

The COLONEL



ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

Fall 2008

Thibodaux, Louisiana



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Up Went the New

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THE COLONEL

Fall 2008

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Gayle Clement Tauzin (B.S. '73)

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If a story in *The Colonel* makes you remember your days at Nicholls, let us know. We welcome letters on subjects covered in the magazine and of broad interest to our readers, as long as they are respectful. We will publish as many as we can, subject to space limitations. We edit for space, clarity, and style.

Left side front cover photo by Curg Click (B.A. '90)

Exciting Events

On the heels of Nicholls State University's outstanding facelift, we celebrate 60 years as a steadily growing and changing campus community. On September 23, our university kicked off its 60th anniversary with an extravagant party, topped off with a birthday cake, and including the unveiling of the beautiful, new official Nicholls class ring. A second-line band led a parade of Nicholls folks holding hand-decorated, Nicholls-themed umbrellas. The day wrapped up with outstanding performances at the "monster" piano concert. Everyone had a great time!

Remember, though, that the 60th celebration lasts for the whole academic year. The 60th birthday party was certainly one to remember, but the fun didn't end there. Family Day and Homecoming also were huge successes! Both provided an opportunity for the Nicholls community to join together to have fun and express their Colonel Pride. I would like to thank everyone who attended and helped to make both events successful.

We received many wonderful responses to questions posed in the last issue of *The Colonel*, and we really hope that you enjoy reading them in this issue. We are interested in hearing from more of you about your successes and life changes; we'd also like to know how your experiences at Nicholls contributed to your success. Please let us know about your successes so that we may share them with our Nicholls community. If your contact information has changed, please let us know by filling out the form on the back cover of this issue.

On behalf of the Alumni Federation officers and board of directors, and the Alumni Affairs staff, we wish you and yours a wonderful holiday season and a happy new year.

In the Colonel Spirit,



Debbie Raziano
Director, Alumni Affairs

P. S. Your membership in the Nicholls Alumni Federation helps make the above-mentioned events and scholarships for students possible. Please consider either renewing yours or joining us today!



Ride with Colonel Pride!

Visit <http://omv.dps.state.la.us/> to get your Nicholls license plate. The Nicholls General Scholarship Fund receives \$25 of the \$26 fee above the regular vehicle registration.

A Thousand Words



Can a picture really be worth 1,000 words? We think so. Share your stories about this 1986 photo or the memories it brings to mind. Send to: deborah.raziano@nicholls.edu or The Colonel, Office of Alumni Affairs, P.O. Box 2158, Thibodaux, LA 70310. Call (985) 448-4111 for more information.



As I WAS THUMBING THROUGH *The Colonel*, the picture shown from a 1987 Colonel football game caught my eye. Even though I was a 1972 graduate, I could not help but noticing three familiar faces. Two of the people have become valued friends. It's ironic how Nicholls alumni seem to develop bonds. My years at Nicholls were great and my baseball memories unforgettable. I made many lifelong friends. Keep the tradition alive. Thanks.

Neal Ayme (B.S. '73)

YES, A PICTURE CAN BE WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS AND MUCH MORE. When I opened the spring edition of *The Colonel*, I couldn't help but notice my wife in the bottom right-hand corner of the picture labeled "A Thousand Words." Thanks to Nicholls, a bayou boy from Thibodaux (me) met a river rat from Hahnville (her) and 22 years later we are the proud parents of five boys, all of whom like to have mud between their toes.

Louis G. Authement (B.S. '86)

MY KIDS WERE SO EXCITED TO SEE MY PICTURE IN THE SPRING ISSUE OF *The Colonel*. Billy Bob and I are always telling them stories about our days at Nicholls. The picture brought back great memories of my days cheering for the football team. Last fall, we were lucky to experience that Colonel Spirit. When the football team came to Houston to play against Rice, we took our four girls to the game. We met up with old friends and all cheered the team to victory. What an awesome WIN!

Renee Plaisance Hebert (B.A. '89)

I REMEMBER WHEN THIS PICTURE WAS TAKEN. I AM PRETTY SURE THAT IT was 1986, though. It was the year that the football team won the Gulf Star Conference and advanced to the second round of the national playoffs. It was a great season and the fans really came out to support the team. I have been going to Nicholls football games since I was eight years old and never before or after was there as much support as we had that year. My husband Tim was on the team. I kept a scrapbook of stats, pictures, and national rankings. It was great seeing that picture and I look forward to another great football season in 2008.

Lisa Taylor Connell (spouse of Tim Connell, B.S. '86)

Important Dates

Jubilee! A Festival of the Arts and Humanities
March 12 – April 7, 2009

Colonel Fest / Annual Alumni Crawfish Boil
Saturday, April 25, 2009

Atlanta/Birmingham Crawfish Boil
Sunday, May 10, 2009

BURNING QUESTION

- What were your favorite NICHOLLS TRADITIONS? Write in and tell us about the traditions that make you long for your days as a student. We'll feature responses in the next issue. Send to: deborah.raziano@nicholls.edu or The Colonel, Office of Alumni Affairs, P.O. Box 2158, Thibodaux, LA 70310.

Letters

THANK YOU FOR THE ARTICLE IN THE SPRING ISSUE OF *THE COLONEL* ENTITLED "Colonel Pioneers," recounting the contributions made by Dr. Bonnie Bourg and Dr. Al Delahaye. Wow! Did that bring back some fond memories of my days at Nicholls (1960-1964) as an out-of-state athlete living on campus. At the time, we lived in a building commonly referred to as "the shack." I participated in "Li'l Abner" and I still remember it as a highlight of my college days. It did, indeed, bridge the gap between the athletes and the student body.

How appropriate to have an article about Dr. O. Cleveland Hill in the same issue. I was on the basketball team when athletics in the South were still segregated. Dr. Hill's comment, "To understand what it was like, you would have to be able to grasp the concept of the time," is so on-target. I have utmost respect for what he accomplished.

I will be forever grateful to Nicholls for the life lessons I learned – especially to Dr. Bourg and Dr. Delahaye, as they both contributed directly to those lessons.

In gratitude,
Harlan Oelklaus (B.S. '64)

I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED THE "COLONEL PIONEERS" ARTICLE IN THE latest issue of *The Colonel*. It brought back so many wonderful memories.

