing student, you must be very dedicated. I know that, and I know that it will pay off in the end."

To learn more about the School of Nursing at Lander, visit [www.lander.edu/nursing](http://www.lander.edu/nursing).



# Mental Strengthening

*Continued from page 5*

take notes, listen to directions, or engage with the class materials. Research demonstrates that even the presence of smart phones in classes – even if a student is not actively texting or scrolling – damages students’ academic performance (i.e. Thornton et al. 2014; Ward et al. 2017). The list of research on this topic is lengthy and persuasive. Successful students do not use their phones in classes.

**They don’t wear headsets and earbuds in class.** Successful students understand the importance of listening. Many of us have AirPods or other products we can use when exercising or when we need to watch videos silently. These devices mask outside noise. You can see the problem: in class we need to be able to hear the professor, the directions, the discussion. In addition to decreasing students’ ability to hear their professors, wireless headsets, EarPods, and AirPods send the message, “I am literally tuning out of class.” Wearing headsets and AirPods in classes is inappropriate, just as scrolling through our social media during class time is inappropriate. I have never visited a doctor, attorney, accountant, or other professional and found myself surprised that the professional was unable to hear me because he or she was wearing a headset or AirPods during our meeting. Successful students put away their smart phones and AirPods during class.

**They don’t miss learning opportunities; they don’t take “the easy road.”** Successful students recognize that college provides career preparation. I used to tell my own children that in middle school, they were

training for high school, and in high school, they were training for college. In college, we are not merely trying to “pass” a class. We need to strive for excellence because our future career success will require our expertise – not our best guess or “partial credit.” In college, successful students know they are working on their “real” careers. They know that college is the opportunity to change their lives for the better. This is your chance, but success requires a more challenging path so that we can learn and grow. Successful students understand that “the easy road” will not take them to the career of their dreams.

I understand that my perspective may not be universal, but I hope you will consider my “13 Things” list about some of the bad habits that sabotage academic success. I share this list because I care enormously about students’ success, and I want to help you succeed in college and as a professional.

Whether you are thinking about this essay from the student, teacher, employee, parent, or administrator perspective, what would your “13 Things” list look like? What characteristics do you think are necessary for academic and professional success? And what characteristics do you think diminish opportunities for success? I would love to hear from you (crlove@lander.edu). Whatever chapter of life you are in, remember that good habits cannot outweigh the cost of bad habits.

# Christmastime Performance

*Continue from page 14*

Director at GCT, shares what inspired the theater to choose The Best Christmas Pageant Ever. “It’s a Christmas classic. It’s been performed on our stage many times, but it’s been about a decade since the last show. The beautiful message of acceptance in it is always relevant, especially during the holiday season. Christmastime is known for the joy and care that is spread all around,

which would make a play about acceptance and family perfect for the community. “Our goal is to create a clear contrast between the Herdman family and the other kids on stage. This will highlight that acceptance matters regardless of appearance or behavior—that the message of the Christmas story is truly for everyone,” continued Hewitt. That’s the core of the story. It’s a reminder to be more accepting and compassionate.”



Final Exam Schedule			
EXAMINATION DAY	SECTION	REGULAR MEETING TIME & DAYS	
Tuesday	2	08:00 am – 10:00 am	TR
	6	11:00 am – 01:00 pm	TR
	A - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 02:00pm - 04:00pm		
	B - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 04:00pm - 06:00pm		
	22	05:45 pm – 07:00 pm	TR
	26	05:45 pm – 08:30 pm	T
Wednesday	1	08:00 am – 8:50am	MWF
	9	12:00 pm – 12:50 pm	MWF
	15	03:00 pm – 04:15 pm	MWF
	C - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 04:00pm - 06:00pm		
	21	05:45 pm – 07:00 pm	MW
	25	05:45 pm – 08:30 pm	M
Thursday	4	09:30 am – 10:45 am	TR
	8	12:30 pm – 01:45 pm	TR
	10	02:00 pm – 03:15 pm	TR
	D - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 04:00pm - 06:00pm		
	24	07:15 pm – 08:30 pm	TR
	28	05:45 pm – 08:30 pm	R
Friday	3	09:00 am – 09:50 am	MWF
	7	11:00 am – 11:50 am	MWF
	13	02:00 pm – 02:50 pm	MWF
	E - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 04:00pm - 06:00pm		
	23	07:15 pm – 08:30 pm	MW
	27	05:45 pm – 08:30 pm	W
Monday	5	10:00 am – 10:50 am	MWF
	11	01:00 pm – 01:50 pm	MWF
	F - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 02:00pm - 04:00pm		
	G - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 04:00pm - 06:00pm		
	H - Only for sections with no formal meeting time. 06:00pm - 08:00pm		



