



# SIGNs

*Significant & Important Good News*

**February 2026**

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# CHBS Mission Statement

“To improve the lives of the people we serve.”



## Ollie the Collie

When walking through the halls of the Doyne Health Sciences Center, you might spot a familiar four-legged celebrity. Known across campus as Ollie the Collie, this eight-year-old Rough Collie is much more than a friendly face.

Since 2017, Ollie has served as a therapy dog for UCA's Exercise and Sport Science students, UCA athletes, and the broader campus community. From classrooms and the library to athletic sidelines, Ollie helps students, faculty, and staff pause, de-stress, and smile. A calming presence and beloved companion, Ollie proves that sometimes the best support comes with a wagging tail.



# Dean Nancy Berryman Reese

## A Message from the Dean: Celebrating Our Shared Impact

Dear Alumni and Friends,

The mission of CHBS is clear: **to improve the lives of the people we serve**. As I look at the recent achievements of our faculty, staff, and students, I am filled with awe and pride knowing that the legacy of **excellence** you helped build continues to flourish.

This past season has been a testament to what we can achieve when we lead with our values.

Our faculty and students have reached new heights, driven by a spirit of **collaboration** that transcends the classroom. From pioneering community health initiatives, to innovative research partnerships, to partnering in simulation experiences and educational study abroad opportunities, our teams are proving that we are stronger together.

We remain steadfast in our **accountability** to our community, ensuring that our work creates tangible, positive change. An example is our partnership with the Conway Ministry Center, where our students and faculty provide healthcare services on a weekly basis to individuals without healthcare access. By treating every individual with **respect** and dignity, our students are graduating not just as skilled professionals, but as caring, empathetic leaders.

You, our alumni, are the living proof of our college mission in action. Your successes inspire our current students to strive for the same high standards. Thank you for being a vital part of our enduring story of impact.

Warmly,

Nancy Berryman Reese, Dean, CHBS



# Morgan Drayton

Director of Development, CHBS

CHBS is gearing up for a big spring of impact and celebration. **Day of Giving 2026 is March 12, 2026**, and we're building on strong momentum—last year, UCA raised over **\$1.5M from 2,518 donors**, with CHBS contributing **\$12,844 from 154 donors**. **On March 12, we're aiming to surpass last year's CHBS total of \$12,844 and 154 donors—because every gift, at any level, helps strengthen student success and hands-on learning.**

We're also excited for **Laurels and Stripes on March 7, 2026**, UCA's largest annual event, honoring two Distinguished Alumni: **Col. Addie M. Morris (Drake), USA (Ret.)**, and **Dr. Jeff Standridge**. During Laurels and Stripes, CHBS will **highlight and celebrate the scholarships we've received—and the generous donors who make them possible**, including **\$20,000 from Andrew Hiegel** to the **Hiegel Nutrition & Family Sciences Fund** and **\$25,000 from Dr. Susan Gatto** to establish the **Susan L. Gatto Scholarship Fund**. These investments support CHBS students through scholarships and the hands-on learning experiences that prepare them to serve our communities. Laurels and Stripes is the biggest night of the year as we recognize alumni, celebrate scholarships, honor our donors, and truly bring down the house.

Many supporters also choose to create lasting impact through legacy giving, ensuring future CHBS students have access to the same opportunities for success. If you'd like to explore long-term giving options, I'd be happy to visit with you.

If you're interested in learning more about how you can get involved with the college—whether by sharing your time and expertise or by supporting faculty development and student scholarships—please don't hesitate to reach out. I look forward to connecting with you.

Morgan Drayton, MBA

Senior Director of Development, CHBS

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## CHBS Advisory Board Highlight



**Trey Hankins**

Those who know me well know that I have a lot of purple and gray in my closet. While I haven't been a fan my whole life, I have been a loyal one since I first arrived on campus in 1999. Professionally, I am the Director of Customer and Digital Experience & Design at Arkansas Blue Cross & Blue Shield, where I have worked since June 2006. I was excited to join the CHBS Advisory Board to represent a different side of the healthcare system and to offer creative ideas on how to promote the university, the college, and specifically the Community Care Clinic.

Although I did not graduate from the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, being on the advisory board has allowed me to see exactly what the college is doing for students and the community. A great example of this is the Interprofessional Therapeutic Activity Program (I-TAP). After learning about the program through the board, I discovered we actually had a blog post about it on the Arkansas Blue Cross website. Shortly after, I found myself discussing it with a coworker whose wife is participating in the program. It is rewarding to see those connections between UCA and the community come full circle, and I am proud to represent the university in this role.



## **Collaboration in Action: Learning Together, Serving Together**

Through a strong partnership between UCA's Community Care Clinic, programs in the College of Health and Behavioral Sciences, and the Conway Ministry Center (CMC), students and healthcare providers are working together to bring care directly into the community. This collaboration allows services to reach individuals experiencing food insecurity or homelessness, meeting people where they are and reducing barriers to care.