I was a freshman in 1955 when Nicholls had just one building and was still a junior college of LSU. I remember the initiation hair cut, the sea of starched khaki uniforms with highly shined brass and shoes, the military balls and the pirogue races. I even remember the saga of the commode and the "Ode to the Commode."

One thing that was not mentioned was our ROTC marching drill team, the Lafourche Grays. We marched in local parades, in Mardi Gras parades in New Orleans and at halftime at LSU football games. What a thrill for us to perform in Tiger Stadium on a Saturday night. We did Nicholls proud!

I loved attending Nicholls and would have preferred to remain there for four years. Unfortunately, when it became a four-year institution, it was not able to get an advanced ROTC program. So, I transferred to LSU, where I could continue ROTC training. Thanks to the great basic ROTC program at Nicholls, I, and most of the transfers to LSU, did very well in advanced ROTC.

When I arrived at Nicholls, James Powell, the registrar, was our first contact. Marie Fletcher was my first English teacher. I remember them well. I am pleased to learn that awards have been named in their honor.

With best wishes to you and Nicholls,
Sidney P. Dugas

I GRADUATED WITH A B.S. IN MATHEMATICS IN 1979 AND WENT TO work for BellSouth in New Orleans in the engineering department. Several years later I was transferred across the country to New Jersey to work for a company that was then a subsidiary that did software work. You can imagine my surprise when I bumped into Craig Bordelon, also a 1979 graduate in mathematics, in my building. It turned out that he, too, was working there. We had spent many nights playing cards together with the other math students in the Math Club during college but had lost touch when Craig went off to grad school and I went to work.

We are both still here working for the same company, which is now known as Telcordia Technologies. At least once we have even found ourselves on the same plane headed home for Christmas. Our Nicholls education has served us well as we had to compete with many of the top students from other well-known schools to get and keep the jobs we have today.

Elaine Rogers Madere (B.S. '79)

MY HUSBAND AND I WERE MARRIED WHILE WE WERE STUDENTS AT Nicholls and both graduated with a B.S. (he in education; I in dietetics) in 1991 and went on to earn master's degrees at the University of Oklahoma. I was a member of the Red and Gray and strongly involved in NFSEA and the home economics department while we were there.

Our story has an ending that led me to write a novel (go to mamiethompson.com to see it) and may be of interest to readers of *The Colonel*. Though a work of fiction, *Finally Time to Dance* tells of how we met and married and then how God worked in our lives to heal our family after he lost his battle with brain cancer in 2001.

Sincerely,
Mamie Rabalais Daniel Thompson (B.S. '91)
spouse of David Knight Daniel (B.S. '91, deceased)

TALK ABOUT A SMALL WORLD. I CURRENTLY LIVE IN JACKSONVILLE, FL, where Nicholls is a college that no one has ever heard of. That is, up until a recent neighborhood swimming party. It was a lazy afternoon – good neighbors and good food and a lot of talking – when a friend from around the corner that we met once before walks in wearing an LSU shirt. This is taboo in Jacksonville – everyone either pulls for the Gators or the 'Noles – so the ribbing begins and Don takes the jokes like a champ. Then someone points toward me and says, "Jenn's from Louisiana, too. I'm sure she has no problem with that shirt." So Don comes over to start a conversation about Louisiana and then about LSU, which results in me saying, "My sister went to LSU, but I went to a smaller college down the bayou." To which Don replies, "Nicholls? I went there, too!"

Isn't it funny how even 500 miles away from home you can still find a Colonel in the neighborhood!

Jennifer Lagarde Davis (B.A. '98)

Harvey Accepts New Alumni Affairs Position

by *Graham Harvey*

Thibodaux native and Nicholls graduate Jessica Harvey has been named assistant director of alumni affairs. She is the first person to hold the new position.

"It is a joy to be back at Nicholls," Harvey said. "As a proud graduate, I look forward to maintaining and strengthening the university's relationship with other alumni – to keep fellow Colonels interested and active in university activities and projects."

Harvey's duties include updating

and revising the university's massive alumni database, researching and writing for *The Colonel*, and providing support to the Office of Alumni Affairs.

A 2006 graduate of the Nicholls honors program with a B.A. in English, Harvey is completing a master's degree in English from Northwestern State University in Natchitoches.

Harvey's professional experience includes management positions with Borders books, Blockbuster video,

and Dairy Queen. She served as an English instructor and graduate assistant at Northwestern and has held a variety of youth-education positions for St. Genevieve Catholic Church in Thibodaux.

Harvey lives in Thibodaux with her husband Graham, writer and media relations specialist for Nicholls, and her blue-tick beagle, Tribble. Her parents, David and Connie Folsie, are both Nicholls alumni, and her sister Jamie is slated to graduate in May 2009. ♡



New Official Class Rings Debut at Party

by Tony Cook

On the 60th birthday of Nicholls, September 23, a new collection of official class rings was unveiled by President Hulbert and offered for the first time to eligible students and alumni by their manufacturer, Balfour.

The new ring collection is a renewal of a 50-year-old tradition. The first official Nicholls class ring was designed in 1958 by Ronald Toups of Raceland. Dr. Al Delahaye, in his book *Nicholls State University: The Elkins-Galliano Years: 1948-1983*, describes the Toups ring design as having an oval ruby surrounded by "Nicholls State College" with "1948" at the base. On the side was "BA" below a lamp of knowledge and above the Louisiana pelican, with sugarcane leaves at the top left and right. On the other side was a colonel with "19" to his left and "58" (or the graduation year of the wearer) to his right.

The new official Nicholls ring collection was created by Balfour with input from a committee representing the university's constituent groups. The committee guided the development of the collection in every aspect, from the requirements to purchase the ring, to the materials that would be used in the manufacturing, to the images that would appear on the ring.

"Not just anyone can purchase this ring and be part of this tradition," noted Alumni Affairs Director Debbie Raziano, who spoke at the unveiling. "To participate, you must have completed 75 hours of collegiate credits and be in good academic standing."

"We expect the ring will become a 'walking diploma' for all Colonels so that everyone who sees the ring will quickly realize that the wearer is from Nicholls," Raziano said.

At the unveiling, Ryan Donegan,

Student Government Association vice president, explained the significance of the ring's design. "Every design in the official ring collection includes unique symbols that are associated only with Nicholls State University," he said.