# Lander Calendar of Events November

<p>November 1 Women's Soccer 1 - 4 PM Bearcats vs. Georgia College</p> <p>November 1 Volleyball 3 - 6 PM Bearcats vs. Georgia College</p> <p>November 1 Men's Soccer 7 - 10 PM Bearcats @ USC Aiken</p> <p>November 3 Spring &amp; Summer Registration for New Students Begins</p> <p>November 3 Intramural - Men's 4v4 Flag Football 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 4 Volleyball 6 - 9 PM Bearcats @ Augusta</p> <p>November 4 Intramural - 4v4 Volleyball 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 5 Intramural - Women's 7v7 Flag Football 7 - 10 PM</p>	<p>November 6 Intramural - Dodgeball 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 7 Volleyball 6 - 9 PM Bearcats @ Augusta</p> <p>November 8 Equestrian Team Bearcat Athletics Highfields IHSA Show</p> <p>November 8 Men's Rugby 12 - 3 PM Bearcats @ Wingate</p> <p>November 9 Equestrian Team Highfields IHSA Show</p> <p>November 10 Senior Exhibit Performing &amp; Fine Arts November 10-24</p> <p>November 10 Intramural - Men's 4v4 Flag Football 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 10 Miss Lander Pageant 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 11 Intramural - 4v4 Volleyball 7 - 10 PM</p>	<p>November 12 Intramural - Women's 7v7 Flag Football 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 13 Intramural - Dodgeball 7 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 13 Jazz Ensemble 7 - 9 PM</p> <p>November 14 Volleyball 5 - 8 PM Bearcats vs. Flagler</p> <p>November 15 Open House 9 AM - 5 PM</p> <p>November 15 Volleyball 3 - 6 PM Bearcats vs. Flagler</p> <p>November 16 Old Main Singers 4 - 6 PM</p> <p>November 17 Autumn Fest: Farmer's Market 4 - 6 PM</p> <p>November 18 Holiday Spectacular &amp; Tree Lighting</p>	<p>6 - 9 PM</p> <p>November 19 Bearcat for a Day 9 AM - 2 PM</p> <p>November 20 Autumn Fest: Thank U, Next Fest &amp; Gratitude Wall</p> <p>November 20 Wind Ensemble 7 - 9 PM</p> <p>November 21 Autumn Fest: Food Crawl 5 - 10 PM</p> <p>November 22 Autumn Fest: Derby Day</p> <p>November 22 Saturday Autumn Fest: Derby Day</p> <p>November 26 Thanksgiving Break</p> <p>December 5 Classes End</p> <p>December 5 Last Day To Withdrawal From All Courses</p> <p>December 8 Reading Day</p> <p>December 9 Final Exams Begin</p>
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## Lander's EYE Program

**The EYE Program is an experiential learning program at Lander University designed to provide students with the opportunity to use academic knowledge to address real world challenges in an authentic context.**

**The program includes internships, co-ops, service learning, course-embedded projects, and study abroad experiences. Earning EYE Program credit is a great way to show potential employers that you have real world skills and experience that may make you more competitive in the job market.**

**For a list of approved activities, please visit [Lander.edu/eye](http://Lander.edu/eye). Students achieving at least 120 EYE credits may qualify for the Golden Eye award. For more information, contact EYE Program Director at [rstevenson@lander.edu](mailto:rstevenson@lander.edu).**

