

Massive Budget Cuts Threaten the Future of Nicholls

by Tony Cook

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times. For Nicholls, Louisiana, and the rest of the country, early optimism that 2008 would see a continuation of prosperity and progress faded by the end of the year to recognition that the changes starting to gather along the horizon might not be for the better.

The celebration of the 60th anniversary of Nicholls in 2008 was tempered by reductions in state funding that delayed or eliminated the filling of key faculty and staff positions, delayed implementing vital technology upgrades, and threatened to deplete the university's meager reserve funds. For the first time in many years, Nicholls officials were faced with eliminating personnel and programs.

The state's newly elected governor, Bobby Jindal, made a state employee hiring freeze one of his first executive actions. For the opening months of the year, no new employees were brought in at Nicholls to replace those who departed.

Jindal, who served for two years as president of the University of Louisiana System, which oversees Nicholls, then submitted a budget for fiscal year 2008-09 that promised a \$34 million increase for four-year higher education spending statewide.

The new governor's focus on supporting higher education in Louisiana seemed to foretell more good things to come at Nicholls.

Dr. Stephen Hulbert, president of Nicholls, was enthusiastic about celebrating the university's 60th anniversary and optimistic about its prospects for the future. "I share the



Drained of its water to save energy, the dry fountain beside La. 1 across from Elkins Hall is stark evidence of the budget cuts that threaten to empty classrooms and offices all over the Nicholls campus.

pleasure of the faculty and staff with the success that the campus has enjoyed in recent years," he said as the fall semester began.

When the 2008-09 budget was finalized, however, Nicholls received only \$13,000 of the proposed \$34 million. The university did not receive almost \$4 million already approved by the state before Jindal's arrival that would enable it to complete a necessary transition to the Banner information management system. Having already sunk nearly \$2 million into this project, Nicholls was forced to tap into its reserves.

President Hulbert found himself beginning the fifth year of a successful

tenure marked by growth and improvement faced with the prospect not of continued expansion, but of immediate curtailment and eventual decline of academic programs.

The ill winds of the state's 2008-09 budget had barely begun to blow at Nicholls when the campus was seriously damaged and temporarily forced to close because of Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Although the state's general hiring freeze had ended, the expenses and loss of revenue from the storms forced Nicholls to begin its own "soft" hiring freeze after they passed. Vacant positions were left unfilled. Faculty and staff received no annual increase in pay for 2008-09,

although other state universities were able to provide this incentive to their employees.

During the final weeks of 2008, Gov. Jindal announced that a projected \$341 million shortfall in the state's budget for the current fiscal year required a 4.6 percent budget cut for four-year higher education statewide. Because of the constitutionally mandated allocation of funding among state government agencies—a situation Jindal has targeted as a fiscal reform priority—only higher education and health care were forced to absorb the mid-year budget cut. The share for Nicholls, with an annual state

See Budget Cuts, page 10

THE COLONEL

Spring 2009

Dr. Stephen Hulbert
University President

Debbie Raziano (B.A. '74)
Director of Alumni Affairs

Jessica Harvey (B.A. '06)
Assistant Director of Alumni Affairs

Tamera Cortez
Administrative Assistant, Alumni Affairs

Renee Piper
Director of University Relations

Tony Cook
Assistant Director of University Relations

Jerad David (B.A. '00)
Assistant Director of University Printing & Design Services

Dr. Al Delahaye, Graham Harvey, Brandon Rizzuto
Contributing Writers

Misty McElroy (B.A. '03)
Photojournalist

Sarah Thibodeaux
Contributing Photographer

2008-09 Alumni Federation Board of Directors
Brett Terrebonne (B.S. '89, M.B.A. '97) President
Herbert Kimble (B.S. '75) President-Elect
Glenn Chance Jr. (B.S. '90, M.B.A. '95) Vice President
Luke Ford Jr. (DIP '54, B.A. '63) Secretary
Stella Lasseigne (B.A. '68, M.Ed. '80) Treasurer
Roger Hamilton Jr. (B.A. '98) Past President

2008-09 Board Members
Martin Benoit (A.S. '79)
Terry Dupre (A.S. '88, B.S. '06)
Eddie Hebert (A.S. '71, B.S.N. '92)
Dr. Leslie Jones (B.S. '91, M.Ed. '92)
Mitzi Naquin (B.S. '97, M.B.A. '99)
Stephen Peltier (B.S. '75)
Mark Plaisance (A.S. '82, B.A. '83)
Ernest Richard Jr. (B.G.S. '87, A.S. '02)
Gayle Clement Tauzin (B.S. '73)

Contact *The Colonel* at:
Office of Alumni Affairs
P.O. Box 2158
Thibodaux, LA 70310
(985) 448-4111
deborah.raziano@nicholls.edu

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.

Exciting Colonel Events...

Exciting things are happening this spring in Colonel Country! The first is that the Nicholls men's basketball team qualified for the Southland Conference Tournament. Our Colonels played in Katy, Texas, on March 12 and 13. As the #2 seed, we defeated Texas State (80-75), but lost a very close and exciting game to the University of Texas at San Antonio (55-57). To kick off this major event, we held a Houston Area Alumni and Colonel Fan Social. Thanks to all who participated in the social, and to those who came to support our team for this fun and memorable event.

Next, I would again like to congratulate our Awards for Excellence recipients. We are excited to bring you information about the six awards and their recipients in this issue of *The Colonel*. You will also have the opportunity to read about the students who were inducted into the Nicholls Hall of Fame in this issue. Thanks to all who attended the Awards for Excellence ceremony on March 29, and to all who participated in helping to bring our ceremony together.