On the top of the official ring is a brilliant red gemstone emblazoned with the Nicholls "N" encircled by the name of the university, except on the dinner ring design, which displays the "N" alone on an elegant rectangular gemstone. Red, a Nicholls school color, is traditionally associated with strong emotions and sensations. The school name and the bold "N" design are reminders of the university's namesake, Francis T. Nicholls, and his contributions to Louisiana and the Bayou Region.

Every ring is customized with the owner's degree letters and graduation year. On most of the designs in the collection,



the Founders Memorial with the words "Colonels" and the hilt of the Nicholls sword appear below the degree letters. These are symbols of longevity, strength, and intellectual ability. Engravings of the first campus building, Elkins Hall, and the year Nicholls was founded, 1948, appear below the graduation year. The arrangement symbolizes the wearer's place in the history of Nicholls. Azalea blossoms and oak leaves adorn both sides of the ring, symbolic of beauty and endurance.

Denise Plessala of Balfour presented the very first new official ring to President Hulbert. ❖

Homecoming 2008



What would Homecoming at Nicholls be without the pirogue races on Bayou Lafourche? The Delta Zeta team, right, won this year's race.



A pep rally outside the Student Union kicked off Homecoming 2008.



At the Nov. 1 football game where the Colonels defeated the University of Central Arkansas Bears, Nicholls State University President Stephen Hulbert (left) presented the 2008 Homecoming Queen, Marquita Hill, a senior from Boutte majoring in child and family social services, and the 2008 Homecoming King, Ugochukwu Ezema, a senior biology pre-med major from Kingston, Jamaica.

Updated Colonel Ready to Face the Crowds

by Renee Piper

After four years with a faceless Colonel, Nicholls is introducing a new, updated Colonel mascot.

In March 2004, Nicholls President Stephen Hulbert retired the 42-year-old Colonel caricature, known as Tillou, and the bearded mascot costume. Although the Colonel remained the official mascot designation for Nicholls and the name "Tillou" was not retired, the university has been without a visual representation of the Colonel since that time.

No longer. Rickabaugh Graphics, a nationally recognized graphic design company, was contracted by the university in June 2008, to develop the new mascot

image. From June through October, Rickabaugh met with focus groups composed of university students, alumni, faculty, and staff to discuss ideas and concerns regarding the mascot.

Based on information gleaned from the meetings, Rickabaugh created nine mascot concepts and presented them to the focus groups. From a crowded field of nine designs, the focus groups narrowed the choices to four and then finally to one.

On April 25, 2009, during the Colonel Fest celebration, the new Colonel mascot will be introduced. *Geaux Colonels!* ♡

DoBee Fires Up Women's Basketball Program

by Brandon Rizutto

A new era in Lady Colonel basketball has begun with the arrival of DoBee Plaisance.

Plaisance comes to Nicholls after 13 seasons as head coach at Loyola. Last season, she coached the Wolfpack to a 28-7 record and a trip to the Elite Eight of the NAIA women's basketball national championship tournament.

"We are extremely excited about what DoBee brings to our women's basketball program," said Nicholls Athletics Director Rob Bernardi. "She is well connected in recruiting and comes highly recommended by many."

Plaisance, a New Orleans native, was a four-year starter throughout her own college career, playing two years at UNO and two years at Southeastern Louisiana University.

She graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi and worked as a student assistant coach for the Lady Eagles. Her next job was a position on the Tulane staff as an assistant coach. Plaisance spent three years at Tulane before her first job as a head coach at St. Martin Episcopal High School in Metairie.

In seven of her eight years at St. Martin, Plaisance successfully guided her squads to the state playoffs before capturing back-to-back state championships in 1993 and 1994. Her teams compiled a 70-4 record over that span that included a perfect 36-0 mark in 1993.

"I am very excited and grateful for the opportunity to be the head coach at Nicholls. I'm really impressed by the contagious support for women's basketball," Plaisance said.

She is very excited about her team as the season gets underway.

"The wins will come by doing the right things, working hard, and believing in each other. These

women have done all the right things so far, and we are holding them accountable for their actions. Leadership is the key," said Plaisance.

This season's team features four seniors and seven true freshmen. Seniors Christie Bryant, Tiffany Jones, Funaki Kefu, and Dominique Washington return to the fold to build a foundation of success, while looking to lead a host of newcomers.

Tickets are available from the Nicholls athletics ticket office, phone 985-448-4792, and they can be purchased at www.ticketmaster.com.

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING ABOUT DOBEE:

"DoBee is one of the young rising stars in our business. She is an outstanding coach and has great charisma. She developed Loyola into one of the elite programs on the NAIA level, and she will use her same positive attitude and tireless work ethic to build a quality program at Nicholls."—Van Chancellor, LSU women's basketball head coach.

"DoBee is one of the hardest-working coaches I know. Not only is Nicholls getting a good coach, they are getting a good person. She has been successful every place she has coached, and she will bring the same success to Nicholls."—Kim Mulkey, Baylor women's basketball head coach. ♡



Ten most common four-year college mascots

Eagles (74)



Tigers (46)



Bulldogs (39)



Panthers (33)



Knights (32)



Lions (31)



Bears (30)



Hawks (28)



Cougars (27)



Pioneers (27)



Barry Landry Receives 2008 Powell Award

by Jessica Harvey

Dr. Barry Landry is the 2008 recipient of the James Lynn Powell Award and the grand marshal of the Nicholls Homecoming parade.

Landry said that receiving the Powell Award was “unexpected.”

“It’s a big honor to be the alumnus of the year,” he said, calling the Powell Award the “highlight” of his life and career thus far. Landry’s sense of humor also shows in his reaction to being named Homecoming parade grand marshal. Noting that he was grand marshal of a firemen’s parade this year, he pointed out that he greatly enjoyed riding a horse in that parade, so he also wanted to ride a horse in the Nicholls Homecoming parade.

A pre-med student at Nicholls, Landry graduated *summa cum laude* in 1977, then earned his medical degree from LSU in 1981. The Thibodaux native completed a general surgery residency in 1986. In 1987, he returned home and began his surgical practice. He is currently on the Thibodaux Regional Medical Center staff.