At regularly scheduled outreach events on the CMC campus, students from nursing, physical therapy, health promotion, and Spanish interpreter programs work alongside licensed providers to deliver health and wellness screenings. These experiences offer meaningful, hands-on learning while highlighting the real-world impact of social determinants of health. When health concerns are identified, clients can be seen on-site by a Nurse Practitioner or Counselor, supporting timely follow-up and continuity of care.





## Collaboration in Action: Learning Together, Serving Together

The impact is felt by both the community and students. As students have shared:

“This experience positively affected my feelings toward individuals who are unsheltered or have limited housing... It taught me that every individual has a story, and caring for them despite their past is very important.” “This experience helped me break the stigma I had formed ... and makes me want to serve this population more.” “This experience was extremely eye-opening. I was able to be in their shoes and experience what they go through. It has changed my perspective on unsheltered clients.” Experiences like this prepare students to become compassionate, team-based professionals while strengthening community well-being.

By learning in partnership and serving with purpose, this collaboration is shaping future health professionals while building healthier, more connected communities.





## A Magical Day: UCA Communication Sciences and Disorders Sensory-Friendly Santa Event

In December, the UCA Communication Sciences and Disorders department hosted a sensory friendly Santa event, designed to create an inclusive holiday experience for every child.

Thanks to the hard work of volunteers (undergraduates from the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association and willing graduate students), the event was a huge success. Dr. Brent Gregg (one of Santa's best helpers!) helped make the day truly special. We were moved by the multiple families who told us this was the first successful Santa experience their children had ever had—and it was a wonderful one!

Beyond a comfortable, one-on-one visit with Santa, children enjoyed creative activities, including: making ornaments and magic reindeer food, playing festive games like Snowman Bowling and Pin-the-Nose on Rudolph, and relaxing in a Christmas storybook corner.





## **Occupational Therapy in Tanzania**

Occupational Therapy students recently completed a study abroad trip in Tanzania, a country rich with history and cultural diversity. The program moved beyond theoretical study, facilitating direct engagement with the community.

The students worked with centers that supported children experiencing conditions like autism, Down Syndrome, and ADHD. Collaborating closely with local staff and professionals, they focused on evaluating the skills necessary for these children to function effectively at home and at school. A crucial element of the program involved understanding the children within their unique environmental and family contexts. The students successfully provided clinical frameworks that families and teachers could utilize to promote and develop these essential skills for effective functioning at home and school.

The transformative core of the experience was the students service-learning contribution at the Step by Step Learning Center (SSLC). SSLC is a non-profit organization providing inclusive special education, and students participated in the Center's income-generating projects. This engagement supported SSLC's mission to foster the physical, intellectual, and social development of each child. To complement their academic and service-learning focus, the students spent time exploring Tanzanian culture and landscapes.





# Achievements

## Communication Sciences and Disorders

Congratulations to Dr. Sunjung Kim Thao, PhD, CCC-SLP, on being selected to participate in the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's (ASHA) 2026 Article Peer-Reviewer Training (APT) Program!

Congratulations to Dr. Brent Gregg, PhD, CCC-SLP, on being invited to serve on the Stuttering and Cluttering Committee for the 2026 American Speech-Language-Hearing Convention.

### Psychology and Counseling

Congratulations to Psychology program alum Dr. Cory Cobb (PhD) for being honored as a 2025 Rising Star by the Association for Psychological Science.



Congratulations to Dr. Christina Christie on successfully passing the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP).  
Way to go!

## Physical Therapy

Congratulations to Dr. Anne Mollers, DPT, for scoring an 800 (max score) on the national physical therapy licensure exam in August 2025.

Congratulations to Dr. Misty Booth, PT, DPT, on receiving the credential of Clinical Instructor (CI) Level 2 Trainer by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).

Congratulations to the Pediatric Residency program on the approval for reaccreditation by the American Board of Physical Therapy Residency & Fellowship Education (ABPTRFE.)

## School of Nursing



Congratulations to Dr. Pam Ashcraft, PhD, RN, PHCNS-BC, on being elected to serve as the Treasurer/Secretary for the Southern Nursing Research Society (SNRS).



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## Achievements

Congratulations to the School of Nursing on being granted Accreditation in the area of Teaching/Education by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare.

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Congratulations to Heather Vines, MSN, RN, CNE, on passing the National League for Nursing's Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) examination.

### Nutrition and Family Sciences

Congratulations to Kathryn Carroll, PhD, CFCS, CPFPE, and Lisa McCoy, MS, CFS, for earning their national credential through the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) in Human Development and Family Sciences (HDFS).