Third, the Annual Meeting and Alumni Crawfish Boil took place on April 25. Colonel alumni and friends came out to enjoy all-you-can-eat crawfish and live music by the Soul Survivors. Alumni also got to meet the Alumni Federation board for 2009-10. Everyone had a great time!

Our Atlanta/Birmingham area alumni got the chance to enjoy crawfish, too, at our Crawfish Boil in Duluth, Georgia, on May 2. Everyone there had a great time with excellent company!

Finally, mark your calendars for Homecoming 2009, when we'll play Jacksonville State University on September 26. We will be honoring the class of 1959 during our Homecoming festivities. Please check our Web site regularly for additional Homecoming information. Come out, join us, and show your Colonel Spirit. We can't wait to see you at our next Colonel event!

In the Colonel Spirit,



Debbie Raziano (B.A. '74)
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 today!



Ride with Colonel Pride!

Visit <http://omv.dps.state.la.us/> to get your Nicholls license plate. The Nicholls General Scholarship Fund receives a portion of the fee charged in addition to the regular vehicle registration.

A Thousand Words



Can a picture really be worth 1,000 words? We think so. Share your stories about this 1959 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.

Letters



Thanks for sending *The Colonel*. We love the photos taken at Nicholls back in the '80s—those pics stir great memories for my wife, Rachel, and me. Rachel and I met at 5-for-1 night at The Colonel's Retreat back in the fall of 1984. We finished our bachelor's degrees and got married in 1987. We live in Austin now, but we visit Thibodaux frequently to see Rachel's family.

I felt it when they knocked down those dormitories. I had many good times in those dorms with my teammates on the baseball team. On the night of my 21st birthday—February 25, 1985—I was in my room in Long Hall studying like a good boy and my teammates entered my room, stripped me naked, put a psychedelic wig on my head, duct-taped me to a chair, put me in the elevator, and pushed all the buttons for a stop on every floor. When I got to the bottom floor they were all there to sing "Happy Birthday" to me.

The '80s were great at Nicholls State! Football coach Sonny Jackson had all of us roaring for the Colonels sports teams. The football team won the Gulf-Star Conference in 1984 and the baseball team won a Gulf-Star Conference co-championship in 1985. Several players from those teams played professional sports.

Thanks for the memories.

Jim Whitefield (B.A. '86)

Important Dates

Welcome Back Day
Thursday, August 27, 2009

Homecoming 2009 • Colonels vs. Jacksonville State
Saturday, September 26, 2009

Family Day • Colonels vs. McNeese
Saturday, October 31, 2009

Get your Nicholls ring today!



Call 985.448.4111 for more information.

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.

Alumni, Supporters Win Awards for Excellence



Dawn Rose LaFont (B.A. '77, M.Ed. '84) received the 2009 James Lynn Powell Award.

The Nicholls Alumni Federation bestowed its 2009 Awards for Excellence at ceremonies on March 29, honoring those who have distinguished themselves through service to the university, the region, and the Alumni Federation.

The James Lynn Powell Award, the highest honor awarded to a Nicholls alumnus or alumna, was presented to Dawn Rose LaFont, principal of Pointe-Aux-Chenes Elementary School in Terrebonne Parish. LaFont's students have given nearly \$3,000 since 2005 to the Bradley Bergeron Endowed Scholarship Fund, named for a soldier who died in Iraq. LaFont was selected in part for her courage and dedication during the recent hurricanes. Rather than wait for help from her school board or FEMA, she assembled her all-female faculty and staff to move furniture, pull

up damaged flooring, and perform repair work.

The Harvey Peltier Award, the highest award presented to a non-graduate of Nicholls, was awarded to Clara Callais Brady, a 1960 graduate of Southwestern Louisiana Institute (today's University of Louisiana at Lafayette). Brady and her late husband, John, teamed with the Pat Brady family to endow the John A. Brady Sr. Endowed Chair in Computer Sciences. They also helped endow a professorship in culinary arts.

The Marie Fletcher Distinguished Service Award was presented to Dr. Luciana Soares, assistant professor of music and a native of Brazil. A faculty member since Fall 2002, Soares has shown a commitment to service beyond what is usually expected of a faculty member. Aside from performing at university functions, she helped with the Nocturne fundraiser for music scholarships. Soares also helped organize and performed for the university's 60th anniversary celebration.

The Ramon J. Labat Award, presented to former or current Civil Service employees who have shown exceptional professionalism, was awarded to Hazel Duet Toups, an administrative assistant in the College of Business Administration. A 24-year Nicholls veteran, Toups is known among faculty, staff, and students for handling difficult situations with finesse—fostering an environment of respect, courtesy, and caring.

Two individuals were named



The Alumni Federation presented its annual Awards for Excellence on March 29. The Corporate Mark of Honor was presented to Edison Chouest Offshore, the largest private employer in the Bayou Region. From left: Dr. Stephen Hulbert, university president; Kirt Chouest (B.S. '87), Edison Chouest Offshore operations manager; Brett Terrebonne (B.S. '89, M.B.A. '97), president of the Nicholls Alumni Federation; and Deborah Raziano (B.A. '74), director of alumni affairs.

honorary alumni this year—violinist James Alexander, adjunct instructor of music, and Chef John Kozar, instructor of culinary arts.