Landry’s receiving the Powell Award

can be attributed to his busy, successful career in medicine, and to his longtime membership in the Alumni Federation, the Nicholls Foundation, and the Colonel Athletic Association (formerly the Colonel Club). As a volunteer team physician and avid fan, especially of football and basketball, Landry is a regular attendee at Nicholls sports events as well as cultural programs and other events on campus.

His contributions as team physician have been many, but one experience stands out. “I attended a Nicholls game and was called by the opposing team’s doctor to the emergency room,” he recalled. “A player from that team had a ruptured spleen and needed emergency surgery. After, the player and his family were extremely appreciative. The young man now plays ball at South Dakota State.”

Landry enjoys a very fulfilling career and volunteer service, and is always quick to praise Nicholls for the education he received. Nicholls, he said, has always done well in its original mission: to educate the local population.

“Now, it is growing into a more

diverse and larger university supporting a larger regional community,” he noted. “I hope to see Nicholls continue to grow and diversify over the years to come.” Nicholls alumni, he said, need to “get involved to help Nicholls grow. Support Nicholls with your presence at events on campus.”

Remarking on the ongoing facelift and campus expansion at his alma mater, Landry points out that “these advancements add a lot to the overall attractiveness of the university. They position Nicholls be a more formidable competitor for students, and are helping to draw more students from farther away.”

Some of Landry’s favorite memories from his years as a Nicholls undergraduate include the “streaking” phase that some students went through (he quickly noted that he was not one of them), his time in the band playing



A white Nicholls baseball cap provides perfect protection against the sun for Dr. Barry Landry (B.S. '77) while visiting Egypt. His wife, Deborah, is riding the camel. photo provided

the saxophone, being the Phi Kappa Theta fraternity chapter president, and participating in the SGA. He also said he enjoyed “hanging out in the union drinking 25-cent beer, eating popcorn, and playing Pedro.”

Today, when not working or attending Nicholls events, Landry enjoys traveling to foreign countries. “I have been to France, Italy, and Germany, among other places,” he said. “I think I like Egypt best: I find it the most exotic.”

Barker Family Helps Fund \$60,000 Classroom

by Graham Harvey

The Executive Master of Business Administration program has a new home at the Theodore “Teddy” Duhé Building in Houma, thanks to the generosity of the family of Nicholls Foundation board member and university alumnus Dickie Barker.

The Barker Family Executive Classroom, which cost about \$60,000, accommodates 20 students in a boardroom environment. Suitable for case discussions, seminars, and lectures, the room encourages interaction among students and professors via state-of-the-art, user-friendly technology. Teaching tools include a viewing monitor that allows interactive writing and recording on the screen, ceiling-mounted surround sound speakers, and a high-resolution projector.

Dr. Shawn Mauldin, dean of the College of Business Administration, said the Barker family is to be commended for “allowing the College of Business Administration to achieve its vision of being recognized as a leader in business education.”

The Nicholls EMBA program, a hybrid system utilizing on-line and face-to-face instructional methods, is designed to meet the scheduling needs of professionals who have chosen to advance their education. Students complete about half their coursework online, on their own schedule, and spend the balance of their coursework in a face-to-face environment approximately every other Saturday.

“Nicholls is so very fortunate to have the Dickie Barker family among

its most loyal and generous supporters,” said Dr. Stephen Hulbert, president of Nicholls. “Those who are familiar with the history of locating the Duhé Building in Houma know that Dickie played a key role in making that happen. For Dickie and his family to make possible the conversion of an ordinary classroom into an extraordinary high-tech boardroom for students in our EMBA program is both special and significant.”

“Dickie’s understanding of the importance of Nicholls to this region and his leadership as an officer of the Foundation have helped to make good things happen over the years,” said Dr. David Boudreaux, vice president for institutional advancement. “He and his

family are focused on serving the people of the Bayou Region.”

“My family and I are pleased that Nicholls selected Houma and the Duhé Building for the Barker Family Executive Classroom,” Barker said. “Throughout my adult life I have recognized what Nicholls means to this community and to this region. The growth and development of Houma and Thibodaux have paralleled the growth and maturity of Nicholls. An executive MBA program that is accessible right here at our doorsteps will help to make us more competitive in a global economy. My family and I appreciate what Nicholls, Dr. Hulbert, his administrative team, and the College of Business Administration have accomplished to make this a reality.”



Nicholls Celebrates a Joyous 60th Birthday

by Tony Cook

On September 23, 1948, a small group of local business and community leaders gathered in what had been a sugar cane field just outside the city limits of Thibodaux to break ground for a new college, an LSU branch named in honor of former Gov. Francis T. Nicholls. With each spadeful of soil, those who broke ground that day for the building now called Elkins Hall opened up educational opportunities that have energized the Bayou Region for decades.

So, when celebrants came from across the region to take part in Nicholls' 60th birthday party on Tuesday, September 23, 2008, they expressed joy and thankfulness for the many great contributions Nicholls State University has made, and will make.

Coming down from Baton Rouge for the day, the talented Michael Foster Project jazz band led a joyful New Orleans-style second-line parade. Hundreds of celebrants, dozens of them sporting colorful umbrellas decorated with Nicholls images and representations, paraded and danced from the Bollinger Memorial Student Union into the Quadrangle. The sounds of "L'il Liza Jane" and "Down by the Riverside" echoed through the oaks, to the delight of the paraders and all those who paused in the midst of another busy day on campus to take part in the festive occasion.

The band stopped beside the Founders Memorial in the center of the Quad, climbed up onto a stage erected in the bright early fall sunshine, and entertained those gathered to hear remarks by campus leaders. Dancing continued in front of the stage until Alex Barnes, president of the Student Government Association, stepped up to the microphone to welcome everyone to the party.

Next, Dr. Stephen Hulbert, the university's president, delivered a short but evocative address about the significance of the date in Nicholls history. Then came Vicki Romero Briggs, the honorary chair of the celebration, who spoke about the importance of Nicholls in her life and challenged students listening to make the most of their educational experiences.

A Nicholls tradition was then renewed. Joined by SGA Vice President Ryan Donegan, Debbie Raziano, director of alumni affairs, announced the new designs for the university's official graduation ring. An unveiling of the rings preceded the presentation of the first new official Nicholls ring to President Hulbert, who invited



"Since 1948, Nicholls has enjoyed steady and stable progress while maturing into a comprehensive university. In our 60th anniversary year, we are honoring our past while celebrating our future." —Dr. Stephen Hulbert, September 23, 2008.

all eligible students and alumni to order the rings from their manufacturer, Balfour. Sales representatives later reported a strong initial response by Nicholls students.