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## Awards

### Psychology and Counseling

Congratulations to the Psychology Department on winning the Small Group Food Drive award for most items donated to the Homecoming Food Drive benefitting the Bear Essentials Food Pantry!

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Congratulations to Dr. Femina Varghese on being awarded Fellowship Status by the Society of Counseling Psychology (SCP).

Congratulations to UCA School Psychology EdS program graduate, Krystal Lovell, on receiving the Service and Commitment to ASPA award from the Arkansas School Psychology Association.

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Congratulations to UCA School Psychology EdS first year student Mealnie Griffiths on receiving the Rookie of the Year award from the Arkansas School Psychology Association.



## Physical Therapy

Congratulations to Dr. Brian Odom, PT, PhD, CWS, on being elected as the incoming president for APTA Arkansas.



Congratulations to Dr. Anne Moellers, UCA DPT graduate, for being recognized as PT Student of the Year for Arkansas based on her clinical abilities.

Congratulations to Dr. Jiabey Thach, UCA DPT graduate, on being recognized as PT of the Year for Arkansas.

## Grants

### Nutrition and Family Sciences

Congratulations to Kathryn Carroll, PhD, CFCS, CPFPE, Pouria Azar, PhD, Meredith Mannix, MS, RD, LD, and DNT graduate students on receiving a UCA Foundation Faculty Grant of \$5,000 for their project “Culinary Programming to Support Healthy Eating Among Transitional Housing Residents.”

Congratulations to Khandra Faulker, MS, RDN, for receiving funding to support a Service- Learning project that collaborates with the Bear Essentials Food Pantry. This funding also supports her Food Science courses.

Congratulations to Meredith Mannix, MS, RD, LD, on receiving a Faculty Development Grant from CETAL.

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### Psychology and Counseling

Dr. Christina Christie was awarded \$500 in funding from the Faculty Development Grant through CETAL.

Congratulations to Dr. Aaron McLaughlin, PhD, on receiving a Faculty Development Grant of \$500 from CETAL.



Congratulations to Melanie Griffiths, first year School Psychology EdS student, on receiving a \$2,000 scholarship from the Arkansas School Psychology Association.



## Presentations

### Communication Sciences & Disorders

Congratulations to Communication Sciences and Disorders students Taylor Reece, Emma Pasierb, Blaire Bryan, and Anniston Ross on their presentation entitled “The need for clinical experience in managing tracheostomy and speaking valve patients for graduate students” at the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association in Searcy.

Congratulations to Communication Sciences and Disorders students Camille Bankston, Wendy Victoriano, Randi Scarbrough, and Dr. Sunjung Kim Thao, PhD, CCC-SLP, on their presentation entitled “Partnering for Change: Strengthening Student Advocacy and Family Partnerships in SLP Training” at the annual conference of the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association in Searcy.

Congratulations to Communication Sciences and Disorders student Emma Corbitt, Dr. Brent Gregg, PhD, CCC-SLP, and Dr. Lauren Rogers, EdS, MS, CCC-SLP, in their presentation entitled “School-Aged Children: Knowledge and Attitudes of School-Based Speech Language Pathologists” at the annual conference of the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association in Searcy.

Congratulations to Communication Sciences and Disorders student Brynn Oleson, Harlie Wolf, Lydia Oxford, College of Education professors Amber Brantley and DeeDee Cain, and Dr. Lauren Rogers, EdS, MS, CCC-SLP, and Dr. Sunjung Kim Thao, PhD, CCC-SLP, on their presentation entitled “Interprofessional Practice in Action: Collaborative Literacy Support by SLPs and Educators” at the annual conference of the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association in Searcy.

Congratulations to Communication Sciences and Disorders students Emma Pasierb and Abigail Bone, and Dr. Sunjung Kim Thao, PhD, CCC-SLP, on their presentation entitled “Exploring the Reciprocal Benefits of Active Learning: How Service-Learning Enhances Cultural Competence in SLP Undergraduate Students and Literacy Skills in Young Children” at the annual conference of the Arkansas Speech-Language-Hearing Association in Searcy.



## Presentations

### Psychology and Counseling

Congratulations to Psychology students and professors Jon Rowe, Kat DeJesus, Dr. Christina Jeffrey, and Dr. Aaron McLaughlin, PhD, for presenting research at the American Psychological Association conference in Summer 2025. Their presentation was titled “The Impact of Socioeconomic Status on Academic Resilience, Locus of Control, and Belongingness.”

### College of Health & Behavioral Sciences

Congratulations to departmental academic advisor Hannah Hanshaw on the presentation of her scholarly paper “The Person vs. The Prediction: Ethical Considerations in the Use of Predictive Analytics” at the National Annual Advising Conference (NACADA) in Las Vegas.

