

Educate a Woman and You Educate a Family

# The Linly Heflin

Newsletter

Focus on our  
Scholars

Inside this issue:



**Dr. Bonnie Strickland, Ph.D.**  
Psychologist,  
Professor



**Dr. Kandace Kichler, M.D.**  
Surgeon



**Ashley Williams**  
Grad Student,  
Future Teacher



**Rebecca Graber**  
Honor Student,  
Volunteer



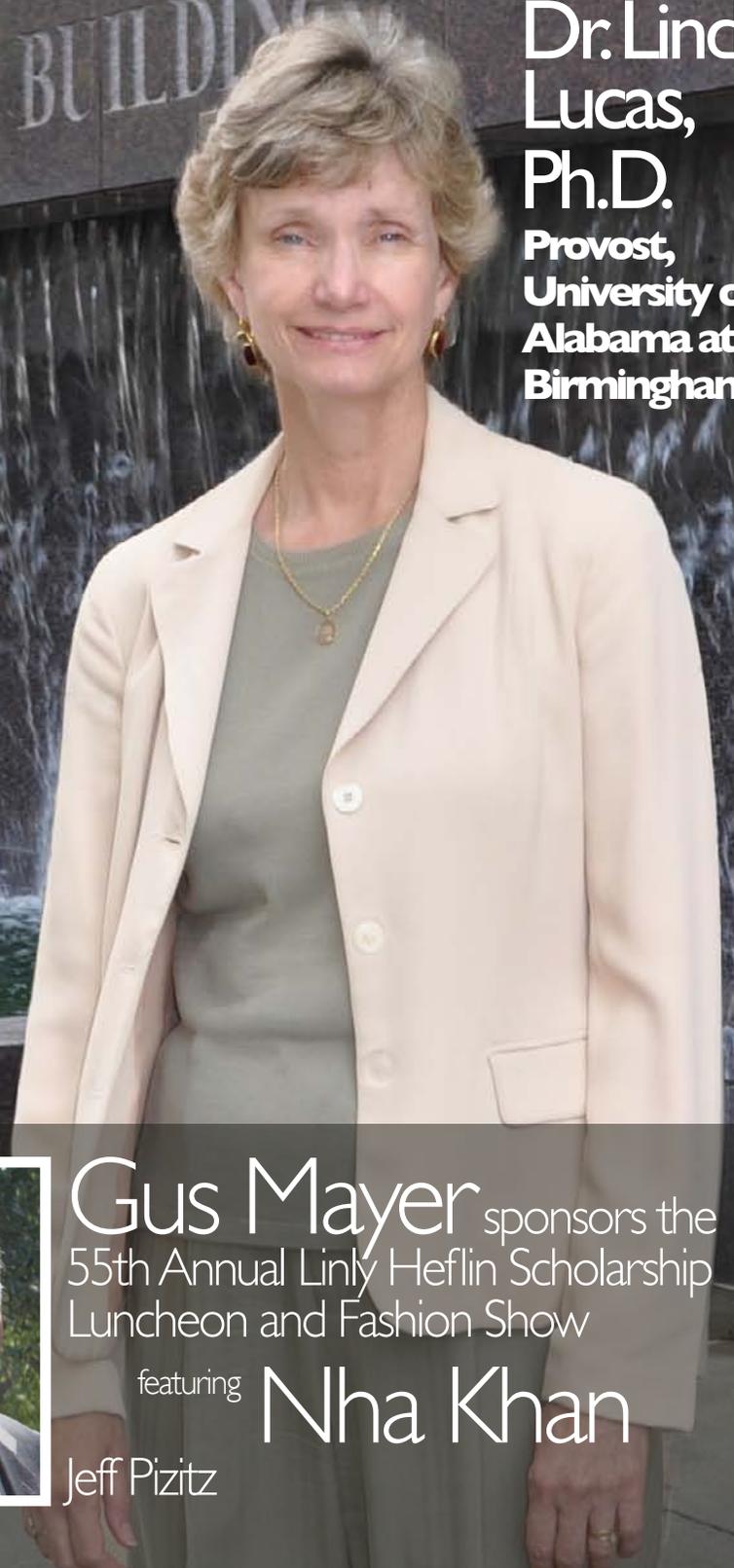
**Gus Mayer** sponsors the  
55th Annual Linly Heflin Scholarship  
Luncheon and Fashion Show

featuring

**Nha Khan**

Jeff Pizitz

**Dr. Linda Lucas, Ph.D.**  
Provost,  
University of  
Alabama at  
Birmingham



# Rebecca Graber

UAB senior, honor student & volunteer

Ambitious, tenacious, honorable, highly intelligent, reliable, creative, hardworking, compassionate.... these are just a few of the glowing terms used to describe Rebecca Graber



Rebecca on a missions trip to Ghana

a Linly Heflin scholarship in the spring of 2010. After studying her application, the scholarship committee agreed that she was unusually well qualified, and voted unanimously in her favor. Currently pursuing her senior year at UAB, Rebecca has maintained a flawless academic record, and has more than fulfilled the expectations of her teachers, mentors, and associates.

Having grown up in Lillian, Alabama, Rebecca is the youngest of six children. She was largely raised by her grandmother, who unfortunately passed away during her teen years. Since money was never abundant in her family, Rebecca learned early to help support herself. When she was only twelve years old, she started working at a local farm. Here her tasks included caring for and feeding forty horses, bailing hay, and giving beginner riding lessons. When she was older, she found jobs at such places as Old Navy, Fossil, and Starbucks, usually working fifteen to twenty hours each week. Although she was enrolled in a number of difficult honors and advanced placement classes, she somehow managed to maintain a perfect grade point

Rebecca learned early to help support herself, working on a local farm at age 12

average in Foley High School, and graduated second in of her class of 303. She was involved in a large number of extra-curricular activities, including the Student Council, the National Honor Society, the Inter-Club Council, and the Scholars Bowl, of which she served as Team Captain. A gifted writer, she won a number of awards for her essays and poetry, and was voted "Most Likely to Succeed" by her senior class. She was quite active in her church, volunteering for the Vacation Bible School and various youth projects, including a missions trip to Puerto Rico. Throughout her high school years, Rebecca's goals and activities were centered in a generous desire to be of help to others and make a difference in a needy world. She tells us that in her early teens she learned about the widespread problems and suffering of the people in Africa, and felt a definite call to enter the mission field. Her interest in studying French stems from the fact that it is the primary language in many African nations today.

