Alumna Honors Parents’ Memory
I am often asked why I choose to teach and work at A&M-Commerce. A few weeks ago, one of my department heads came in for his weekly meeting and told me that he’d found out that one of his graduate students had become homeless and his possessions were literally only the clothes on his back. I was of course alarmed, but the Head continued that the faculty member who had first become aware of the situation had arranged for temporary housing through student services, had procured some clothes through the Career Closet program, which normally provides students with professional clothing for job interviews, and had personally collected money from the rest of the faculty to buy the student some food. I asked if I could help financially, of course, and the department Head asked me if I could possibly find an assistantship for the student in the Spring semester. I was able to secure the funds and promise the student an assistantship.

So, when I am asked why I choose to work with faculty and staff that do not have to ask what to do in a situation like this, but simply solve the problem working as a team, using their personal time and money, if needed, I just say, “because we are the university that cares.”

Unless of course your degree is from Old ET or A&M-Commerce. Then, you don’t need to ask.

Sal Attardo
Dean, College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts

The Update is the newsletter of the College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts.
“I decided to create these scholarships in honor of my parents. It will alternate between Political Science and Education majors, for each of my parents. I intend to grow this scholarship, to continue to add money to the endowment and help the students as much as I can. I want to give back to an organization that has given so much to me and my family.”

Susan Faires Dacus, class of 1971, was raised in Commerce. She received a bachelor’s degree in Journalism and English from East Texas State University. After graduating, she earned a master’s degree in English Literature from Southern Methodist University. “I have always loved reading. When I was a child, my mother told me I could only read two books a week because I always had my nose in a book and she also wanted me to go outside and run around. That didn’t work very well. I recently found a list of things I was reading when I was a child; I was reading about history and the confederacy and I realized that I was a nerd even back then! When I wasn’t reading, I was doing synchronized swimming or dancing. I did ballet until I was 20, but in high school that was when I really started to get recognition for my writing. My high school English teacher, Mrs. Janet Peek, was very inspiring and encouraging.
She encouraged me to write. I also worked on the yearbook in high school and that led me to double major.” After graduating, Susan spent 37 years working in the Texas public school system, three of those teaching and the rest in the administration of educational communications/ media for Wylie, Richardson, and Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISDs. She has also written and published several articles about education issues for newspapers, magazines, and journals. “I loved my time at ET; Dr. Paul Barris, Neil Blakeley, and Dr. Mack were my biggest influences. I especially loved the ethics in the journalism department—if you wrote it, it had better be true; if you interview someone, it had better be right; your opinion goes in an opinion page. Those values helped me in my jobs. I have so many wonderful memories of my time there and I still keep in touch with my sorority sisters from Chi Omega and many of my other friends.”

“My parents were honorable, ethical people. My parents were a team. They built their house together, lived there from 1957 until they both died in 2010. I always aspired to have the kind of marriage they had and to be like them,” said Dacus. Her father, James “Jelly” Faires was born in Commerce, June 26, 1920 and also graduated from Old ET with a bachelor’s degree in Political Science in 1942. After graduating, he enlisted in the military and served as a staff-sergeant in the Army Air Corps, specifically the 13th Air Force. After returning from World War II, he attended Southern Methodist University and graduated with his Juris Doctor in 1948. He then practiced law in Commerce for over 50 years, serving as the city attorney for the majority of his career. He also taught business law at the university and served as the Chairman of the Grievance Committee for Hunt County.

Her mother, Dee Taylor Faires was born in Como, Texas in 1923. She received a bachelor’s and a master’s degrees in Education from East Texas State Teacher’s College. She worked with Texas public school students for over 20 years and retired as a diagnostician with the Tri-County Special Education Cooperative. She was also a published poet. Mrs. Faires served on the Commerce Library Board, the University Homecoming Committee, as President of the Afflatus Culture Club, and advisor to the Sigma Zeta Chapter of the Chi Omega Fraternity, a position which Dalcus now holds.