Alexander founded the Nicholls string program, using his own funds to travel abroad and recruit students. He has performed in Austria, Brazil, Czechoslovakia, England, Germany, Italy, Japan, Romania, Serbia, Switzerland, and Uruguay as well as the United States. In Fall 2008, he performed at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., with Dr. Luciana Soares.

Since his arrival at Nicholls in Fall 2002, John Kozar has conducted several presentations for Jubilee and

Scholars Day, and he participates in the Southern United States Trade Association Culinary Program. A former chair of the Instructional Technology Fee Committee, Kozar has served on the Faculty Senate.

The Corporate Mark of Honor, was presented to Edison Chouest Offshore, the largest private employer in the Bayou Region. Gary Chouest, the current president and CEO, joined the company at age 19.

Founded as a two-vessel shrimping operation in 1960, Edison Chouest Offshore entered into an affiliation agreement with Nicholls in Fall 2008 to provide externship opportunities for students.—*Graham Harvey*



Brady



Soares



Toups



Alexander



Kozar

Class of '58 and Outstanding Alumni Honored

Outstanding Alumni, 2008

The 2008 Alumni Homecoming Brunch and Reception took place Saturday, November 1, under a massive tent in the Guidry Stadium parking lot. A pep rally with the Pride of Nicholls Band and the Nicholls cheerleaders highlighted the event.

Along with the great food and music, the Nicholls Class of 1958 was honored; the Homecoming Court was introduced; and the Outstanding Alumnus or Outstanding Alumna for each college was announced.

Dr. Barry Landry (B.S. '77) received the 2008 James Lynn Powell outstanding alumnus award and rode in the Homecoming parade as grand marshal.

Marquita Hill, a senior from Boutte, was the 2008 Homecoming Queen. The Homecoming King was Ugochukwu Ezema, a senior from

Kingston, Jamaica.

"It was special having the Class of 1958 with us at the alumni brunch to celebrate 50 years, since those class members were the first to receive baccalaureate degrees from Nicholls," noted Alumni Affairs Director and Homecoming Chair Debbie Raziano.

"Whenever you receive recognition for your hard work, it is always a proud moment for you and your family," said Outstanding Alumnus honoree Casey Guidry (B.S. '98).

"But when it comes from your alma mater and your peers who have seen the good works of so many through the years, well, it's humbling and truly special," Guidry said.

Honoree Brett Terrebonne (B.S. '89, M.B.A. '97) is the 2008-09 president of the Nicholls Alumni Federation.—*Tony Cook*



Arts and Sciences
Kerry Michael St. Pé,
B.S. '73



Business Administration
Brett Terrebonne, B.S. '89,
M.B.A. '97



Education
Casey Guidry,
B.S. '98



John Folse Culinary
Institute
Lauren Caldwell-Guy,
B.S. '06



Nursing and Allied Health
Clair Petit Millet,
B.S.N. '97



University College
Kevin George,
B.G.S. '96, B.S. '99,
M.Ed. '03



Members of the Class of 1958 received special recognition during Homecoming 2008. From left: Susan Blanchard Blair; Shirley Durocher Boudreaux; Ruby Foret Gervais; Priscilla Toups Pendzimaz; Dr. Stephen Hulbert, university president; Patricia Gervais Roland; and Henry Toups.



Dr. Barry Landry (B.S. '77) was the Homecoming parade grand marshal.

Alumni Gather for Crawfish

On Saturday, April 25, more than 300 alumni came together in the Cotillion Ballroom of the Student Union for the Annual Meeting and Crawfish Boil sponsored by the Nicholls Alumni Federation. In keeping with tradition, live music by the Soul Survivors and a cash bar helped the crawfish go down.



Officers and members of the 2009-10 Alumni Federation board of directors attending the April 25 annual meeting, from left: Ernest Richard (B.G.S. '87, A.S.'02); Tommy Eschete (B.A. '80); Mitzi Naquin, treasurer (B.S. '97, M.B.A. '99); Gayle Clement Tauzin (B.S. '73); Mark Plaisance (A.S. '82, B.S. '83); Terry Dupre (A.S. '88, B.S. '06); Glenn Chance, president-elect (B.S. '90, M.B.A. '95); Herbie Kimble, president (B.S. '75); Luke Ford, secretary (DIP '54, B.A. '63); and Stella Chiasson Lasseigne, vice president (B.A. '68, M.Ed. '80). Alumni Affairs Director Debbie Raziano (B.A. '74) is behind the group.

Demolition of Long Hall Creates Constructive Result



A Nicholls landmark for 40 years, Long Hall went down in history on November 22 in a spectacular implosion witnessed by the public. The \$5,000 raised by the “Bringing Down the House” event was matched by the Nicholls Foundation to endow the new Huey P. Long Hall Memorial Scholarship. Donations are still being accepted; please call (985) 448-4134.

What’s in a name?

Long Hall, demolished last fall, was under construction in January 1968 when President Vernon F. Galliano asked State Superintendent of Education William



J. Dodd to name it after Huey Long. By letter Galliano said simply: “I feel that it is fitting and proper and that it will mean a great deal to all of our citizens to honor the memory of one who had such an influential role in our State.”

Other than as governor, Long never had close ties to the Nicholls area. Some observers noted that Long’s son, U.S. Sen. Russell B. Long, had become chairman of the Senate Finance Committee two years earlier, not long after the Higher Education Act of 1965 began sending millions of Great Society dollars to colleges and universities across the nation.—*Dr. Al Delahaye*

Beauregard To Become Showplace

Beauregard Hall renovations are on schedule for completion by March 2010, reports Assistant Vice President for Administration Mike Davis.