The youngest of six children, she was largely raised by her grandmother, who passed away when Rebecca was a teenager.

Rebecca particularly enjoyed serving as a delegate to the Alabama Governors School at Samford University during her junior year in high school. The experience of being on a college campus with other ambitious, community-oriented students like herself reinforced a long-held desire to attend college. Although her family members supported her longing for higher education, they were not in a position to help her financially. With her high school teachers' and counselors' help, Rebecca explored various avenues toward a college degree. Fortunately, her hard work, excellent record, and persistence resulted in her being offered several scholarships. These included several partial-tuition scholarships from UAB, a Pell Grant, and a Linly Heflin Scholarship. Rebecca was particularly grateful for the help of the Lily Heflin, for it helped fund her living expenses, books, and fees.

Rebecca's many volunteer activities reflect her passion for helping those less fortunate

Rebecca's first three years at UAB mirror the successes of her high school years. Enrolled in the University's Honors Program, she has maintained a nearly perfect G.P.A. (3.96). She is consistently on the Dean's List and the Presidential Honor Roll. She was one of seventeen students selected as Sparkman Scholars by the UAB School of Public Health for mentoring in global health research. As in high school, volunteer activities have claimed a large amount of her time. Most of these activities reflect Rebecca's passion to help others who are less fortunate than she is. She feels that majoring in International Development, with a double minor in Public Health and French, will assist her in identifying ways in which she can help to right some of the wrongs in our world. She currently serves as co-president of Universities Fighting World Hunger at UAB, an organization that advocates awareness about domestic and international hunger issues. Last year she attended the organization's annual conference in Honduras. A high point of the conference was being able to meet with, and hear a speech by President Porfirio Lobo Sosa. She is active in the International Studies Club, and serves as an International Mentor for UAB. Local community involvement activities include volunteering at the Birmingham Crisis Center Rape Response Center, and regularly tutoring fourth and fifth graders in the Step Up After-School program at East Lake United Methodist Church. In addition, she is actively involved in The

Rebecca with the President of Honduras Porfirio Lobo Sosa at the Universities Fighting World Hunger Conference in Honduras



Rebecca last summer with fellow participants at Columbia



Rebecca participated in a Summer Public Health Scholars Program at Columbia University. She served an internship with a professor of Epidemiology and took several classes in the field of public health.



Rebecca with the mascot of the New York Mets

After Rebecca graduates she plans to work for a year in under-served communities

Church at Brookhills, and the servant-leadership team of the University Christian Fellowship at Mountain Brook Community Church.

Rebecca's summers have not been idle. In 2011, she participated in two mission trips. In the first, she visited Haiti with the University Christian Fellowship, where she worked alongside staff at Canaan Christian Community, helping with water sanitation, learning about nutrition needs, and mentoring school children. During July and August, she spent five weeks in Kasoa, Ghana, as a volunteer with an International Field Research Expedition. Her activities there included teaching English in several local schools and villages, and assisting with HIV/AIDS counseling and testing at Korle Blue Teaching Hospital. In the summer of 2012, she spent three months in Queens and Lake George, New York as a volunteer with Youthworks, an interdenominational organization that plans church mission projects for high school students. Rebecca helped coordinate various Kid's Clubs, Vacation Bible Schools, community



The training event at SIFAT, where she learned gardening methods, sanitation techniques, ways to obtain safe water supplies, and other skills to improve life in underdeveloped countries.



Rebecca with new friends in Ghana

gardens, and home repair projects undertaken by the volunteers.

This past March, Rebecca spent her spring break with the Alliance Francaise in Paris. Here she participated in Level B1 French classes, and earned a Certificate of Completion in the language. She particularly enjoyed the opportunity of speaking French and interacting with students from countries around the world. In early May, Rebecca spent two weeks with Servants in Faith and Technology (SIFAT) in Lineville, Alabama. Here she attended a field training event, and earned a certificate in World Hunger and Malnutrition: Practical Skills to Make a Difference. The participants learned gardening methods, sanitation techniques, ways to obtain safe water supplies, and other skills to improve life in underdeveloped countries. The remainder of her summer was spent in New York City. Here, as one of fifty students chosen from more than 1200 applicants, she

"I hope to potentially pursue a Masters in Public Health and/or a Certification in Professional Midwifery."

participated in a Summer Public Health Scholars Program at Columbia University. She served an internship with a professor of Epidemiology and took several classes in the field of public health. During the summer,

she visited and explored several community-based public health programs in the city, including Harlem's Children Zone and WEACTION for Environmental Justice, and also researched falls prevention in elderly people.

This fall, Rebecca has resumed her busy schedule at UAB. She is taking a full load of classes, as well as participating in a number of volunteer activities. In addition, she is holding down a paying job as a student assistant for UAB's Reasons for Geographic and Racial Differences in Stroke Study. There is no reason to believe that her senior year will be any less successful than her three previous years. After Rebecca completes her degree next spring, she says she plans to take a year off from school and work in under-served communities either domestically or internationally. Afterwards, she may pursue a Masters in Public Health. A devout Christian, Rebecca tells us that ultimately, she hopes to use her skills and knowledge to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others in order to serve both their spiritual and physical needs.

In conclusion, Rebecca wishes to thank the Linly Heflin scholarship committee for all of their help. In her words: "Without the scholarship I definitely would not have been able to explore all the academic avenues that I have, or be as involved in the community. Not only has it been a blessing financially, but it has also meant so much to have the support of so many women believing in me to complete college and make a difference."

By Katy Terry



Rebecca during a trip to Haiti with the University Christian Fellowship

"Not only has the Linly Heflin been a blessing financially but it has also meant so much to me to have the support of so many women believing in me to complete college and make a difference."



Rebecca in Paris while studying French with the Alliance Francaise during Spring Break, 2013

My desire to do missions in Africa came through prayer & reading scripture.

Rebecca has a 3.96 GPA!