“To my parents, education was everything. You worked hard and you got an education. For that generation, many people didn’t go to college so for them to be able to go to school and get a degree was a big deal. They put a great deal of value in our education, my brother’s (Jim) and mine. My brother is now a sales manager for five or six radio stations and does very well and I spent all those years working with and for students and I credit all of that to my parents’ influence.”
ART DEPARTMENT’S NEW HEAD

“I want to build on the achievements of my predecessors,” said Dr. William Wadley, the new Head of the Department of Art. After starting his artistic career as a painter, Wadley realized that his passion was in art history. “I found it fascinating; it opened new avenues for me—I got to travel, be exposed to genius, and learn foreign languages.” Dr. Wadley started his career in 1989 as the Head of the Department of Art at East Texas State University, and he served for ten years before stepping down to focus on teaching. “The atmosphere and the people in Commerce really sold me; I feel very privileged to be a part of this department.” This year, Dr. Wadley resumes administrative work, which he calls “an opportunity to do something meaningful. I want to continue to strengthen and expand our nationally recognized department.”

LATINO AMERICANS: 500 YEARS OF HISTORY

Thanks to the grant, Latino Americans: 500 Years of History, which was awarded to the A&M-Commerce Libraries, the Hispanic Outreach Program, in conjunction with the Departments of Political Science, Literature and Languages, and History, hosted a visit from Dr. David Montejano. The grant, produced by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the American Library Association, is a nationwide public programming initiative that supports the exploration of the histories and experiences of the Latino community and is part of an NEH initiative, The Common Good: The Humanities in the Public Square, which is designed to demonstrate the critical role humanities scholarships play in our lives. Dr. Montejano is a sociologist and historian currently teaching at the University of California, Berkeley. He has published multiple works on Latino history. In his lecture on campus he said, “The underlying theme of my work is the whole question of leadership—some are born, some are made, and some are mistakes. You can’t just be a college student; you have to be involved in outreach.”
ALUMNA STEPS INTO BIG SHOES

English alumna Ann Bolman was recently promoted to President of Western Dakota Tech in South Dakota. Bolman graduated from A&M-Commerce with a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) in English and loves applying her years of teaching to administrative work. “My interest in developmental and remedial English grew out of several interests. I knew I was interested in people—how they capture their thoughts and experiences in writing.” Bolman transitioned to administrative work in 1999 after her doctoral work. “While I was teaching, I became interested in the broader, political aspects of community colleges because they are so critical in providing opportunities for students from wide economic backgrounds. I grew up a mechanic’s daughter and I see a direct connection between the work we do at community colleges and the positive effects that work has on our communities.”

“My biggest influences at A&M-Commerce were Richard Fulkerson and Donna Dunbar-Odom. They set high standards for me, challenged me to publish my work, and to think critically,” said Bolman. Dr. Donna Dunbar-Odom said, “I’m not at all surprised that Dr. Ann Bolman is now a college president. When I worked with her, she was a basic writing teacher and administrator, so she knows firsthand what obstacles and difficulties some students face.

Bolman continues, “I advise up-and-coming administrators to prepare themselves for a highly challenging career that will inevitably push every limit you thought you had. It is critical to establish a culture of confidence, team work, and support.”

ALUMNUS WINS PRESTIGIOUS TEACHING AWARD

Department of Literature and Languages alumnus Colin Charlton, now the Interim Chair for the Department of Writing and Language Studies at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, received this year’s Regents’ Outstanding Teaching Award. This annual award recognizes faculty members at The University of Texas System’s nine academic and six health institutions who demonstrate excellence in classroom performance and innovation in undergraduate instruction. Charlton graduated from A&M-Commerce with his B.A. in English in 1994 and his M.A. in English in 2000. “In Commerce, I learned how to make room for learning in writing classrooms. Professors like Donna Dunbar-Odom, Gerry Duchovnay, Bill Bolin, and Robin Reid gave me a sense of purpose at a time when I didn’t know what I wanted. My Commerce network taught me the value of a network built through intent and accident. These professors showed a sense of curiosity in not only their own work but in mine and that has defined the opportunities that framed my being in the world.”
COLLECTION OF A LIFETIME

Professor of Art History, Dr. Emily Newman, along with former A&M-Commerce librarian, Emily Witsell, are co-editing a collection of essays about the Lifetime Movie Network. “We really bonded over our shared interest in the channel,” said Newman, “and the number of movies in our DVRs. We took the idea to McFarland Press and they loved it. Besides the introduction and the conclusion, my contribution deals with eating disorders and the Lifetime/made-for-TV film. The book includes essays on Project Runway, The Lottery, Witches of East End, docudramas, and rape-revenge films. The book really focuses on the channel in the 21st Century.” Dr. Newman recently interviewed on Marketplace, a public radio program with 12-million listeners via NPR, about the collection. “Marketplace has a huge audience so it was wonderful publicity for the book and for the university,” Newman said, “this was really a passion-project for us and we are very excited about it.”