The Lemoine Co. of Lafayette is the primary contractor for the \$14.8 million renovation. Beauregard Hall has been stripped to its interior and exterior walls so that new, state-of-the-art science classrooms and laboratories can be constructed within the building and its electrical service can be upgraded.

Because state law requires that one percent of the renovation funds must be used for art, proposals will be accepted in the coming months from artists for creating a courtyard to feature sculpture, water, and benches.

The result will be a serene showplace, suitable for special events, Davis said.—*Dr. Al Delahaye*

Enrollment Grows in Spring

The enrollment statistics for Spring 2009 at Nicholls indicate steady growth and academic progress, especially among freshmen.

Compared to Spring 2008, total enrollment increased by 125 students—from 6,304 to 6,429—with freshmen accounting for 84.8 percent of the total boost. In all, the number of full-time students increased by 4.6 percent, with an overall 4.3 percent increase in full-time credit hours. New-student enrollment swelled by 16 percent, and the retention rate of first-time freshmen rose to more than 86 percent.

“This proves Nicholls is becoming the institution of choice for the best and brightest students in the Bayou Region,” said Larry Howell, associate provost. “Valedictorian scholarships, for example, increased by 30 percent in Fall 2008—and all of those students were retained for the Spring 2009 semester.” The Early Start Program (formerly the Dual Enrollment Program), which allows high school students to enroll simultaneously

in university-level courses, enjoyed a substantial increase—29.1 percent—resulting in a total of 204 students.

Academic programs with significant enrollment boosts include the Department of Applied Sciences, the

College of Arts and Sciences graduate program, the School of Fine Arts, and the John Folse Culinary Institute—with increases of 25.4 percent, 22.5 percent, 17.7 percent, and 13.1 percent, respectively.—*Graham Harvey*

Tillou Gets Refreshed

Colonel Tillou will make his much-anticipated return to campus at 11:50 a.m. on Thursday, August 27, during the annual Welcome Back Day celebration in the Quadrangle.

After five long years, Nicholls will no longer be without a visual representation of the historic Colonel mascot. The new Colonel Tillou will have a fiercer appearance and will wear a different style of military uniform than his predecessor.

Along with getting a new, updated Colonel, logos featuring the new Colonel have also been created. University officials are keeping it all—the new costume and the logos—under wraps until the big reveal in late summer.

Merchandise featuring the new look of the Nicholls Colonels will be available at the campus bookstore and area retailers August 1.—*Renee Piper*

Orders are now being accepted for T-shirts displaying the new Tillou. Visit www.nichollsalmuni.org/programs for information or call 985-448-4111.

Hall of Fame Adds 16 Students



Membership in the Hall of Fame is the highest honor bestowed upon a Nicholls student. The 2009 honorees were named at the March 29 Awards for Excellence event. From left, top: Dr. Eugene Dial, vice president for student affairs and enrollment services; Ugochukwu Ezema; Ron Sapia; Alex Barnes; Caitlin Morris; Tessie Rachal; Brandon Gil; Johnathan Wise; and Christopher Monier. From left, bottom: Debbie Raziano, director of alumni affairs; Dr. Carroll Falcon, provost and vice president for academic affairs; Crystal Robichaux; Kristi Ledet; Michelle Becnel; Olinda Ricard; Erin Ballantyne; Janee Rogers; Sara Taylor; Amy Shows; and Dr. Stephen Hulbert, university president.

Students Protest in Baton Rouge



About 200 Nicholls students rallied on the state Capitol steps April 27, protesting budget cuts to higher education. Dressed in Colonel red and displaying signs and a large papier-mâché shark, the students chanted "Don't Eat Education" as the Legislature opened its two-month session. They later repeated their chant in the Senate balcony just as senators adjourned to walk over to the House to listen to Gov. Bobby Jindal's opening-day speech. The students object to Gov. Jindal's proposal to take away \$220 million from the state's public universities, community colleges and technical schools. Nicholls will lose about \$5.3 million in state money next year—on top of \$1.5 million taken away this year—if the Legislature approves Jindal's 2009-10 budget.

Crawfish Day 2009

"My favorite Nicholls tradition above all is Crawfish Day. I love the crawfish queen, the pirogue race, the winner paddling the queen, the crawfish, the beer, the games, and the music. The music I remember best is by Cheap Trick. Every time I hear them I think of Crawfish Day."—**JON T. WALL** (B.S.N. '95)



Mudbugs and music made for another memorable Crawfish Day at Nicholls on April 30.

Every Dollar Invested in Nicholls Multiplies, Study Shows

An economic and community impact study commissioned by the University of Louisiana System—to which Nicholls belongs—concludes that the continued success of Nicholls strongly affects the economic success of the Bayou Region. The study focuses on spending, education, research, service, and quality of life.

“This study documents the importance of our institution,” Dr. Stephen Hulbert, Nicholls president, said. “I encourage everyone to read it. The Bayou Region is rightly proud and protective of an uncommon resource like Nicholls—and those of us in the university family are indeed privileged to be part of the institution’s 60-year history of making life better for those we serve.”

In terms of spending, the study shows that every dollar invested in the university increases by a factor of eight as it cycles through the Bayou Region’s

economy. Moreover, the university’s annual expenditures generate a regional wealth increase of \$274 million—along with a workforce boost of 2,843 full-time, non-university jobs in fields such as construction, health care, food services, and many others.