Rebecca in Ghana

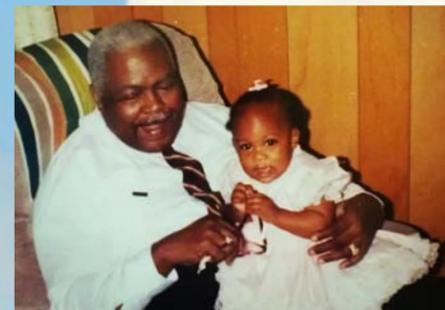


# Ashley Williams

## Grad Student & Future Teacher

Ashley's dream is to help to found a school for gifted and talented students

When Ashley Williams received her B.S. degree in Education (Cum Laude) from the University of Alabama last May, perhaps the proudest, happiest person in Coleman Coliseum that day was her grandmother, Juanita Williams. Having helped raise Ashley from the time she was a baby, Juanita, more than anyone else, had inspired Ashley to do well in school and aim for a college education. In her young life, Ashley has had more than her share of difficulties and disadvantages. Her father was never a factor in her upbringing, and he died while Ashley was still in grade school. In addition to her father's absence, another problem affecting Ashley's childhood was her mother, Jennifer's, poor health. Having been diagnosed with cancer while still in her teens, Jennifer contended with the effects of the disease and its treatments throughout most of her life. Fortunately, though, Ashley had wonderful grandparents, who filled many of the gaps in her life. From the time that she was a baby, Ashley and her mother lived with Jennifer's parents, Juanita and Roosevelt Williams. Roosevelt had spent 23 years in the armed services (both the Army and the Air force), but by the time Ashley was born, he had retired and returned to Birmingham permanently. He supplied the role of a kind,



Ashley with her late grandfather, Roosevelt Williams



Ashley as a teenager

carrying father-figure for Ashley during her early childhood. Unfortunately, Roosevelt passed away when Ashley was only eight years old, leaving a huge void in her life, and in the lives of her mother and grandmother. However, Juanita's strong Christian faith sustained her in the midst of her sorrow, and she was able to continue providing a safe, happy home for her daughter and grandchild.

For a while, Ashley's mother was able to contribute to the family's finances through jobs at Walmart and as a lab assistant at UAB. Sadly, however, she lost her battle with cancer when Ashley was twelve years old. While it was a devastating blow for Ashley, she received comfort in the knowledge that she still had a warm, loving grandmother to rely upon. Having earned a degree at Miles College, Juanita had spent many years in the business world, working first for the Birmingham Housing Authority (22

years), and then Bell South (19 years). She was well aware of the benefits of a college education, and ingrained in Ashley a desire to excel in school. Having retired in 1991, she was able to devote all of her time to her growing granddaughter's needs. With both parents gone, Juanita more than filled the role of a mother and father for Ashley.

Juanita tells us that Ashley was almost the "perfect" child. She was unusually polite and obedient, and Juanita only remembers one occasion when she had to discipline her! A conscientious student, Ashley never had to be reminded to do homework, and always brought home good grades. During high school years at Ramsay, she was consistently on the A-B Honor Roll. She enthusiastically entered into such extra-curricular activities as the Academic Bowl Team, the Student Government Association, the Junior ROTC Staff, The Future Business Leaders Club, and the Yearbook Committee. An active member of new Pilgrim Baptist Church, she taught Sunday School, sang in the Youth Choir, and was a member of the Praise Dance Team. Her most

When Ashley was 12 her mother lost her long battle with cancer. With both parents gone, Juanita more than filled the role of a mother and a father for Ashley



Ashley and best friend Christopher at Ramsay High School graduation



Ashley's god sisters & friends on a trip they took with the Youth Network at her church to the Georgia Aquarium and the Coca Cola Factory. (inside the World of Coke.) L-R: Alexis, LaQuita, Ashley, Markea, and Marilyn.

important after-school involvement was with SpeakFirst, a city-wide debate team that focuses on academic enrichment and college preparation. The recruitment process for SpeakFirst is quite rigorous. Ashley was nominated by her ninth grade teachers, and participated in a lengthy interview process. Due to her strong academic record and her favorable interviews, she was one of only four students chosen that year in the city of Birmingham. Throughout her sophomore, junior, and senior years in high school, Ashley spent most afternoons at the center diligently practicing Public Forum debate. She travelled all over the Southeast with the debate



Ashley's graduation: Coleman Coliseum at The University of Alabama

## Ashley is enrolled in the Masters Program in Gifted and Talented Education



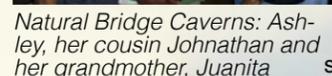
Uncle Jerome's graduation from Wayland Baptist University in San Antonio, (pictured with Ashley, her grandmother, and her cousin Johnathan)



Ashley and her youngest god sister, Alexis, on a trip to Panama City Beach during the summer of 2009.



Ashley with the debate team of SpeakFirst during her sophomore year



The SpeakFirst team, in caps and gowns

Stephen Black, Founder/President of SpeakFirst says: "Ashley is a young woman of incredibly strong character, and one of the most outstanding participants in SpeakFirst's program."

Ashley with 4th graders at Maxwell Elementary School in Tuscaloosa

team, and received numerous awards, including a coveted Degree of Honor from the National Forensic League. Stephen F. Black, who is the Founder and President of SpeakFirst, is lavish in his praise for Ashley. He tells us that he considered Ashley to be one of the most outstanding participants in the program, and also a young woman of incredibly strong character. He has retained a strong mentoring relationship with Ashley throughout her college years.

During her high school years, Ashley's one over-arching goal was to attend college. However, when she and her grandmother considered

her options, it became clear that she would need financial help. With Stephen Black's help, she received a Speak-

First full-tuition scholarship to the University of Alabama. However, she still needed more funding, and was overjoyed when she received a Linly Heflin scholarship. This ensured that her living expenses on campus would be covered. Ashley's undergraduate years at the University of Alabama were happy ones. With her financial needs taken care of, she was able to focus on, and excel in, her studies. She selected elementary education as a major, for she had always loved school and working with young children. She particularly enjoyed the time she spent fulfilling her practice teaching requirements at various elementary schools in Tuscaloosa.

Throughout her high school years, Ashley dedicated over 400 hours to practicing Public Forum debate at the center.

Ashley has decided to make teaching her career. When she told her grandmother her plans, Juanita pointed out to her that teaching was not known as a high-paying occupation. Ashley's reply was that "money was not the most important thing to her". She loves teaching, and feels

she can make a real contribution to the world through pursuing this as her life's work. She says her favorite moments in teaching occur when a child she is trying to help finally understands a concept, and "gets it"! For Ashley, such magical moments make teaching worth any time and effort that is involved. Stephen Black, Ashley's friend and mentor, thoroughly approves of Ashley's decision. Noting Ashley's love for children, he observes that "Ashley is truly a young woman with a mission: to make a difference in the lives of those around her". As a teacher, Black feels that Ashley will make a huge difference for good in the lives of all of her future students.