FILM FESTIVAL CONNECTS STUDENTS WITH THE WORLD

The MANHATTAN SHORT Film Festival began as a screen mounted on a truck in New York City in 1998. This year marked the 18th anniversary of the festival and showed in over 250 theaters on six continents. A&M-Commerce welcomed the festival for the second year, giving students the opportunity to view ten films from eight countries. Dr. Hunter Hayes said, “The MANHATTAN SHORT Film Festival dovetails perfectly with the university’s QEP mission and focus on global initiatives in that for one week you have approximately 100,000 people engaged in precisely the same activity: to view and enjoy examples of innovative filmmaking from various cultures and to vote for best actor and best film. In this regard, people from various backgrounds engage in a common purpose. It is an honor for us to be able to bring the festival to A&M-Commerce which, for the second year, was one of only four venues in Texas to host the event.”
“I was in the right place at the right time, and I received an amazing education,” alumna Cathy Morrison said of her time at East Texas State University. After double majoring in fine arts and education, Morrison did her student teaching in Greenville before realizing that her passion was in illustrating children’s books. “When I was at East Texas, Gerard Huber was one of my favorite teachers. I remember being in awe of his paintings and drawings of the human form, just blown away by his draftsmanship. To this day, when I’m working on an illustration, I can still hear his words. What he taught me about being an artist with a good work ethic was invaluable.”

Morrison continues, “Drawing came naturally to me and I just never considered any field but one based in art. You can go a lot of different directions with an art background—it’s up to the individual to do the most with their education. As an artist, you have to make your own way in the world, and that doesn’t necessarily include a formulaic sort of career, but a path you forge for yourself. It’s extremely rewarding.”
Her first job after graduating was with K&H Productions. “This was old-school animation before computers, and I began as an in-betweener, specially hired to work on ‘Jot’ which was an animated cartoon on a Christian TV show; it is still available to watch on YouTube. As an in-betweener, I would take the head animator’s main images and create the characters’ movements transitioning between scenes by drawing ‘in-between’ the key areas. I branched out and did more key animation, lip-syncing, animation cell inking, and painting, basically learning a little about everything. Eventually, I moved into freelance work and that evolved into Big Chief Graphics, my own small graphic design and illustration business. That is where I rediscovered children’s books, and I knew that it was something I wanted to explore. I feel very fortunate that I have been able to pursue a career while raising my family. My time in education, as well as my two children and grandson, made me realize that I wanted to inspire and teach children through my art.”
Help Us Grow

Texas A&M University-Commerce, formerly East Texas State University, has grown by 30% since 2008. This makes us one of the fastest growing universities in the country. The reasons are simple: our students are attracted by the quality of our academic programs, our small class sizes, the convenience of our multiple locations and online programs, and above all by the individual attention to the students which has earned us the nickname of “university that cares.”

The College of Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts is one of the key players enabling this growth. We offer 65% of the core curriculum for the whole university, as well as more than fifty graduate and undergraduate programs.

You can help our students grow both academically and professionally by making a gift to the College of Humanities, Social Sciences & Arts. Your gift of any amount will impact our students’ lives.

Giving is easy! Return the form below or make a gift on our secure website at www.tamuc.edu/give. Also, you can call Devin Girod at 214-449-6555.

“I’m not out to change an organization for a day or a month. I’m out to change the lives of as many people as possible.”

-T. Boone Pickens

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Alumnus Tracy Adkins is truly a Renaissance man. “I make it a habit to learn something new every day. I read 33 different publications from National Geographic to Popular Mechanics.” In 1986, he graduated from Eastfield College with an associate’s degree, from The University of Texas at Dallas in 1994 with a bachelor’s degree in accounting, and from Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2011 with a master’s degree in history. “I chose to do the non-thesis option so that I could take more classes. I wanted to hear teachers teach and learn as much as possible,” said Adkins about his master’s program. “Dr. Judy Ford was one of my favorite professors, partly because we study the same period in history but also because she’s a very compassionate person and is much more diplomatic than I am! Dr. William Kuracina was also a big inspiration; he really gave me a better understanding of the modern world.”