Carol Mathias, director of Ellender Memorial Library, then awarded prizes for the most imaginatively decorated umbrellas.

As clouds began to shade the sunny Quad, partygoers enjoyed jambalaya, lemonade and birthday cake. The jazz band encouraged dancing in front of the stage, and the party lasted another hour, until a sudden downpour chased the celebrants and the band into shelter.

Earlier that morning, Nicholls began its 60th birthday with a breakfast for retired university employees. A lecture by Dr. Gunter Bischof from the University of New Orleans history department surveyed American-European relations since World War II.

That evening, the special day ended with a "Monster Piano Concert" featuring faculty, students and alumni performing on the university's new Steinway pianos and other instruments in the Talbot Hall theater. Taking cues from the Nicholls alma mater, a work composed by alumnus Stuart Folse '83. "... and thine shall be," premiered that night. ♡



Hundreds of celebrants, dozens of them sporting colorful umbrellas decorated with Nicholls images and representations, paraded and danced from the Bollinger Memorial Student Union into the Quadrangle.



The talented Michael Foster Project jazz band led a joyful New Orleans-style second-line parade.



School of Nursing celebrants get into the second-line groove. Prizes were awarded for the most imaginatively decorated umbrellas.

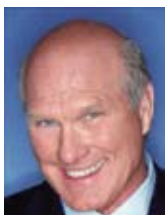


The "Monster Piano Concert" featured faculty, students, and alumni performing on Steinway pianos and other instruments in the Talbot Hall theater.

It is not too late to be part of the 60th birthday celebration at Nicholls. A limited number of commemorative posters, numbered and signed by the artist—assistant director of University Printing & Design Services Jerad David—and President Hulbert are available for \$60 each. Call the Office of Institutional Advancement at (985) 448-4134.

THEN & NOW

Also born in 1948...



Terry Bradshaw
sportscaster



Prince Charles
British royalty



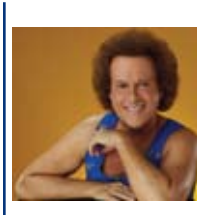
Olivia Newton-John
pop singer



Robert Plant
rock singer



Ntozake Shange
poet



Richard Simmons
fitness guru



Garry Trudeau
cartoonist

Comfortable New Residence Halls Welcome Students





Residents of La Maison du Bayou enjoying the swimming pool.



Students enjoy watching HDTV from leather recliners in the entertainment room of Scholars Hall.

by *Graham Harvey*

Wednesday, August 13, was officially move-in day, but some students began moving into their new residences as early as Sunday, August 3. With the fall semester's opening of three brand-new residence halls and the renovated La Maison du Bayou apartments, the excitement among incoming and returning students came as no surprise.

The \$50 million investment in on-campus housing improvements is the largest investment of any kind in Nicholls history.

"The university is excited to be able to offer quality, state-of-the-art housing to students," said Dr. Eugene Dial, vice president of student affairs. "Our new facilities are second to no other school in the state or the region."

"Students love the way the new residence halls look," said Alex Barnes, president of the Student Government Association. "When you walk inside, they resemble a hotel. There are plenty of study

rooms available, as well as rooms for students to socialize. Some students who live off campus have even mentioned slight jealousy."

With good reason. Each of the new three-story residence halls features two-bedroom units with individual, furnished bedroom spaces and a well-appointed bathroom shared by no more than two residents. All units provide a bed, desk, chair, and dresser; high-speed wireless Internet; individual telephone connections; ceiling fans; and, in many units, a microwave and refrigerator.

Each new residence hall contains elevators, a computer lab, a game room with a pool table, a TV room, a media room, a meeting room, a study room, laundry facilities, a snack bar, outdoor seating, and barbecue areas.

La Maison du Bayou, new in 2004 and renovated in 2008, includes seven three-story brick buildings with two-bedroom and four-bedroom apartments. Each apartment includes modern furniture, a full-



The contemporary style of Scholars Hall is popular with students and their families.

size washer and dryer, basic cable, wireless Internet, and an equipped kitchen (refrigerator, microwave, and stove).

The apartment complex also offers a landscaped courtyard; private parking; a clubhouse with media, game, and meeting rooms; a fitness center; a resort-style swimming pool; a beach volleyball court; and a convenience store featuring a sandwich shop. ♡



The well-appointed lobby of Scholars Hall offers several nursing students a comfortable place to relax.



The courtyard in front of the new Scholars Hall is a popular gathering place.

Down They Came, But the Memories Remain

by Tony Cook

Word came on October 8 that demolition work had begun on the worn, outdated residence halls on the Nicholls campus. Once the homes away from home for thousands of students over the years, the four structures slated for removal — Millet, Zeringue, Meade, and Long Halls — were coming down one-by-one.

First to go was Millet. By nightfall on October 8, only a pile of debris remained to mark the spot where it stood. The last hall to go was Long Hall, eight stories high and for 40-plus years the tallest building in Thibodaux, which fell in a spectacular public implosion witnessed by hundreds of spectators on November 22.

Tickets were sold at \$10 each, offering the winner the honor of pushing the button to set off Long Hall's implosion. Proceeds from the "Bringing Down the House" event endowed a new Huey P. Long Hall Memorial Scholarship, to be awarded to a student living in on-campus housing.

"These buildings have been on campus for decades and there are many memories associated with each structure," said Mike Davis (B.A. '73), assistant vice president for administration at Nicholls and former Alumni Federation president. "They played important roles in the history of the university. They will not be forgotten." ❖



A brand-new Huey P. Long Hall, built in 1967, rises above the Nicholls campus. *photo courtesy Ellender Memorial Library Archives*

So Long, Long Hall

by Curg "Bubba" Click (B.A. '90)

I came to Nicholls State University in 1986 after attending Texas A&M for two years. I remember coming home to New Orleans over Thanksgiving holidays in 1985 and talking to friends I played soccer with in high school. They told me they were going to Thibodaux for the weekend and I should come with them. They wanted to go out at a place called the Colonel's Retreat.