In order to further prepare for her career, Ashley has decided to pursue graduate work. She is currently enrolled in the Masters Program in Gifted and Talented Education at the University. In addition, she has a part-time job with a local tutoring franchise. Ashley tells us that her ultimate dream for the future is to help found a school for gifted and talented students. Considering her proven ability to overcome heartbreaking trials, and achieve success in spite of difficulties, this goal may well become a reality in the future. The Linly Heflin offers our congratulations to Ashley for her many accomplishments, and we wish her well in all of her future undertakings.

By Katy Terry



Uncle Jerome Williams, Juanita Williams (Ashley's grandmother), and Ashley by the river in San Antonio in June

Ashley's favorite moments in teaching occur when a child she is trying to help finally understands a concept, and "gets it".



# Bonnie R. Strickland, PhD

Psychologist  
Professor  
Writer

Dr. Bonnie Strickland, a widely respected psychologist and Professor Emerita of the University of Massachusetts, tells us that she retired ten years ago. However, after learning of the active life she is currently leading, (in spite of being a two-time cancer survivor), one doubts that Bonnie really understands the meaning of the word "retirement"! She is still heavily involved with the academic world from which she "retired", and regularly teaches psychology courses at the University of Massachusetts. In addition to teaching, she continues to write articles in her chosen field of Psychology. She also participates in The Five College 'Learning in Retirement' Seminars. She

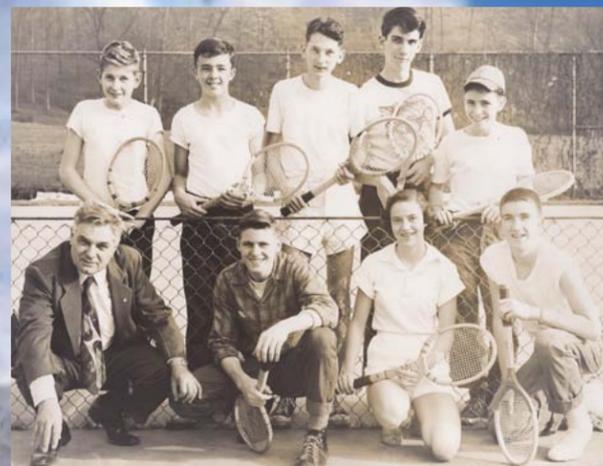


Bonnie (age 4 or 5) with her mother, Billie Whitfield Strickland, and her brother Roy in Birmingham

retains an active membership in a number of prestigious professional associations, and attends their meetings and conventions on a regular basis. Among these are: the American Psychological Association (of which she is a past president), the American Psychological Society, and the Association for Women in Psychology. A resident of Belchertown, Massachusetts, she raises flowers and vegetables at her lovely lake home there. An expert on the tennis court, she plays four or five times each week. Until

recent years, she participated in 10-K runs in various parts of our country, and regularly rode her mountain bike. Each winter still finds her downhill skiing in such places as Colorado or Northern California. Another favorite among Bonnie's "retirement" activities is travel, with Southeast Asia being among her most preferred destinations. At various times, she has visited Burma, North Vietnam, Thailand, Cambodia, Tibet, and China. Several years ago, she undertook an eighteen-day trek in Upper Mustang, an independent kingdom in Nepal. She and her fellow "trekkers" hiked over one hundred and eighty miles in the rugged mountain terrain of the Himalayas, at altitudes of 14,000 feet and higher. The weather was unpredictable...sometimes it was uncomfortably warm, and at other times, they were hiking in slippery snow and ice. The "plush" accommodations consisted of tents set up on the ground each night by their Sherpa guides. Needless to say, there were no roads, no electricity or running water, and bathroom facilities were both minimal and primitive. The food prepared by their guides was less than gourmet, and often consisted of such ingredients as Spam and rice. In spite of such hardships, Bonnie claims that this was one of her favorite experiences! Being in the midst of such magnificent mountain scenery more than made up for any discomforts. Although the majority of Bonnie's life has been spent in New England, she grew up in Birmingham. Her father worked for the L&N Railroad, and her mother's income was derived from jobs as a waitress. Bonnie's parents were divorced when she was quite young, and she and her younger brother, Roy, were raised primarily by their mother, who established a home in the Avondale area. It was a happy situation for the two children, for their house was located directly across from Avondale Park. They enjoyed having easy access to the library, playgrounds, tennis courts, and other attractions. Having the library nearby was important in nourishing Bonnie's love of reading. The tennis courts were another particular attraction. A friendly neighbor gave Bonnie rudimentary lessons, and she was soon spending many hours perfecting her tennis skills on the court. She and her brother attended Avondale Elementary School, and later, Woodlawn High School. Having developed an early love for books and learning, Bonnie became a top student at Woodlawn High School. A natural athlete, she excelled in such sports as softball, basketball, and tennis. She achieved special recognition for her tennis skills, and was highly ranked in the girls-under-sixteen bracket nationwide. She was even made a member of the boys' tennis team at Woodlawn. During her high school years, Bonnie competed in many tournaments, and proudly remembers winning the Alabama State Doubles Championship in 1953. Another happy memory is being named "Woman Athlete of the Year" by her high school.

During her high school years, Bonnie developed an ever-growing longing to go to college. Although no one in her family had ever progressed beyond high school, her parents were not opposed to her ambitions. However, the family's finances were stretched to the limit, and Bonnie knew that she would somehow have to make it on her own. Just when it seemed that college would be impossible for her, Bonnie's high school physical education



Bonnie made the Woodlawn High School Boy's Tennis Team

This is a picture taken just before her Presidential Address at the American Psychological Association Convention in Atlanta in 1988.



Bonnie Strickland, Dean of Women at Emory. At age 27 she was the youngest college dean in the country.



Dean Strickland participating in a sorority soapbox derby at Emory



Bonnie giving a Presidential Address to the American Association of Applied and Preventive Psychology

teacher came to her rescue. She told her of Alabama College for Women, one of the state's less expensive schools of higher learning that she had attended, and loved.

## Bonnie R. Strickland is Professor Emerita at UMass Amherst, having taught for 45 years.

and ambitious drive, she made top grades in all of her courses. In addition to holding down a half-time job in the dining room, she was able to participate in intramural sports, and was once again named the "Woman Athlete of the Year". Most importantly, Bonnie was inspired by a psychology teacher to make that subject her life work. Following her graduation with a B.S. in 1958, she was accepted into a graduate program in Psychology at Ohio State University. Once again, Bonnie's hard work and determination paid off, and she earned an M.A. degree in Psychology in 1960, followed by a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology in 1962.