Adkins has established two scholarships for history students, The Tracy Adkins Family Scholarship. “Experience makes you who you are. My wife, Jami, and I worked our way through college. I have fended for myself my whole life, and I know how hard it is to pay for college. That’s why I have established these scholarships and hopefully someday an endowment. I want to give back to the university that gave me so much and leave some worthwhile legacy. Wisdom comes from experience, not from being..."
smart—learn from other people’s mistakes. Learn from other people’s stories. Listen to the stories of people older than you—they have knowledge that we don’t. I have been a lifelong student of history, and I believe that once you put your foot in, you fall in. You never stop learning. I like to find out how the world around me works and see people in a new way.”

Now a CPA, Adkins runs his own accounting firm with over 900 clients in 12 states and is a Dave Ramsey endorsed provider for tax services. The walls of his office are decorated with stock certificates from historical businesses, including the original courthouse in Dallas. “I’ve always had a knack for accounting.

I could talk about the lawn mowing business I had in the fourth and fifth grades but I started doing taxes when I was sixteen. I ordered the books from the IRS back before everything was online, and I kept ordering more of them for fun. I found them fascinating and eventually I ordered the business ones. Over time, I started charging for my services. I placed an ad, and my phone started ringing off the hook so at nineteen, I had my own bookkeeping and tax company. I knew that I wanted to be an accountant my junior year of high school. My family also prepared me to run my own business; I’m the oldest of four and I was always expected to be the older sibling—to plan and organize get-togethers—so I got used to giving orders. I’m very Type A, so I like to make things happen and happen efficiently. I think you can be successful as long as you have the drive.”

In 2013, Adkins opened up a gun shop, Gotta Have Guns, with his sons Scott and Shawn. “I’ve always had a passion for shooting sports, and I taught my boys. I taught rifle shooting in the Boy Scouts; both of my boys were scouts; my oldest, Scott, was an Eagle Scout. ”I wanted to advance their opportunities and help other people. You have to be invested in what you’re selling and if I don’t believe in it, I won’t sell it. I love helping people find just what they want but also what they need. You get what you give in life—you help people, it comes back to you.”

Tracy’s son, Scott was also in the military and Shawn helps run the gun shop.

Tracy also recently started a publishing company, Codex Publishing, Inc.—a book and online magazine publishing company. “The primary publishing focus is on-line magazines and books including science fiction and fantasy novels, children’s fiction, and educator newsletters. Our aim is to assist unpublished authors in entertaining and inspiring all ages. I also have a passion for writing and have been writing since elementary school.

Someday I plan to publish my family’s story for my kids and their kids and so on. I’ve been digging into my family’s history, hundreds of years back, and it’s fascinating. I love collecting stories. This endeavor has really helped me learn to delegate. You need the support to run a good business, and I have that. I do a lot of different tasks every day, but as long as you do one thing every day that makes you happy, you’ve lived your life.”
GOOD LUCK, DR. MATTHEI

Dr. Linda Matthei, professor in the Department of Sociology, retired in 2015. After receiving her B.A. and M.A. degrees in comparative culture and a Ph.D. in social science from The University of California, Irvine, Dr. Matthei came to East Texas State University in 1993. “I stayed on at A&M-Commerce because I came to appreciate the cultural diversity of the student body and the diversity of teaching and research interests among the faculty.” She then worked as assistant then associate dean in the College of Arts and Sciences for eight years before returning to teaching in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice where she coordinated and served as director of a new interdisciplinary minor in gender studies. Dr. Matthei has received multiple awards and fellowships, including the Rockefeller Fellowship which she used to continue her research on the Garifuna, research that she plans to continue in retirement. “My husband, Ed, and I plan to pursue our common interests in gardening and antiquing, spend more time with family, and hope to make future trips to South Central Los Angeles and Belize to maintain our friendships in the Garifuna community.”

PROFESSOR ROCKS OUT!

With a bachelor’s degree in psychology, a master’s degree in sport studies, and a Ph.D. in American culture studies, Dr. Brad Klypchak is no stranger to an eclectic approach to academia.

The Liberal Studies degree allows students to customize a degree plan based on their interests and career goals, and Dr. Klypchak loves helping students craft their own journeys. His own work includes multiple publications in journals such as the Texas Theatre Journal and the Journal of the American Studies Association of Texas as well as chapters in a variety of collections about popular music.