The university’s primary mission—educating the professionals of tomorrow—strengthens the workforce as well. Since the founding of Nicholls, 37,288 degrees have been awarded—9,752 in the past 10 years alone. They include 7,254 bachelor’s degrees, 1,193 master’s degrees, and 1,305 associate’s degrees. Today, these professionals can be found in such industries as health care, petroleum services, culinary arts, science, business, and education. These graduates have added \$526 million to the regional and state economy over the last decade.

Also fueling the Bayou Region’s economy are the various research and

service programs at Nicholls—each of which is designed to stimulate new and established industries in surrounding parishes. Nicholls currently supports 28 of these programs, including two economic development initiatives; two engineering and technology programs; three cultural development programs; five environmental and natural science projects; and 16 education, health, and human services activities.

The remaining focus of the UL System study—quality of life—is largely immeasurable. In short, the Bayou Region community relies on Nicholls to serve as the hub for cultural programming, family-friendly activities, and community-building events beyond standard university activities. A prime example is Jubilee: A Festival of the Arts and Humanities at Nicholls, which attracted about 11,000 visitors in 2009. Moreover, Nicholls faculty, staff, and students volunteered approximately

176,000 hours of community service in 2008—a direct result of the university’s service-learning and volunteerism initiatives.

“The upshot of the study is clear,” Hulbert said. “In terms of educational opportunity, community service, locally oriented research, cultivation of the arts, and generation of economic activity, Nicholls is an invaluable resource to the Bayou Region.”

The UL System study was conducted by Applied Technology and Research Corp. of Baton Rouge, UL System staff, and research teams from Nicholls and each of the system’s eight universities. The Nicholls impact area includes Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. Mary, and Terrebonne parishes.

For additional details, including a link to the full text of the study, go to www.nicholls.edu/impactstudy. —Graham Harvey

New Residence Halls Dedicated to Navy Fliers Lost in 1961

First Dormitories Honored Deceased Alumni and Faculty

Nicholls became a residential college on September 7, 1964, when students moved into the first men’s and women’s dormitories, which had no formal names. Construction had begun in April 1963, about three months before Dr. Charles C. Elkins turned the Nicholls presidency over to Dr. Vernon F. Galliano. Elkins had quietly obtained state-board approval to name the structures for Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes.

But in late 1964, Galliano got state board authorization to name the original dormitories, plus major additions to them, in memory of two deceased Nicholls junior-college graduates and a deceased faculty member. He especially wanted to honor Marvin Joseph Zeringue and Richard Joseph Millet.

Zeringue and Millet died on November 5, 1961, in the crash of a Navy plane 50 miles south of Jacksonville, Florida, while on active duty. Both had served under Galliano’s command with the Atlantic Fleet, Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 821, after Dean Galliano had been recalled to active duty. Lt. (j.g.) Zeringue was the pilot and Aviation Machinist Mate 2nd Class Millet was a member of the crew.

The first men’s dormitory was named for Zeringue, a 1953 graduate of Thibodaux College and a 1955 graduate of Nicholls Junior College. He was born in 1936 in Thibodaux and had been a member of the Nicholls band and the Lafourche Greys, an ROTC precision-drill unit; he had also been an ROTC cadet captain and Newman Club treasurer.

The major addition, built a year or so later and to the right of the first structure, was named for Millet, a 1955 graduate of Destrehan High School and a 1957 junior-college graduate. As a Nicholls student, Millet, who was born in 1935 in the St. Charles Parish community of Montz, had also been a member of the band and a cadet captain; in addition, he had served as president of the Science Club. Both men were married, had families, and had been recalled to active duty on October 1, 1961.



On a beautiful morning, April 29, family and friends of the late Marvin Joseph Zeringue (DIP '55) and Richard Joseph Millet (DIP '57) joined Nicholls officials to name two of the new residence halls on campus in their memory. The new residence halls replaced the outdated Millet-Zeringue Hall that was demolished last fall. Pictured at left with their father’s restored portrait are Zeringue’s daughters, Janelle Zeringue Welchel (B.S. '81), Alice Zeringue Landry (B.S. '80), and Michelle Zeringue Parro. At right are Millet’s daughters, Jeanelle Millet and Millie Millet Browning, with the portrait of their father. At the lectern is Nicholls Assistant Vice President for Administration Mike Davis, who spoke during the event.

The first women’s dormitory at Nicholls was named Babington Hall in honor of Mima Babington, a charter member of the faculty and head of the English Department when she died of natural causes on December 30, 1960. A native of Franklinton, she was known to carefully correct any Nicholls student who said, “I want to axe you a question.” A portrait of Babington that hangs in Babington Hall was presented by her relatives at a November 3, 1966, convocation in her honor.—Dr. Al Delahaye

Basketball Team Tries for Kayo in Katy

One of the biggest sources of Colonel Pride for Nicholls supporters in recent months was the men's basketball team's extraordinarily successful 2008-09 season. Heading into the season, the Colonels were ranked near the bottom of Southland Conference standings by the league's coaches and sports information directors.

Their lowly pre-season status surprised no one. Nicholls had suffered seven straight losing seasons, averaging only 6.3 wins per season in that time. The Colonels also failed to make the conference tournament in each of those seasons. But something changed on the way to March Madness in 2009. The Colonels started winning. At season's end they had won 20 games and lost only 11.

The Colonels traveled to Katy, Texas, for the conference tournament, where they advanced to the semi-final game and lost in a nail-biter to Texas-San Antonio. The head coach, J.P. Piper, was named the Southland Conference Coach of the Year.