Bonnie's next move was to Atlanta, where she took a post as Assistant Professor of Psychology at Emory University. She remained at Emory for eleven years, during three of which she served as the Dean of Women for the University. When she first received the appointment as Dean, she was only 27 years old, and was the youngest college dean in the country at the time. In 1973, she received an appointment as Professor of Psychology at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Massachusetts. In addition to her teaching duties, she served several years as Chair of the Department of Psychology. In 1983-84 she served as Associate to the Chancellor. Bonnie remained at the University until her retirement ten years ago. During her long and distinguished career, she has received national recognition as a teacher, clinician, consultant, researcher, and administrator. She has published well over a hundred scientific and scholarly works, including two Citation Classics in psychology. Her book, "Women in Depression", is one of the most popular in its field, and some of her research is among the most heavily cited in the world. Through the years, Bonnie has received numerous awards and honors. These include: the Raymond D. Fowler Award and The Distinguished Contributions to Psychology in the Public Interest Award (both given by the American Psychological Association), the Chancellor's Medal for Distinguished Service, the International Academy of Behavioral Medicine, Counseling, and Psychotherapy Award, and the Alumna of the Year Award, given by her alma mater, the University of Montevallo (formerly known as Alabama College).

In the midst of her retirement years, (Bonnie claims that she "flunked" retirement), she finds her life to be incredibly rich and fulfilling. She tells us that none of this could have happened without the help of the Linly Heflin scholarship. In her words: "My life's career path began at Alabama College, and wouldn't have occurred except through your generosity." In turn, our heartfelt congratulations go to Bonnie for all of her past accomplishments, and for the continuing inspiration she is to all of her students and associates.

By Katy Terry

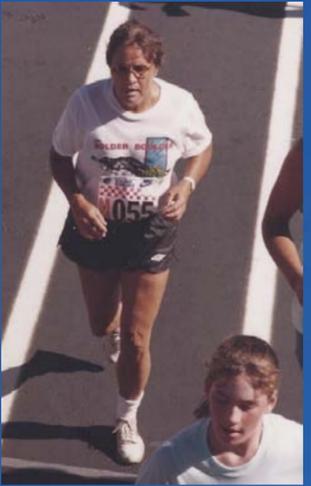
Bonnie has testified before the United States Congress and is proud to have been actively involved in the major social movements of our time

At the same time, Bonnie learned of the Linly Heflin scholarship program. With encouragement from her teachers, Bonnie applied for, and won a scholarship. Bonnie tells us that this was a life-changing event in her life. In her own words:

"I wanted desperately to go to college, the first in my family to do so, but there was no way I could afford it.

Then I received the Linly Heflin Scholarship, which made it possible for me to attend Alabama College. The scholarship paid half of my tuition and room and board (of \$536.00). With part-time jobs on campus, I was able to graduate with highest honors. The scholarship changed my life, and enabled me to embark on a rewarding career as an academic and professional psychologist, something that would never have happened otherwise. I am grateful beyond words."

Following her graduation from Woodlawn, Bonnie entered Alabama College as a Health, Physical Education, and Recreation major in the fall of 1954. Here she spent four fruitful and happy years. Due to her studious habits



Running a 10K in the Boulder Boulder Classic, in Colorado in 1989.

In 2005, Bonnie and fellow trekkers hiked 180 miles in the Himalayas of Nepal. Bonnie admits that she "flunked retirement".

She was named "Alumna of the Year" by the University of Montevallo (formerly known as Alabama College)"

Skiing in Colorado



The Linly Heflin scholarship changed my life and enabled me to embark on a rewarding career as an academic and professional psychologist, something that would never have happened otherwise. I am grateful beyond words.

# Kandace Kichler, M.D. Surgeon

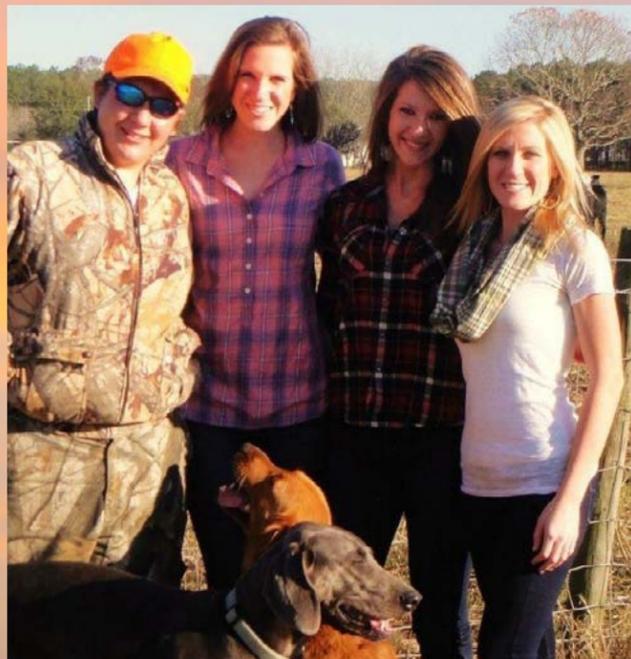
Some people are fortunate enough to recognize at an early age those individuals who have helped them along the way. That gift of gratitude can be a strong motivator in a young person's life. Former Linly Heflin scholar, Kandace Kichler, is one such young woman. She is grateful to those people in her life who have shown her the way and have been markers for her along the road map that she is following for her life.

Kandace grew up on a farm in Elberta, Alabama, a small town in Baldwin County. Elberta was founded by farmers who emigrated from Germany to the midwestern United States before settling in South Alabama. Kandace's father, Ronald, is a third generation farmer whose grandparents came to Elberta in the

**Kandace grew up watching her father work from dawn to dusk every day.**

early 20th century. The Kichler family farms more than 1200 acres, raising cattle, as well as growing cotton, soybeans, sweet potatoes and other produce. Kandace grew up watching her father work from dawn to dusk every day to make a living for his family. Her mom, Laura, worked just as hard raising the children, and, when they were old enough, working as office manager for the town doctor, Dr. Terry Kurtt's. Kandace and her younger sisters and brother were involved from an early age in helping on the farm, and she attributes this experience and the work ethic taught by her parents' example as the reasons for her own strong work ethic today.