## Publications

### Occupational Therapy

Congratulations to Dr. Lorrie Paschal, PhD, OTR/L, ATP, CBIS, on coauthoring a publication and presentation entitled “Theory-driven design, theory-integrated learning: A multimodal approach to teaching Occupational Adaptation” in the Journal of Occupational Therapy Education.

### School of Nursing

Congratulations to Dr. Kerry Jordan, PhD, RN, CNS, CNL-BC, on being featured in the UAMS Age Wise Podcast for August on the topic of “The Importance of Respite Care and Available Resources.”

Congratulations to Annette Gartman, MSN, RN, on publishing her first manuscript entitled “Beyond Decline: Holistic Nursing Approaches to Multidimensional Frailty in Older Adults” in Holistic Nursing Practice.



## Psychology & Counseling

Join me in congratulating Mental Health Counseling program graduate Greta Hacker, along with Dr. Christina Jeffrey and Dr. Anna Park, on the publication of their manuscript “Does He Like Me? Feminine Norms, Dating Anxiety, and the Mediating Role of Personal Empowerment in Young Adult Women Who Date Men” in the journal *Women & Therapy*.

Congratulations to Dr. Seungyeon Lee, along with international collaborators across six countries, on co-authoring a new article entitled “Collaborative Registered Replication of Griskevicius et al. (2010): Can Pro-environmental Behavior Be Promoted by Priming Status Motivation?” in *Collabra*.

Congratulations, Dr. Elena Savina, a graduate of our School Psychology doctoral program, on being the lead author on the recently published book "Empowered to Flourish: A Curriculum Promoting Well-being and Resilience in Adolescent Girls".

Congratulations to Psychology Professors Kristina Ray, Christine Jeffrey, Kathryn Armstrong, and Lawrence Watkins for the publication of "Black American College Student Perspectives on Disproportionate Police Contact: A Qualitative Analysis" in *The Counseling Psychologist*.

Congratulations to Dr. Aaron McLaughlin, PhD, on his publication on existential humility entitled “Tradeoffs of humility in the face of existential concerns” in the *Journal of Research in Personality*.

Congratulations to Dr. Seungyeon Lee, Dr. James Wages, and Dr. Yeseul Nam on the publication of their peer-reviewed journal article entitled “Perceptions of student learning effectiveness: Exploring active vs. passive learning” in the *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*.





## Publications

Congratulations to Dr. Aaron McLaughlin and colleagues on their publication entitled “Cultural Opportunities involving spiritual, existential, religious, or theological (SERT) themes: Three practical approaches” in *Psychotherapy*.

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Congratulations to Dr. David Mosher and student Will Brock on the publication of their article entitled “Religion, spirituality, and well-being in sexual minorities: The moderating role of sense of belonging” in the *Journal of Psychology and Theology*.

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Congratulations to Melissa Eubanks and colleagues on the publication of their article entitled “Religious leaders’ exposure to suffering, personal spiritual doubts, and well-being” “An empirical study applying the relational spirituality model” in the *Pastoral Psychology Journal*.

### Interprofessional Education

Congratulations to Dr. Sunjung Kim Thao, PhD, CCC-SLP, Dr. Leslie Graybeal, PhD, Dr. Yeseul Nam, and student Bridgette Hearn on their publication entitled “Beyond the Classroom: Evaluating the Impact of Community-Based Practice on Speech-Language Pathology Undergraduate Students through the Lens of Fink’s Taxonomy” in the *Journal of Experiential Education*.

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Congratulations to Sean Engle, MS, Dr. Steve Tucker, PhD, ATC, Dr. James Fletcher, PT, PhD, AT-Ret, and Dr. David Taylor, PT, PhD, on their recent publication entitled “Effects of Open Versus Closed Kinetic Chain Shoulder Resistance Exercise Training on Torque and Power: A Randomised Controlled Trial” in the *International Journal of Therapy and Rehabilitation*.

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### Physical Therapy

Congratulations to Dr. Brian Odom, PT, PhD, CWS, Dr. Leah Lowe, PT, PhD, PCS, and Dr. Charlotte Yates, PT, PhD, PCS, in a recent publication entitled “Pediatric Wound Dressings Overview and Considerations for Management” in the *American Journal of Pediatrics*.



## CHBS Shout Out!



### Meet the CHBS Staff Leadership Team!

The CHBS Staff Leadership Team is a newly formed team created to strengthen connections across the college and amplify the vital role of staff. As the heart of each office and department, this team is dedicated to supporting one another, sharing ideas, and collaborating on new professional development opportunities. By working together, the Staff Leadership Team helps strengthen individual departments while building a more connected, informed, and supportive CHBS community.



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# **SIGNs** *Significant & Important Good News*

Communication Sciences & Disorders

Exercise & Sport Science

Health Sciences

Military Science and Leadership

Nutrition & Family Sciences

Occupational Therapy

Physical Therapy

Psychology & Counseling

School of Nursing