Senior forward Ryan Bathie, a native of Australia, goes in for a layup during the 80-75 victory over Texas State at the Southland Conference tournament in Katy, Texas. Bathie was named the conference's co-MVP.

"I'm very proud of my guys and the way they represented Nicholls," Piper said. "We're only going to get better. I think the program is in great shape and the future is very bright for the Colonels." —*Brandon Rizzuto*

"The Shooting Stars" Reunite



Three Decades Later.

The 1979 Nicholls Colonels basketball team enjoyed a reunion on campus January 24. Front row, from left: Al Suffrin (B.A. '77), Walt Lemoine (B.S. '83), head coach Don Landry, assistant coach Jerry Sanders (B.S. '66, M.Ed. '69), James Perry (B.S. '80), Barry Canterbury, and Bob Drury. Back row, from left: George Schexnayder (B.S. '83), Larry Wilson, Rogers Washington, Johnny Hall, Shelby Hypolite (B.A. '78), Mark "Sonny" Charpentier (B.A. '80), and Chris Jennings.

Ravens Pick Webb in NFL Draft

Nicholls football standout Lardarius Webb (B.G.S. '08), was selected by the Baltimore Ravens with the 24th pick (88th overall) in the third round of the 2009 NFL draft. The selection marks the third consecutive year that Nicholls has had a player taken in the draft.

Kareem Moore was selected by the Washington Redskins in the sixth round of the 2008 draft, while Jacob Bender was a sixth round selection of the New York Jets in 2007.

"This is just a great opportunity for Lardarius. He is a great young man who is capable of so much, and we are all happy for him," said Nicholls Head Football Coach Jay Thomas.

Webb, an Opelika, Alabama, native, accumulated 38 individual awards, including conference and national player of the week honors, during his two years with the Nicholls team.

He was a two-time consensus All-American at safety, and stands as the only player in NCAA history on any level to win offensive, defensive, and special teams player of the week awards as selected by the conference through the course of a season.—*Brandon Rizzuto*



Men's Tennis Has Banner Season

The Nicholls men's tennis team finished second in the Southland Conference this season. The Colonels fell, 4-0, to nationally ranked Texas A&M-Corpus Christi in the SLC Championship on April 26, at the HEB Tennis Center in Corpus Christi.

The Colonels competed in the SLC Championship for the first time in school history. Nicholls (13-10, 3-6) upset No. 3 Texas-San Antonio and No. 2 Texas-Pan American on the way to the championship competition, but could not pull off the ultimate upset in the finals.

"I can't express enough how proud I am of our guys," said Head Coach Jim Hunter. "They really came into the tournament feeling like they had something to prove, and showed that they belonged here."

The Nicholls men's tennis program put together its best season since bringing the sport back in 2004, posting double-digit victories, while also accumulating the most wins in conference action



Senior Abhaya Prakash, a senior general studies major, played his final collegiate match April 26, leading the Colonels to a second-place finish in the Southland Conference.

since competing in the Southland Conference.

"This is just so great for Nicholls," said Hunter. "These young men represented the university well, and competed with pride." —*Brandon Rizzuto*

“Where would we be without education? We would be nowhere. Everyone on campus is talking about this, and we feel like we’re on the bottom of the totem pole. What’s Gov. Jindal going to do?”—*Amanda Jefferson of Marrero, mass communication student*

“It’s hard to describe the situation we face. Higher education in Louisiana has never been struck such a significant blow in terms of financial reduction.”—*Dr. Stephen Hulbert, Nicholls president*

“If you look at the most recent public-opinion polls, education is the top area of concern in every area of this state. It touches on everything from economic development to outmigration. It’s the one major issue we need to deal with properly in this session.”—*Rep. Joe Harrison, R-Napoleonville*

“There are literally billions of dollars [in the state operating budget] that are protected either by statute or constitution. We’re saying that every program should have to compete for taxpayer dollars.”—*Gov. Bobby Jindal*

Contact the governor’s office.
<http://www.gov.state.la.us>

Contact your state legislators.
<http://house.legis.state.la.us>
<http://senate.legis.state.la.us>

operating budget of \$36 million, was \$1.5 million.

Financially strapped already because of the earlier technology funding omission and the hurricanes, Nicholls had no viable options other than to freeze all discretionary spending, continue the hiring freeze indefinitely, and scale back the number of part-time faculty it hires as needed to provide academic instruction. Library acquisitions and operating hours were curtailed. And, even though the budget cut did not affect the new construction and renovation projects on campus, which are financed through a separate budgeting process, energy conservation measures were tightened—meaning no lights in underused parking lots, no water in the fountain on Highway 1 across from Elkins Hall, and extinguishing the gas flame in the anniversary monument on the Quadrangle.

An already challenging situation threatened to become monumental when Gov. Jindal warned higher education institutions to prepare for further, much larger budget reductions for the 2009-10 budget year. Two scenarios were proposed, both of them stunningly severe for a campus already making sacrifices to stay afloat. The coming budget cuts, said the governor, could be as large as 28.5 percent. The better of the two scenarios warned of a 15.8 percent reduction. And this would be in addition to the 4.6 percent cut already absorbed.

As the campus closed down for the Christmas holiday break, the mood among employees and students, like the switched-off Christmas lights on Elkins Hall, was dark. They worried whether the new year might bring loss of a job or of a cherished educational opportunity.