**Kandace attributes working on the farm as a child and her parents' example as the reasons for her own strong work ethic.**



**Kandace with her siblings on the farm L-R: Kody, Kyleigh, Kandace, Kayla with the family dogs Remi and Gracie**

in the National Honor Society and the Key Club, played the flute and the piccolo in the Foley High School band, and was even named Miss Baldwin County Agriculture in 2005!

When it was time to think about college – a necessary step toward her dream of becoming a doctor – Kandace knew she would need to find scholarships to cover the cost of tuition and expenses. With her excellent grades and impressive resume, she was more than qualified; now it was up to her to do the research, complete the many applications and interview for the scholarship awards. True to her upbringing, Kandace did the work and won several scholarships, enough to go to Auburn University, which she chose for its small town feel (like home!) and for the opportunity to fulfill a pre-med curriculum through Auburn's College



**Kandace in the operating room performing a ventral hernia repair with her co-resident Dr. Alberto Zarak**



**Laura Kichler (mom), Kyleigh (sister), Aubie, Kandace, and Kayla (sister)**

## Kandace's passion is minimally invasive surgery



**Left to right: Ronald (father), Kayla (sister), Kandace, Laura (mother), Kyleigh (sister), and Kody (brother)**

a wife and a mother of 6 children. She served as a strong mentor for Kandace, and more importantly as a model of a successful female surgeon and mother, showing Kandace that it is possible for a woman to be a surgeon and still have a family.

Currently, Kandace is in her second year of residency at the University of Miami-Miller School of Medicine, in Palm Beach, Florida. She is still a small town girl at heart, so she is happy to be in the smaller community of Palm Beach – though South Florida is quite a different culture from South Alabama! She doesn't know where she'll be for the next step of her journey, but she is focused on her goal of becoming a successful surgeon and she hopes one day to have a family of her own. Her passion is minimally invasive surgery – such as laser, laparoscopic, and robotic techniques, and she has also developed a strong interest in bariatric surgery as a treatment for the disease of obesity.

Kandace is grateful for the influence and inspiration she has received from her parents and from Dr. Terry Kurtt's and Dr. Donna Dyess as she pursues her dream of being a doctor. She is also grateful for organizations like the Linly Heflin Unit that believed in her and provided scholarships enabling her to attend college. Without her Linly Heflin scholarship, Kandace might not have achieved that first step, and she says the Linly Heflin scholarship means the world to her. It is exciting to see the ripple effect that a Linly Heflin scholarship can have in a family; as the oldest of her parents' children, Kandace has led the way, and her siblings are following in her footsteps. Kayla, age 24, is studying to become a radiation therapist, and Kyleigh, age 22, is graduating in Accounting as a CPA. The girls' younger brother, Kody, is working hard at Foley High School and helping their dad on the farm. We congratulate Kandace Kichler on her success and wish her all the best in her pursuit of her dreams.

By Shirley Elliott



**Kandace with Starr Houghton, a pageant contestant from the Miss Palm Beach County pageant, which she helped hostess/volunteer.**

**It is exciting to see the ripple effect that a Linly Heflin scholarship can have in a family.**

of Animal Science. After Auburn, the next stop along the way was medical school, and once again, Kandace's work ethic served her well at the University of South Alabama. She realized that she wanted to be a surgeon between her first and second years when she worked as a summer research fellow with Mobile surgeon, Donna L. Dyess, MD. Kandace describes Dr. Dyess as an amazing surgeon, who also happens to be



**Kandace at her hospital, JFK**



**Medical school graduation at the University of South Alabama College of Medicine (from L to R: Ronald Kichler, Laura Kichler, Kandace Kichler, Kayla Kichler, Kyleigh Kichler, and Kody Kichler)**



**University of Miami Palm Beach Regional Campus General Surgery Residency L- R: Chetan Patel, MD, Danon Garrido, MD, Kandace Kichler, MD, Lucy de la Cruz, MD, Alberto Zarak, MD, Vanitha Vasudevan, MD, Chadwick Rastatter, MD, and Alvaro Castillo, MD**

# Dr. Linda Lucas, PhD Provost, The University of Alabama at Birmingham

The first in her family to attend college, Linda has earned six degrees: two Bachelor's, three Master's, & one PhD.



When Dr. Linda Lucas was appointed Provost of UAB last year, a good friend called to congratulate her on her new position. After telling her how proud he was of her success, he asked her this question: "By the way, what is a provost?" Linda laughingly tells us that it is a question that she often hears. A provost, she says, may have differing responsibilities at various institutions. At UAB, she compares her position to that of a COO (Chief Operating Officer) of a large corporation, while the university's president could be considered the CEO. As provost, she is directly responsible for all academic programs and student affairs. She has regularly scheduled meetings with the deans of the various schools, and reports directly to the university's president, Dr. Ray Watts. In a nutshell, it is her responsibility to solve problems, develop new programs, and generally keep things running smoothly at the university. Needless to say, Linda's job keeps her extremely busy, so we felt very fortunate that she granted us an hour-long interview.

Linda was born in Waltham, Massachusetts, and but for a tragic accident, would probably never have lived in Birmingham. However, when she was two years old, her father lost his life while serving with the military in Tunisia. Finding herself alone, and without family support, her mother decided to bring her young daughter to Birmingham, and to make her home with her mother and an unmarried sister, who lived in Fairview. It was a happy situation for Linda. As an only child (she calls herself a "limited edition"), she was the center of attention for the three adults in the family. She says it was like growing up with three loving mothers. Unusually bright as a child, Linda always excelled in school. As a teen-ager, she attended Ensley High School, consistently maintaining a straight "A" average. Her favorite subjects were science and math, although she also did well in English and history courses. Most of her extra-curricular activities were centered in Fairview Methodist Church, which had an outstanding youth program. She also became an accomplished pianist through the years of lessons she took at Birmingham Southern College. During her high school years, Linda developed a growing ambition to attend college. This was something no one else in her family had ever done. Both her mother and her father were high school graduates, but neither her grandmother nor her aunt had progressed this far in school. Nevertheless, all three of her "mothers" agreed that Linda should, indeed, have a chance at a higher education. The only hitch was the family's financial situation. Linda's mother had a secretarial job at Alabama Power, yet her income barely covered the everyday needs of the family. Linda discovered that as the daughter of a former member of the U.S. Army, she was entitled to help from the G.I. Bill. There was still a shortfall in her needs, but at the suggestion of her high school counselor, Linda applied for, and won, a Linly Heflin scholarship. Linda tells us that being awarded the Linly Heflin scholarship was not only essential to her financial needs, but was also a wonderful help to her self-esteem. It was a great morale-booster to realize that the scholarship committee valued her as a person, and believed that she



Linda and Richard on their wedding day

*The Linly Heflin Scholarship meant a great deal to me because not only did it mean financial support for college, but also because your organization's strong belief in me motivated me to succeed. Your scholarship opened so many doors for me, and I shall be forever grateful.*

Linda Lucas

## Dr. Lucas served as Dean of the UAB School of Engineering for 11 years

## Dr. Lucas has led UAB's International Outreach Efforts in India, Turkey, and Egypt

had the potential to achieve educational success.