When I saw the campus, tucked away within the high sugar cane fields on a small two-lane highway, I knew that I wanted to be there. My friends told me they all played on the soccer team and lived on the same floor in Long Hall. I felt that sense of belonging that I didn't feel at a large university.

I remember the first time I saw Long Hall, standing as if watching over the campus. Its height made it unique, in my mind. I guess this made an impression that caused me to not forget it, unlike so many things that have slipped my mind over the years.

Although Long Hall is gone, some of us will

never forget the memories that we shared in that place. It was only a collection of bricks and glass, but to some of us, like me, it was home. It was where we lived because our lives were there. We didn't go home: we were home. To others, it was just a place to stay during the week to attend class and then go home for the weekend.

My story is just one of so many that have spanned the years that Long Hall stood on the campus at Nicholls. Tammy Cheramie attended Nicholls during the 1980s, and she was the second generation in her family to reside in the dorms and lived in the same dormitory her parents lived in.

I was surprised to hear that they were tearing down several dorms at once. I guess I thought those buildings would stand forever. But I can take comfort in the fact that my youth was spent there, and even though the dorms will be gone, the memory will last my lifetime.

They say nothing lasts forever. Or does it? With the implosion of Long Hall, an era at Nicholls

passes into memory. It's the memory of that place that we have to lock away with others from our youth. It's those thoughts that become keepsakes for those who lived in the dormitories. For me, it was the 1980s, a time at the halfway mark in the history of Long Hall and Millet-Zeringue Halls.

Meade Hall was built later and didn't see the lifespan that the others had. But, like the other dorms, it, too, has memories that live with those who made it home. I lived in Meade my first semester at Nicholls. It was the only semester I spent there. And I do have the memories of it. But the next two years were spent in Long Hall. And my time at Nicholls will always be remembered in that place.

I hope that every student who goes to Nicholls can take with them half of what I got out being there, because if they do, they will always remember it. Like the song goes, "It's like I lost a friend, but kept the memory." And that can make all the difference in the world. ❖

Back-to-Back Hurricanes Challenge Fall Opening

by Tony Cook and Graham Harvey

Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, major storms that battered the Louisiana coast less than two weeks apart in late August and early September, tested the university's resources. Despite serious disruptions in class schedules and some damage to facilities, Nicholls prevailed.

As Gustav entered the Gulf of Mexico, the university's emergency planning committee acted to close the campus at noon on August 29 and evacuate on-campus residents to Louisiana Tech on August 30. The Nicholls web site was used to communicate up-to-the-minute information. E-mails and text messages went out to students, faculty, and staff. Nicholls activated telephone hotlines. Additionally, press releases flowed to 768 media contacts across the state.

With the campus closed and everyone out of harm's way, Gustav came ashore on Monday, September 1, causing significant property damage in Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes. Gustav's winds did not spare the Nicholls campus. Mature live oaks and pines in the Quad came down. Some 35 campus buildings, including Ellender Memorial Library, had roof damage. The lights at Guidry Stadium were battered and destabilized, causing the season-opening home football game against Bowie State to be cancelled.

As soon as the winds diminished,

the Nicholls staff, assisted by personnel from McNeese State University and Northwestern State University, began working to clear and secure the campus for reopening.

Employees of Sodexo, the university's contracted food service company, were on campus by Wednesday, September 3, to provide meals and ice to Nicholls maintenance staff, university police, housing personnel, grounds staff, and other essential employees and officials.

Agreements struck by Nicholls with various state and parish governmental entities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina remained in effect for Gustav and Ike. As a result, the Terrebonne Parish government stored vehicles and heavy equipment on campus to protect them from high water, and the Louisiana State Police operated from the Century Room at Guidry Stadium.

After Gustav, Nicholls immediately agreed to new requests from various first-responders. Betsy Cheramie Ayo Hall was designated as temporary housing for Troop C of the Louisiana State Police, accommodating a minimum of 40 state troopers at any given time. The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries was granted the use of parking lots at Guidry Stadium as a staging area for more than 50 vehicles and boats. The U.S. Coast Guard was cleared to store and protect two boats on campus, with



This mature live oak tree in the Quad near Beauregard Hall became a casualty of Hurricane Gustav's winds. photo by Terry Dupre

several coast guard personnel receiving on-campus food and lodging.

Restoring electrical power to the Nicholls campus took about one week. On Monday, September 8, university offices reopened and on Wednesday, September 10, students returned to classes.

But, before anyone had time to take a deep breath, Hurricane Ike appeared in the Gulf of Mexico. In the same media release notifying the public of the campus reopening after Gustav, the university noted that its officials had begun to monitor Ike.

The decision came on Thursday, September 11, to close the campus again due to Ike's pending landfall the next day. A problem with the Thibodaux municipal water supply caused by Gustav continued, leading to the removal of students from the residence halls to the Student Union, where bottled water was distributed.

By Monday, September 13, the university reopened for the rest of the fall semester. As a result of the two hurricanes, the main campus sustained approximately \$3.5 million in damages, \$1 million of which was the tab to repair the lights at Guidry Stadium.

The Nicholls Farm in Thibodaux, the Duhé Building in Houma, and the Sculpture Garden and Folk Art Studio

in Chauvin survived Gustav with minor damage. But after Ike, the latter flooded and the sculptures were caked with residue.

On the main campus, the ten days between Ike and the university's 60th birthday on Tuesday, September 23, were filled with the sounds of chain saws removing damaged trees, roofers nailing down new shingles, and—thankfully—students going about their daily routines as usual. By the time the second-line parade marched through the Quad, horns blaring and umbrellas twirling on that memorable birthday, there was scant evidence of the double-punch Nicholls received this hurricane season.

The University of Louisiana System later commended the university's efforts during the prolonged period of duress. In a letter to Nicholls President Stephen Hulbert, the president of the University of Louisiana System, Dr. Randy Moffett, praised Nicholls for going "above and beyond the call of duty with a spirit of collaboration and selflessness."

Hulbert shared the letter in an open e-mail to the university community, concurring with Moffett: "Clearly, the hard work and dedication of staff did much to protect the university; ensure the safety and support of students, faculty, and staff; and respond to the needs of the broader community." ❖



Nicholls reopened the campus after Hurricane Gustav with help from McNeese State University personnel. photo by Terry Dupre

1960s

BILLY ARCEMENT (B.S. '61) is the co-author of *Journeying on Holy Ground: Christian Strategies to Reach Your Personal, Professional, and Spiritual Destiny*.