President Hulbert, noting the anxiety generated by the wave of bad news, made a statement vowing to keep Nicholls moving forward. “We must protect, as much as possible, the disciplines and service units that have made Nicholls the viable institution for this region that it has been for many years,” he said in a message to the campus. “These include those that contribute to our status as a Southern Regional Education Board 4-Year IV [five or more postgraduate degree

programs] institution, our general education core, and the disciplines that are the major source of an educated workforce in this region.”

Gov. Jindal has announced that during the 2009 legislative session in Baton Rouge, in addition to seeking greater flexibility and transparency in allocating state spending, he intends to push for a change in higher education funding that softens the current focus on enrollment growth and parity with peer institutions in the Southern region. In the future, colleges and universities would be “incentivized” to offer more programs and produce more graduates in fields that are identified as important to the state economy.

In early March, the governor told state university leaders that his proposed 2009-10 budget would seek an overall higher education budget reduction of more than 15 percent. Although not the worst of the two scenarios Jindal had outlined in December, the additional \$5.3 million to be taken away from Nicholls would make the university’s total budget reduction—over barely two years—19 percent.

Whether the budget cuts to Nicholls and its sister institutions in Louisiana are based on revenue shortfalls, unfair allocation of revenue, or ideological bias against government spending, the effect is the same: diminished access to higher education and fewer career and lifestyle opportunities for the citizens of Louisiana.

As if the direct results of the cutbacks are not serious enough, a just-released study of the economic and social impact of higher education spending in the state concluded that every dollar spent is multiplied eight times as it moves through the local and regional economies. When those dollars are taken away, communities are diminished.

Gov. Jindal has warned higher education leaders that the 15 percent reduction he is proposing starting this July 1 will be followed by further cuts in 2010-11 and 2011-12. “Nobody knows for certain what’s going to happen two years from now,” he told the Baton Rouge *Advocate* in March.

Until fiscal reform has been achieved, and state government leaders restore higher education funding, Nicholls remains in dire straits. The

2009-10 Budget Reduction Plan for the university, released April 28 and subject to change, will eliminate 19 tenured or tenure-track faculty positions, 16 non-tenured faculty positions, 16 unclassified staff (professional) positions and 29 classified staff (Civil Service) positions. It includes releasing 58 employees and leaving 22 vacant positions open. The resulting curtailment of programs and services will affect 464 students directly, and a much higher number indirectly.

The Budget Reduction Plan also calls for a furlough of unclassified and classified staff for 6.5 days, a move that will save \$326,664 by reducing the earnings of 356 employees. In addition, the plan withholds Civil Service merit pay increases from 233 employees.

The evisceration of higher education in Louisiana can be prevented only by action of the state legislature during the current session that began April 27 and ends June 25. Nicholls officials are asking all constituents of the university to contact their state representatives and state senators as well as the governor’s office to make their opposition to the further reduction of higher educational opportunities known.

Some alternatives to the bone-deep cuts are:

- distribute necessary budget reductions more evenly throughout state government, even if a new constitutional convention must be held to change the current law.
- spend part of the state’s \$800 million surplus from 2007-08.
- allow higher education governing boards to regulate tuition and fees—only Louisiana requires a vote by its state legislature to change tuition.
- make the TOPS scholarships a level amount regardless of the university attended.

“These are very challenging economic times for Louisiana, and the unfortunate current reality is that the majority of budget cuts must be absorbed by higher education and health care,” Hulbert said.

“Now, more than ever, we need the citizens of the Bayou Region—and all Nicholls alumni and friends—to voice their support for Nicholls and the future of higher education in Louisiana.”

1950s

LUKE FORD (DIP '54, B.A. '63) received the Distinguished Graduate Award from Saint Joseph Catholic Elementary School in Thibodaux.

1960s

DR. ALEX LASSEIGNE (B.S. '67) serves on the Board of Directors for the Lafourche Education Foundation.

1970s

PAUL BOUDREAUX JR. (B.A. '75) is director of the Insurance Fraud Section at the Louisiana Department of Insurance.

MARILYN DOMINIQUE (B.A. '76) was named Artist of the Month for January by the Terrebonne Fine Arts Guild.

ROBERT WALLACE LEVY (B.S. '71) has joined the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities board of directors.

BARRY MELANCON (B.S. '79, M.B.A. '83) has been reappointed president and CEO of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

MILLIE NAQUIN (B.S. '77, M.Ed. '79) was named College and University Health Educator of the Year by the Louisiana Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. She is a professor at Southeastern Louisiana University.

ED RICHARD JR. (B.S. '71, M.Ed. '75) has retired from the Terrebonne Parish School System.

JANE TRICHE-MILAZZO (B.A. '78) is a judge in the 23rd Judicial District Court of Louisiana.

BARRY UZEE (B.A. '71, M.Ed. '79) has retired from the Lafourche Parish school system after 34 years as a teacher, coach, and administrator.

1980s

BOB ARCENEUX (B.S. '85) is co-owner of Coffee Roasters of New Orleans, which sells coffee and tea to coffeehouses, restaurants, grocery stores, and mail-order customers.

GASTON CHARLES "CHUCK" BORDIS IV (B.A. '85), is a chancery court judge for the 16th Judicial District of Mississippi.

RILEY CHERAMIE (B.G.S. '89) an Army lieutenant colonel, was honored as the U.S. Transportation Command field

grade officer of the year. He and his wife, Laura Pennison Cheramie (B.S. '89) are both graduates of the former Nicholls ROTC program.

TED MUNCH (A.S. '88) is a city councilman in Westwego.

BURT ORTEGO (B.S. '84) is a vice president at MidSouth Bank in Lafayette.