After graduating from Ensley High School, she entered the University of Alabama in the fall of 1967. Here, her intellectual skills and enthusiastic work ethic practically guaranteed success in everything she undertook. Four years later, Linda's family was thrilled to see her receive a Bachelor of Science degree. Little did they realize at the time, but this was merely the first in an impressive suc-

## In 2012, the Engineering Council of Birmingham named her "Engineer of the Year"

cession of degrees and honors that were to come Linda's way. Following her graduation, Linda spent the next few years working as a laboratory assistant at UAB, while at the same time taking courses toward a Master of Arts Degree. This she achieved in 1974. Two years of teaching followed, one at Ensley High School, and one at Mtn. Brook Jr. High School, where she served as math and biology instructor. In quick succession, she earned three more degrees at UAB: Master of Science (1977), a Bachelor of Science in Engineering (1979), and a Master of Science in Materials Engineering (1980). In 1982, she was awarded a Doctoral Fellowship in Dental Biomaterials in Oslo, Norway. The culmination of all her research and studies came in 1983, when UAB awarded her a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Biomedical Engineering.

Linda joined the UAB faculty in 1982 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering. She was named chair of the department in 1995. In 2001, she was named Dean of the UAB School of Engineering, a post she held for eleven years. In 2012 she was appointed to her present position: Provost of UAB. Linda has conducted extensive research throughout her career, focusing on the development of biomaterials for orthopaedic and dental implants. As a widely respected scientist, her work has appeared in hundreds of publications and has been presented at countless scientific meetings all over the world. She was an inaugural member of the Council of the National Institute of Biomedical Imaging and Bioengineering, and has served as president of three international organizations: the American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering, the Biomedical Engineering Society, and the Society for Biomaterials. The awards that she has garnered along the way are far too numerous to include here. Two of the more recent ones are the Distinguished Alumni Award for UAB (2009), and Engineer of the Year Award, given by the Engineering Council of Birmingham in 2012.

Throughout her career, Linda has travelled widely, attending countless scientific conferences and seminars all over the world. In recent years, she has become involved in exchange programs with universities in such places as Egypt, Turkey, and India, and has spent time in each country. She says it has been rewarding being able to exchange ideas with students and professors from differing backgrounds and cultures.

In addition to her scientific, educational and administrative career at UAB, Linda has somehow found time to be involved in a number of community service organizations. These include the Exchange Club, the Women's Network, Leadership Birmingham, and the Women's Shelter, for which she was an overnight volunteer. In addition, she has been deeply involved with First United Methodist Church. She taught the first grade Sunday School class for many years, and was a



Dr. Lucas in Egypt

member of the Board of Trustees. Some years ago, her church membership led to a particularly happy event, when Linda was introduced to her future husband, Richard Stanford, in a Singles Sunday School class there. The couple's long and happy marriage has produced a son, John Philip Stanford, who is currently a Senior at UAB.

Since our founding in the 1920's, the Linly Heflin has contributed to the college educations of over 3,000 Alabama women. It is with great joy that we recognize Dr. Linda Lucas as one of our most outstanding former scholarship recipients. We will continue to watch with pride as her amazing career continues to unfold in future years.

By Katy Terry

*As a senior scientist in the Center for BioMatrix Engineering and Regenerative Medicine, Dr. Lucas' research has focused on the development of biomaterials for orthopedic and dental implants*



Linda with her son John Phillip Stanford



Dr. Lucas in Alexandria, Egypt

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*The Blue Mosque in Turkey (It is considered one of the most beautiful buildings in the world) Dr. Lucas visited Istanbul, Turkey in the spring of 2013.*



Richard Stanford (husband), John Phillip Stanford (son) and Linda Lucas at Disneyworld



Dr. Barry Andrews, Dr. Uday Vaidya, Dr. Selvam Pillay and Dr. Linda Lucas at UAB Material Science Laboratory



Linda Lucas with Egyptian students taking an engineering class at the University of Alexandria, in Egypt

# Congratulations to our 32 New Linly Heflin Scholarship Recipients for 2013

Each spring the Scholarship Committee interviews and selects the new recipients. The criteria used include high G.P.A.s, ACT and SAT

scores, extracurricular activities, proof of need for financial help, and the over-all impression the candidates make during the interviews.



Rania Awwad



Megan Bedwell



Josie Bruno



Amy Chandler



Brittany Lassiter



Popi Ledbetter



Rose LeGault



Megan Liveoak



Megan Chestnut



Kiley Ethridge



Qyonna Grady



MacKayla Harris



Christa Long



Hollie Lusk



Rebecca Meyer



Courtney Noel



Courtney Haynes



Brittany Hall



Autumn Helton



Bethany Herndon



Katie Oliver



Hemali Patel



Samantha Richardson



Morgan Short



Sydnee Holliday



Sadi Hulgán



Kirsten Johnson



Ally Lappe



Samantha Sloan



Norma-Jean Theriot



Tiara Thomas



Tiffany Thomas

# Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show 2013 featuring Nha Khanh

Welcome to the 55th annual Linly Heflin Luncheon and Fashion Show. We appreciate your attendance and continued support of our mission. "Educate a woman and you educate a family. For over 90 years The Linly Heflin Unit has been delivering on that promise. During that time more than 3000 four-year scholarships have been awarded to deserving women, totaling over \$5 million dollars. While we are a small group of volunteers, we share with our founders the drive and desire to make a difference by using our resources and time to help provide the opportunity of a college education to Alabama women. Every member has a job and does her part to see that our mission is fulfilled. Without your support, both individual and community, we could not make these dreams come true for the scholarship recipients. Thank you for your support.

*Grace Bentley*  
Grace Bentley  
President of the Linly Heflin Unit



## amazing facts:

100% of your donation goes straight into funding scholarships. Your donation will not be used for administration or overhead. Linly Heflin has an administrative account, funded solely by membership dues, that pays all administrative expenses. Furthermore, volunteers do all of our labor. Over 3,000 scholarships, totalling over 5 million dollars, have been awarded. This year Linly Heflin has 94 scholarship recipients at 14 different Alabama schools.