STELLA LASSEIGNE (B.A. '68, M.Ed. '80), received the Distinguished Service Award from the National School Board Association. Prior to this she enjoyed 30 years as an educator.

DAVID RICHARD (B.S. '67), former Nicholls baseball pitcher, has served 31 years as a city court judge.

BILLY TAUZIN (B.A. '64), president and CEO of Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America and former U.S. representative, was the keynote speaker for a dinner during the 2008 Mid-Atlantic Bio conference. Over 800 senior executives from various industries attended.

1970s

WINDELL CUROLE (B.S. '74) was appointed interim director of the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District. He will continue in his role as general manager of the South Lafourche Levee District where he oversees hurricane and flood protection projects.

DAVE DEFELICE (M.Ed. '72) is on the board of directors for the Lafourche Education Foundation.

MIKE DOTSON (B.A. '74, MBA '80), marketing professor in Appalachian State University's Walker College of Business, has been awarded the John W. Guffey Jr. Professorship. He teaches marketing research, promotion, and consumer behavior.

THERESA "TERRI" JACOB (B.A. '74) has a 35-year career in education. In July, Jacob became principal of St. Peter Catholic School in Reserve.

ROBERT WALLACE LEVY (B.S. '71) was recently named to the board of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities.

JERRY MYERS (B.S. '72, M.Ed. '75) has been promoted to senior vice president of Steward Enterprises, a Lafayette-based funeral home.

MILLIE NAQUIN (B.S. '77, M.Ed. '79) joined the Southeastern faculty

in 1993 and was later promoted to professor. She recently received Southeastern's President's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

PATTI RASBERRY (B.S. '77) was named human resources administrator for the Cardiovascular Institute of the South.

RAYMOND RICHARD (B.S. '74) joined MidSouth Bank as a commercial loan officer working out of the Larose branch.

RUSTY SAWYER (A.S. '77), a veteran of the deepwater operations at Murphy Oil Corp., is now a senior manager for the company in Houma.

JIMMY SKILES (B.S. '74) is vice president of Laborde Marine Inc.

Yale University Press has published *The Good Pirates of the*

Forgotten Bayous by **KEN WELLS**, a widely known writer and a 1972 Nicholls graduate. Wells returned to Thibodaux on October 8, where he gave a talk to students in Talbot Hall and signed copies of his book at the Nicholls bookstore.

1980s

KERRY BOURGEOIS (B.S. '87) joined the Lutch branch of First American Bank as assistant vice president and lending officer.

SCOTT GUIDROZ (B.S.'88) was one of three finalists for the Terrebonne Parish Inspirational Teacher of the Year award.

CYRIL HELLIER (B.M. '80) and **LIBBYE HELLIER** (B.M. '80), identical twins, amaze audiences with their almost perfectly matching soprano

voices. The twins have toured such cities as Houma, New Orleans, and New York. On August 29, 2008, they performed a memorial concert in New Orleans for the third anniversary of Hurricane Katrina.

PAT HERQUES (B.A.'87) was the September 2008 featured artist for Art After Dark at Downtown Art Gallery in Houma.

MICHAEL SAVOIE (MBA '86), a UT-Dallas School of Management professor, has been appointed to the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corp. board.

JUNE SHAW (B.A. '80) is pursuing her dream as a novelist. Her first book, *Relative Danger*, was nominated for the David Award for best mystery of the year. *Publisher's Weekly* called the book a "promising debut."

Twins Follow Same Path to Earn Medical Degrees

by Clyde Verdin Jr. (B.A. '08)

Brad and Brett Hymel have followed the same path since their birth in Hahnville all the way to their completion of medical school last May. Through it all, the twin brothers have been roommates, fishing buddies, workout partners, and motivators for each other.

They earned Nicholls degrees in biology in 1999, graduating *magna cum laude*. Next they earned master's degrees in physical therapy at LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. They then received their M.D. degrees from LSU in Shreveport with straight-"A" averages, a feat neither says was his objective.

Now the brothers have separated: Brett has begun his residency in internal medicine at Tulane University, Brad in urology at LSU-Shreveport.

Speaking of his medical school grades, Brett says: "I just wanted to have as many options as I could when I finished, so I knew that meant working as hard as I could in the classroom.

Brad says he would have been OK with making a "B" in any of his classes, but "we knew that the better prepared we were in school, the better we could help our patients in the years to come."

"Going to medical school was

really an afterthought," Brad says, "until Brett and I got together and really thought about going. If it weren't for him, I have no idea what I'd be doing right now; he's my compass sometimes."

While growing up, Brad and Brett played baseball with their father coaching them and their mother cheering for them. Even then, the boys were concerned about grades, and strived constantly to impress their older brother, Jean-Paul, who earned an MBA from the Air Force Academy and is a sales manager in New Orleans. "There was never any doubt in our house where our priorities needed to be," Brad says.

Both their parents are Nicholls alumni. Their father, Ronald, is a 1971 animal science graduate, and their mother, the former Anita Champagne, is a 1969 home economics graduate.

At Nicholls the brothers worked for nearly four years as resident assistants in Long Hall. For Brad, supervising the floor largely occupied by baseball players was a chance to loosely live out a childhood dream.

"I would have loved to continue playing baseball in college," he says.



Brad and Brett Hymel, newly graduated doctors of medicine, in their academic robes. photo provided

"But at Nicholls, the athletes were so approachable that Brett and I became really good friends with a lot of the players, something we may not have done elsewhere."

Both describe Nicholls as a driving force behind their achievements. They say such professors as Dr. Marilyn Kilgen, Dr. Tim Barry, and Dr. John Doucet remained helpful even after graduation. "I remember calling Dr. Doucet with a question, and he talked to me like I was one of his best friends—that really meant a lot to me," Brett recalls.

Although their residencies now separate them, it's only temporary, they say. Both plan to raise families and work in New Orleans. That will be an opportunity to reunite with Jean-Paul.

As Brett puts it, "I guess it's always been a family affair, and I'm sure that's the way it'll always be." ♦

DEBORAH TONGUIS (B.A. '81) was named the 2009 Louisiana State Teacher of the Year. Her prizes included keys to a Mercedes-Benz to drive for a year, complimentary tickets to fly anywhere in the continental U.S., a classroom laptop, and a one-year supply of Community Coffee and Coca-Cola.