TODD PELLEGRIN (B.S. '88, M.B.A. '90) is a vice president of World Lifeboat Operations at Hercules Offshore.

DARREL PLAISANCE (B.S. '84) is vice president of International Operations for GulfMark Offshore.

1990s

PEDRO CALMON (B.S. '98, M.B.A. '00) is a senior online advertising consultant at Google.

GAIL B. GROS (B.A. '98, M.Ed. '03) received the Educational Guiding Light Award in St. John the Baptist Parish.

VONDRA ETIENNE-STEIB (B.G.S. '92, M.Ed. '03) is director of education for St. James Parish schools.

PEGGY EVANS (B.A. '91, M.Ed. '97) is assistant principal at Bayou Blue Elementary School.

JOHN WOODLEY (B.S. '93) is the founder of Trusted Technologies in Baltimore, which provided security services during President Obama's inauguration.

BRAD ZELLER (B.S. '99), a Colonels football player from 1995 to 1998, was inducted into the Nicholls Athletics Hall of Fame.

2000s

TRICIA COLLINS (B.A. '04) is events coordinator at the Northshore Harbor Center near Slidell.

HOLLY HOUK CULLEN (M.B.A. '00) received the 2008 First Circle Award from the Baton Rouge Chapter of the Public Relations Association of Louisiana. She is assistant vice chancellor for public affairs at LSU.

JACOB DAGATE (B.S. '05) has graduated from Southern University Law School and was admitted to the Louisiana state bar. He works at the Jimmy Dagate law firm in Houma.

JONATHAN FORET (B.A. '01) works for a non-profit organization, the Bangladesh Protibandhi Kallyan

Society, to unify the efforts of grassroots organizations for disabled people.

KACY KERNAN (B.A. '02) is director of community impact for the United Way of St. Charles Parish.

JONATHAN LAFLEUR (B.G.S. '06) is associate pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Morgan City. He became associate pastor at age 22—the youngest

in his church's history.

JACOB LIPARI III (B.S. '02) is in the pre-theology program at Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

RACHEL MAIN (B.S. '02) is executive chef and partner at Main Course California.

GLENDA TOUPS (B.A. '03) is director of the Houma Regional Arts Council.

In Memoriam

EDWARD THOMAS BAKER (B.S. '69), 69, of Los Angeles, on May 18, 2008; his name was on the lawsuit that allowed him and six others to integrate Nicholls racially in 1963.

FRANCIS W. BUCKEL JR. (B.G.S. '91), 72, of Thibodaux, on June 23, 2008.

CHAPMAN HYAMS BURGUIERES III (B.S. '03, M.B.A. '07), 33, of Houma, on January 11.

THOMAS B. COBB (B.S. '60), 69, of Houma, on February 24, 2008, in Houma.

DR. JAMES ALTON COWAN, 68, of Houma, retired head of the Department of Languages and Literature, on July 8, 2008.

SINCLAIR "KIT" CRENSHAW, 54,

visiting instructor of accounting and business law since Fall 2005, on April 2.

ROYCE JOHN DOUCET (A.S. '82, B.G.S. '90, M.Ed. '99), 46, of Galliano, on March 20.

MARY BYRD REDDING NADLER (B.A. '65), 90, on June 15, 2008, in Anderson, S.C.

ALEX J. PLAISANCE JR. (B.A. '60), 71, of Golden Meadow, on December 10, 2008; he was student body president in 1959-60.

JOSEPH D. SALTZMAN, 77, of Thibodaux, retired associate professor of foreign languages, on April 3; he joined the Nicholls faculty in 1957.

JOSEPH WILLIAM SEVIN JR. (B.S. '76), 73, of Schriever, on February 1.



Pictured are alumni who gathered May 2 in Duluth, Georgia, for a crawfish boil sponsored by Nicholls and six other universities. Nicholls alumni and family members at the event numbered 41. Front row, from left: Bonnie Bush Craft (A.S. '74); Rhonda Adams Keller (B.S. '87); Tonya Oliver (B.S. '94); Eddie Verdin (B.S. '92); Leslie Gray (B.S. '85); Kim Gautreaux Longacre (B.A. '77); and Susan Elliot Lombardo (B.A. '93). Back row, from left: Carmen Posey (A.S. '98, B.A. '00); Kenneth Keller (B.S. '86); Liz Boudreaux Sunseri (B.S. '84); Scott Sunseri (B.G.S. '84); Tara Use Skinner (B.A. '81); Kendall Bernard (B.S. '82); Don Danos (B.S. '85); Philip Clement (B.S. '01); Rickie Clements (attended '82-'84); and Debbie Raziano (B.A. '74), alumni affairs director.

The COLONEL

ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

P.O. Box 2158
Thibodaux, LA 70310

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
THIBODAUX, LA 70301
PERMIT NO. 77

Update US so we can
do the same for YOU.

Help us keep up with Nicholls alumni by filling out this form or visiting www.nichollsalumni.org to submit news online or to update your contact information. We'll use your news in the Colonel Notes section, and we'll use your contact information to keep you up-to-date on what Nicholls is doing.

Name _____

Address _____

Degree(s), Major(s), and Year(s) _____

E-mail _____

Phone _____

Employer _____

Your news _____

Return this form to: Office of Alumni Affairs,
P.O. Box 2158, Thibodaux, LA 70310. Or fax to (985) 448-4822.



Leave a legacy and pave the way for students at

NICHOLLS
STATE UNIVERSITY

with a commemorative brick in
the campus quadrangle.

For more information, call (985) 448-4134.