Check out our website:  
[www.linlyheflin.org](http://www.linlyheflin.org)  
Learn more about the Linly Heflin scholarship, print reply cards for the Scholarship Fashion Show and Luncheon and much more!  
Our thanks to Midge Miller

Newsletter editor: Katy Terry  
Graphic artist and co-editor: Anne Hicks  
Writer and Assistant Editor: Shirley Elliott

## Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show 2013 Preview

At the September 5th Linly Heflin meeting, Gus Mayer presented a sneak preview of some of the fashions from the 55th Scholarship Luncheon.



(L-R): Sumner Starling, Nichole Cummins, Elizabeth Hubbard and Herman Heinle



Modeling for Gus Mayer are (L-R) Murray Priester, Happy Anthony, Cheryl Upchurch, Alison Gorrie, Margaret Little and Holly Goodbody

## Linly Heflin Trust Fund named scholarships

Each year Linly Heflin receives a number of named scholarships. These are established by a gift of \$15,000 to the Linly Heflin Scholarship Trust Fund. Some donors choose to give a lump sum, and others spread out their giving over a number of years. The Linly Heflin is extremely grateful for the generosity of all of our donors. Here are the named scholarships established during the past year:

- Elizabeth Nesbit Simpson Scholarship
- Betty Ferguson Brice Scholarship
- Vivian Sherrill Hutto and Jane Sherrill Wade Scholarship



Penney Hartline  
Corporate Funding



Laura Colebeck  
Marketing



The 54th Annual Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show was held on September 28th, 2012. Co-chairs Fran Goodrich and Libba Williams and their committee members worked with Gus Mayer to please the audience with another memorable show. Gus Mayer featured some beautiful, wearable examples of Fall fashions from their store at the Summit and Los Angeles based designer, Lourdes Chavez presented her Winter 2012 Collection at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel Ballroom.

Lourdes was born a designer but is equally a talented pattern maker and sewer. Lourdes hand sketches each item with her clients' comfort and appearance in mind. She has a clear focus on future trends while keeping her styling and taste current but ultimately classic and timeless. Her tailoring, patterns and fit are intricate and elaborate works of art.

"I think of clothes as an investment," Chavez said. "I create classic designs so that you can go through your closet five years from now and it will still be in fashion." She designs dresses, suits and cocktail dresses and specializes in mother-of-the-bridal and special-occasion dresses. "I work with my clients to create something just for them."

The show, which also showcased lovely fall fashions from Gus Mayer, was produced by Megan LaRussa and narrated by Amie Beth Shaver, Miss Alabama 1994.

## Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show 2012

## Linly Heflin Officers 2013-2014

- |                         |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| President               | Grace Bentley     |
| First Vice President    | Kate Stockham     |
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| Recording Secretary     | Bette Owen        |
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| Scholarship Co-Chair    | Happy Anthony     |
| Scholarship Trust Fund  | Deane Cook        |

Photos by Anne Hicks

photos by Anne Hicks

# 55th Annual Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon

We wish to thank

Gus Mayer, Nha Khanh,  
and the many individuals who contributed generously, and especially...  
our 2013 Corporate Sponsors

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University of Alabama in Birmingham Administration

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Photo by Gina Boyd

Megan LaRussa, Nichole Cummins, Herman Heinle, Sumner Starling and Elizabeth Hubbard

Dallas-based designer Nha Khanh will present her Fall/Winter 2013 Collection at the 55th Annual Linly Heflin Scholarship Luncheon and Fashion Show at the Sheraton Birmingham Hotel Ballroom on Wednesday, September 25, 2013. Co-chairs Elizabeth Hubbard and Sumner Starling and their hard-working committee members are coordinating with Gus Mayer to present an exciting show. Gus Mayer is offering a 10% discount to all luncheon attendees and will donate 10% of all sales to the Linly Heflin Unit.

Nha Khanh's designs focus on modern glamour, inspired by art, architecture

and most importantly, nature. The designs are ethereal; meticulously constructed, and host an ease about them that allows for an effortless sensibility. The company offers seasonal "advanced contemporary" ready-to-wear; a custom Atelier collection, which hosts one of a kind and custom pieces, and a bridal line.

The Nha Khanh mission is to empower a woman with inner-strength through her clothing with a focus on "elegance with a modern edge".



Designer Khan Nguyen

"Nha", in Vietnamese, is a feminine word implying "light", whereas "Khanh" is a masculine word, meaning celebration. The fusion of the words creates a balance of union between what is feminine and what is masculine. The collection joins "lightness" and "softness" of silhouette and fabrication, with the celebration of construction and classic bodies. This is the fundamental philosophy and creative driving force behind the Nha Khanh Label.

Khanh Nguyen, the Creative Director and Designer of the Nha Khanh collection, has been surrounded by fashion and art throughout her life. Born to Vietnamese, artisan parents, and raised in Dallas, Texas, Khanh has always been exposed to what is beautiful and refined. At the age of five, she began to mimic what she saw around her by sketching and designing garments in her personal journal, and constructing dresses for her doll. Fashion always came easily to her, and has always been her passion.

Khanh's natural talent for Arts has shined throughout her scholastic years. She attended the University of North Texas and obtained a Bachelor degree in Fine Arts in Fashion Design. During her education, Khanh received many awards, but her most notable recognition was the "Top Achievement Award at the Dallas Career Day Design Competition", allowing her the opportunity to embark on an internship in Paris, France. She was trained intensively with the world's leading fashion house and practiced the haute couture sewing techniques of Nina Ricci, draping methods of Madame Gres, millinery skills of Jean Paul Gaultier, and emulated the techniques of handbag and accessories design by Anne Valerie Hash. After being surrounded by many creative talents and learning through hands-on experiences, Khanh strives to push the envelope with her innovative and creative designs.

Upon her return to Dallas, Khanh immediately set her sights on making her childhood dream a reality— and started her own fashion firm, Nha Khanh. The company was officially established in January 2010. Design and production of the line are all based in Dallas, Texas, while the sales, marketing and public relations of the collection are based in New York City. The company takes pride in exceptionally well-made garments, which are manufactured exclusively in the United States. Linly Heflin wishes to express our deep appreciation to Jeff Pizitz and the Gus Mayer staff for once again making it all possible.