He also published a book on heavy metal music titled Performed Identity: Heavy Metal Musicians Between 1984 and 1991. “Academia has more acceptance for these types of studies than it used to—I focus primarily on heavy metal music because I was a metal head as a teenager. I love obscure bands such as Hanoi Rocks and Arsis. I examine how musicians manipulate their identities for consumption, how heavy metal music remembers itself, and how we as audiences view those times. We consume pop culture; it impacts our own identities and casting a critical lens on it allows for a better understanding and a deeper appreciation. I want our students to see their own interests in a new way to keep exploring.”
MARINE BAND
Since John Philip Sousa first took “The President’s Own” United States Marine Band on tour in 1891, it performs publicly more than 500 times a year across the country. Current director, Lieutenant Colonel Jason K. Fettig crafted a program of popular and patriotic work including solos, orchestral transcriptions, and original music. Each program begins with a fanfare and a march then concludes with Sousa’s “The Stars and Stripes Forever” and a salute to the Armed Forces of the United States of America. “We try to highlight music on our programs that celebrates the region we are visiting,” said Fettig. “Nothing makes us more proud than to honor veterans at our concerts and finish each performance with music that reminds them of how appreciative we are of their service.” One of the reasons the band came to Commerce on this tour is that member, MSgt. Chris Clark is a native of Commerce and the son of our trombone professor, Jimmy Clark. Clark was part of the USMB Brass Quintet that recently performed in Finney Concert Hall. Head of the Department of Music, Dr. David Scott said, “We are excited to be hosting the band as part of their Fall 2015 National Tour. In addition to their performance, members of the band provided masterclasses for our music majors. It is a wonderful opportunity to be able to provide this interaction for our students. We are honored that they have included A&M-Commerce on their tour.”

BROADWAY COMES TO COMMERCE
We wanted to provide our students with the opportunity to work with an active industry professional.” Recent music department graduate Katie Wick said, “Mr. Bennett motivated me to learn more about dance and take more dance classes.” Senior music minor, Sara Wray said, “Learning from Eddie was a fantastic experience. He really made a point to critique us in detail so we could become better. If we had a specific question for him, he made sure we fully understood his answer and critique so we could take it to heart. He was also extremely friendly with everyone and really cared about what we were doing. I really feel like I learned a lot about performing and auditioning from him, and my confidence in both has increased.”

The Department of Music hosted a musical theatre dance workshop featuring professional dancer, Eddie Bennett, who just celebrated his 15th year performing in Chicago at the Ambassador Theatre in New York City. Faculty coordinator, Dr. Jennifer Glidden said, “The workshop was a huge success. We had sixty participants from all over the Metroplex.
Alumna Janie Oliver recently celebrated her 10th season as the artistic director and co-founder of the Children’s Chorus of Collin County. Oliver graduated from East Texas State University, now Texas A&M University-Commerce, in 1964 with a Bachelor of Music degree and in 1966 with a Masters of Counseling and Guidance degree. “I come from a very musical family, and singing has always been a significant part of my life,” said Oliver. “My musical abilities have opened many doors for me. I received a full music scholarship, which made college possible. Attending A&M-Commerce was the best decision I ever made— it changed my life.”

As the first person in her family to attend college, Oliver was thrilled to take advantage of the many opportunities afforded to her and was very active on campus. “Before I went to college, I was just a little country girl; I knew nothing about the world. So when I came to A&M-Commerce, I was able to explore all of the possibilities of what my life could be, and all the things that I could learn, which I had never even dreamed of. It was like a whole new world opened up to me,” she said. During her time at A&M-Commerce, Oliver served as Commander of Angel Flight, Alpha Phi rush chairman, played tennis, and performed in numerous choruses. Oliver also worked as the student assistant to the Dean of Men, Dean Rollins, during her undergraduate career and as
the student program director at the student center during her graduate career. “Dean Rollins was a great mentor for me. I am a better person because I worked for him,” she said.

After graduation, Oliver taught 5th and 6th grade classroom music for Dallas Independent School District for five years. “During my time as a teacher, I had 365 students—one for each day of the year,” she said. “I introduced new programs and coordinated many musicals and productions.” Following her teaching career, Oliver held the position of associate minister of worship and music at Park Cities Baptist Church in Dallas for 30 years. “I coordinated 18 children’s choirs, five hand bell choirs, a senior adult choir, a ladies ensemble, and directed the Easter and Christmas pageants every year. It was the dream job,” said Oliver. Her passion for sharing music with her community led her to co-found The Children’s Chorus of Collin County in the spring of 2007.