RICHARD WATKINS (B.S. '80) works for Cellular One of Arizona, the largest provider of wireless telecommunications for native Americans in Arizona.

1990s

CHRIS BROWN (A.S. '92, B.S. '01) received the Terrebonne Parish Teacher of the Year award.

DONNY CLAUS (B.S. '99) is the human resources manager for Terrebonne General Medical Center.

DR. JAMIE HUDDLESTON (B.S. '98) returned home to practice neurology at Ochsner St. Anne General Hospital in Raceland.

LANCE LAPLANTE (B.A. '97) received his Ph.D. in English with the completion of his dissertation, "The Trembling Prairie."

State Trooper Credits Nicholls For Success

by Jessica Harvey

Darrin Naquin, an 18-year Louisiana State Police veteran who earned an associate's degree at Nicholls in 1988, has been promoted to captain and commanding officer of Troop C in Houma.

Naquin says he "set a goal to be a state trooper and realized that goal. The rest is a work in progress."

He began his career as a Nicholls police officer before joining the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Department. "Working for the campus police department gave me a basic foundation in law enforcement," he said.

He noted that his new position allows him to "be more involved in the community, and to interact more with the public and public officials."

Being an officer of the law, though, is not always serious business. Naquin shared an anecdote: "Not long after graduating from the academy, while patrolling on LA 311 outside of Houma, I clocked a black Mustang speeding southbound. I hit my blue lights and began to turn around, but when I pulled onto the shoulder my tires got stuck in soft mud.

"I saw the black Mustang continue heading south around a curve and out of my view. I started to get a little disgusted because I figured I would have to call a wrecker to pull my vehicle out of the mud. Just as I was picking up the radio to call my supervisor, I saw the black Mustang coming back toward me and then pull over to the side of the road.

"The driver got out of the vehicle



with a very apologetic and concerned look on his face. That is, until he saw that I was the trooper. Then he burst out laughing. As it turned out, he was a friend of mine, that I had met at Nicholls, who now works for the U.S. Marshal's Service. He helped pull my car out without having to call a wrecker—or my supervisor. We still see each other every now and then and always laugh about that day."

You never know when or how you will reconnect with fellow Nicholls alumni.

Naquin resides in Hahnville. He has been married 14 years, and has two daughters, ages eight and ten. When he isn't working or spending time with his family, he enjoys running and playing golf.

Naquin fondly remembers good times at Nicholls hanging out in the student union with his friends from criminal justice classes. "I'm proud to have gone to Nicholls; it gave me a foundation to build my career and life," he said. ☺

LUKE LUCAS (M.Ed. '98), a Vietnam veteran, is a counselor for New Iberia Parish schools. He also works with families of addicts and alcoholics and specializes in counseling veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder.

ELLEN MATTHEWS (BSN '95) is clinical director of the medical/surgical 3 and rehab units at Thibodaux Regional Medical Center.

JUDE PITRE (M.Ed. '93) is dean of the Louisiana Technical College-Avozelles campus in Cottonport.

GERALD THIBODAUX II (B.S. '98, MBA '01), a certified public accountant, is assistant vice president and deposit operations supervisor at Synergy Bank.

JARED TOUPS (B.S. '92) is director of operations for Oil States Industries in Houma.

2000s

SHEILA BELLA (MBA '01), former manager for the Road Home program, has been chosen as the new business liaison for an economic development group.

KENDALL BERGERON (A.S. '06) is the environmental coordinator for Bollinger Shipyard in Amelia.

KALI BOUDREAU (B.A. '08) is the assistant extension agent for 4-H youth development at the LSU Ag Center in St. Charles Parish.

MANDERLY BOUDREAU (B.A. '00) was one of three finalists for the Terrebonne Parish Inspirational Teacher of the Year award.

BRENT CALLAIS (B.A. '02) began his own political consulting firm, B.D. Callais and Associates.

RUDY DARROW (BGS '06) pitched for the West Michigan Whitecaps, the Class-A affiliate of the Detroit Tigers.

LIZETTA FREDERICK (M.Ed. '00) is assistant dean of students at the University of Houston.

PATRICK GILBERT (B.S. '02, B.S. '05) is a third-year medical student at Tulane University.

VALERIE HEUMANN (M.A. '07) was one of three teachers nominated for Terrebonne Parish Elementary Teacher of the Year.

WISTER G. HILL (A.S. '04, B.S. '07) is a second lieutenant for the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion.

RACHEL BILLIOT KLAUS (B.A. '05) served as director of music and accompanist for Le Petit Theatre de Terrebonne's *The Sound of Music* performance.

KAREEM MOORE (BGS '07) made his NFL debut on August 3 against the Indianapolis Colts in Canton, Ohio. Moore is a former Nicholls safety.

SAMANTHA TRAN (B.S. '08), a Houma native, is a staff accountant for the Bourgeois Bennett accounting firm.

.....Deaths.....

INEZ MARKLEY BUSBY (B.A. '74, M.Ed. '93), 70, of Houma, on May 18. She worked for Terrebonne Parish School Board as a counselor and special education teacher for 36 years.

FRANCIS DUGAS SR., of Thibodaux, 89, on September 2. As a Lafourche legislator, he helped to change Nicholls in 1956 into a four-year college. His daughter, Bernadette Dugas, is an instructor at Nicholls.

BOBBIE JEAN COMMINGS HAMILTON (M.Ed. '80), 52, of DeSoto, Texas, on June 30. An active Baptist, she was involved in Christian education.

WILLIE R.J. ORGERON ('55, B.S. '69), 73, of Thibodaux, on March 29. He was a retired teacher and principal,

and was one of the first ordained Roman Catholic deacons.

GEORGE ALLEN PICOU JR., 64, of Schriever, on March 15. He was a retired pharmacist and businessman and received the Harvey Peltier Award for non-graduate supporters of Nicholls. Memorial donations can be made to The George Picou Jr. A+ Scholarship, NSU Foundation, P.O. Box 2066, Thibodaux, LA 70301.

CONSTANCE DENISE JUDE WASHINGTON M.D. (B.S. '90), on July 18. She was a Red and Gray member and made the dean's list all four years at Nicholls. Some of her research in breast cancer has been published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

The COLONEL

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