“Our first year, I wasn’t sure what to expect; I wasn’t sure if we would even have any singers sign up,” said Oliver. Fourteen members comprised the first children’s chorus. Ten seasons later, the chorus consists of 125 members, three choirs, and two special performance groups. The Children’s Chorus of Collin County strives to educate its members, foster a sense of excellence, celebrate diversity within its community, and spread joy through music. The choir has performed at Carnegie Hall twice and will travel to Europe for its first international trip this summer where it will perform at Canterbury Cathedral and Southwark Cathedral in London as part of the International Children’s Choir Music Festival. “I am just amazed at these kids; they have such talent,” said Oliver. “I don’t take much credit for that. They come in with the talent, but I am happy to provide them with the opportunity to learn and grow.”
NETWORKING EVENTS PREPARE

Career Services recently offered a career clinic which allowed students to experience mock interviews, practice their elevator-pitches, have their photos taken in a LinkedIn booth, and have their résumés reviewed by staff from Career Services in preparation for various career fairs and networking opportunities. There were 183 students in attendance. The following week, Career Services hosted its annual Humanities Networking Night at which 51 students spoke with industry professionals from a wide range of companies from Dallas area theaters and historical societies to law firms and banks. Assistant Director for Career Services, Ashley Ortiz, said, “This event is the perfect opportunity for Humanities students to network with professionals from their desired field of study and fields they had not originally considered.” Graduate student Lauren Simpson thought that, “This year’s Networking Night was great; I got to talk to local industry professionals as well as representatives from companies in Dallas.”

WELCOME, DONNA DEVERELL!

The Department of Theatre is happy to welcome alumna Donna Deverell as the new costume shop supervisor. She also serves as a mentor for the Women in Leadership learning community. Deverell earned her bachelor’s and master’s degrees from A&M-Commerce and is thrilled to return to campus. “The University Playhouse is home. I worked in the entertainment industry for five years after graduating and when the opportunity came for me to come back to Commerce, to do what I was trained to do, I couldn’t resist. I get to spend my day introducing the next generation of artists to the work I’ve loved my entire life. This department is all about collaboration, and the students get to work closely with their mentors.”

For Donna, each professor, Gary Burton, Jim Anderson, John Hanners, Michael Knight, and Carrie Klypchak, instilled something different in her. “I tend to approach theatre as a form of therapy, so I try to help others do the same. Maybe you need to lose yourself sewing a costume, sometimes you need to hammer out aggression in the shop, maybe you need to learn something about someone else so you do a character study. Stanislavski said, ‘Love the art in yourself, not yourself in the art’ and that is what I want to teach our students. I want them to leave this department as better artists and better humans.”
FAITH, FOOD, AND FAMILY

Alumnus James McCoy, class of 2004, directed a touching production of Joe Pietro’s Over the River and Through the Woods this summer. “I used an old photograph as a directing concept. It affected every part of the design and direction—the color scheme used tans and browns; there were empty picture frames suspended in the air; we used partial walls, all playing with the idea that memories are just fragments of reality.” McCoy is currently working on his M.S. in theatre. “My biggest influences as an undergraduate were Gary Burton and Jim Lile; working on this show with Professor Jim Anderson was also wonderful. There is magic in theatre and we are blessed because we get to create that magic.”

WELCOME, CASEY WATKINS!

The Department of Theatre welcomes its new costume professor, Casey Watkins. A native of Wilmington, North Carolina, Watkins earned her B.A. from North Carolina State University and then went on to her M.F.A. in costume design at Southern Illinois University. “I am very interested in costume history, especially non-Western costumes. The clothes we wear sort us into ‘style tribes’ and create subcultures based on economics, politics, backgrounds, etc. and those are the types of things designers need to think about when designing a show. It’s not an arbitrary decision.” Watkins has received multiple honors for her designs such as the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Meritorious Achievement Award in Costume Design. “I love teaching and want to make my lessons accessible to all of my students—there is theatre in every culture, and I want to expose my students to as much as possible. I have favorite experiences rather than favorite plays, and I want my students to make their own memories as they learn.”