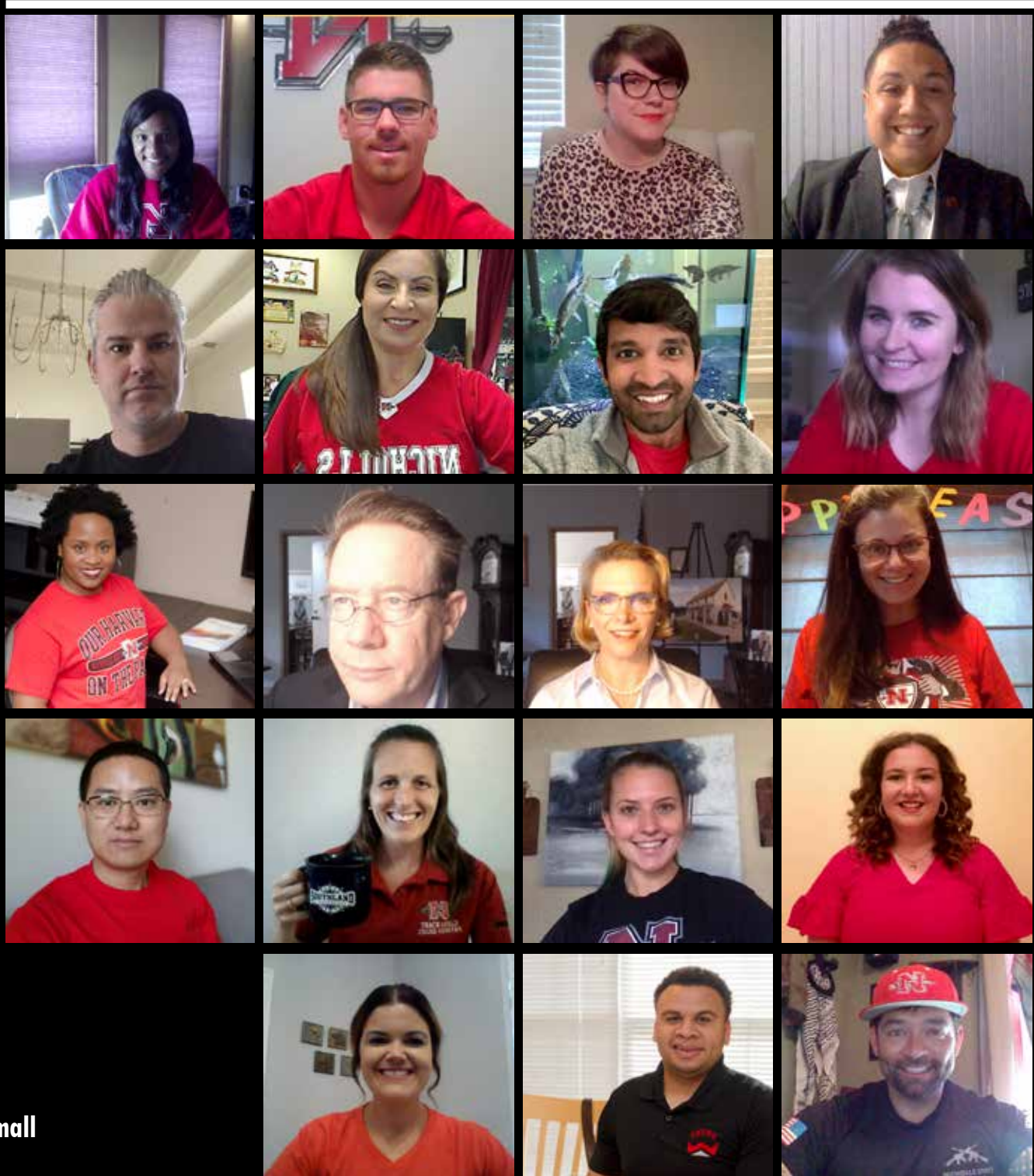


THE COLONNEL

the magazine of NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY



SUMMER 2020

SBDC Works to Help Small
Businesses Survive
Page 8

Relive a Memorable Year on Campus
Page 20

Nicholls Nursing Alums Put Their
Patients Before Themselves
Page 34



The Big Picture



CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!
Welcome to the alumni family!

NICHOLLS
STATE UNIVERSITY
CLARENCE JAMES JR.
ALUMNI HOUSE

Wish you were here.

Nicholls Alumni Federation compiled commemorative commencement yard signs to celebrate the accomplishments of our Spring 2020 graduates.

FEATURES



20

A Campus to Remember

From the first day of class to another home playoff victory, relive some of our favorite moments over the past year, as captured through the lens of campus photographer Misty Leigh McElroy.

A Promise Kept

They miss their students. They miss their classrooms. They miss their labs. They miss their routines. The Nicholls faculty have had to adjust their curriculum on the fly as their concerns shift from exams and papers to health and wellbeing.



26



30

A Different Point of View

Author, photographer and Nicholls Alum Bill Guion captured the empty Nicholls State University campus through an infrared lense.



34

1 THE BIG PICTURE

5 A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

6 COLONEL PRIDE

- 6 Ask the Experts
- 8 Staying Afloat
- 9 Being There, From Afar
- 10 Rolling with the Punches
- 11 Keeping Campus Clean
- 12 Finding the Answers
- 14 Nicholls COVID-19 Timeline



11

DEPARTMENTS



10

16 REDZONE

- 16 Opportunity Lost
- 18 A Different Kind of Gametime

34 ALUMNI HOUSE

- 34 The Frontlines
- 37 Changing Roles

38 CAMPUS CORNERSTONE

- 38 A Call to Action
- 39 Not Slowing Down

40 A COLONEL OF TRUTH

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We Are #NichollsStrong

I was pulling out of our driveway when the news broke of the first case of COVID-19 in Louisiana. At that time, my biggest concern was whether the headlining act for Crawfish Day would play the radio version of songs (rather than the explicit version). Allison and I were on our way to Katy, Texas, to cheer on our men and women's basketball teams in the Southland Conference Championships. We stopped at Steamboat Bill's Seafood Restaurant in Lake Charles and talked about what might happen.

We made it as far as the Ikea in Houston before we had to stop. I spent five hours in the Ikea parking lot on calls about the immediate future of our campus.

Before I went to bed, the NBA suspended its season. By the time we woke up, the Southland Conference had canceled the tournament. Eventually, all spring sports would be canceled.

I tell you this story to showcase how fast this situation is evolving and changing.

The stories in this issue aren't going to focus on the latest news from this campus. Instead, they are going to showcase the lengths to which our people have gone to support our students, employees and each other.

In this issue, you will read about how our students have risen to the challenge as leaders and communicators. You'll hear from our coaches and student athletes who are frustrated at their lost seasons but focused on being ready for next year. Our faculty will talk about how they're adjusting their classes and working with their students through the pandemic. And you can get a glimpse of what it's like being on the frontlines as our nursing alumni describe what they are seeing in local hospitals.

This is a very different campus than we are used to seeing. It is devoid of students. But our mission remains the same. And even though the circumstances have changed, we are fully committed to educating and graduating our students.

We haven't settled with just getting by. We are using this time to get better, and we will emerge from this crisis stronger than ever.

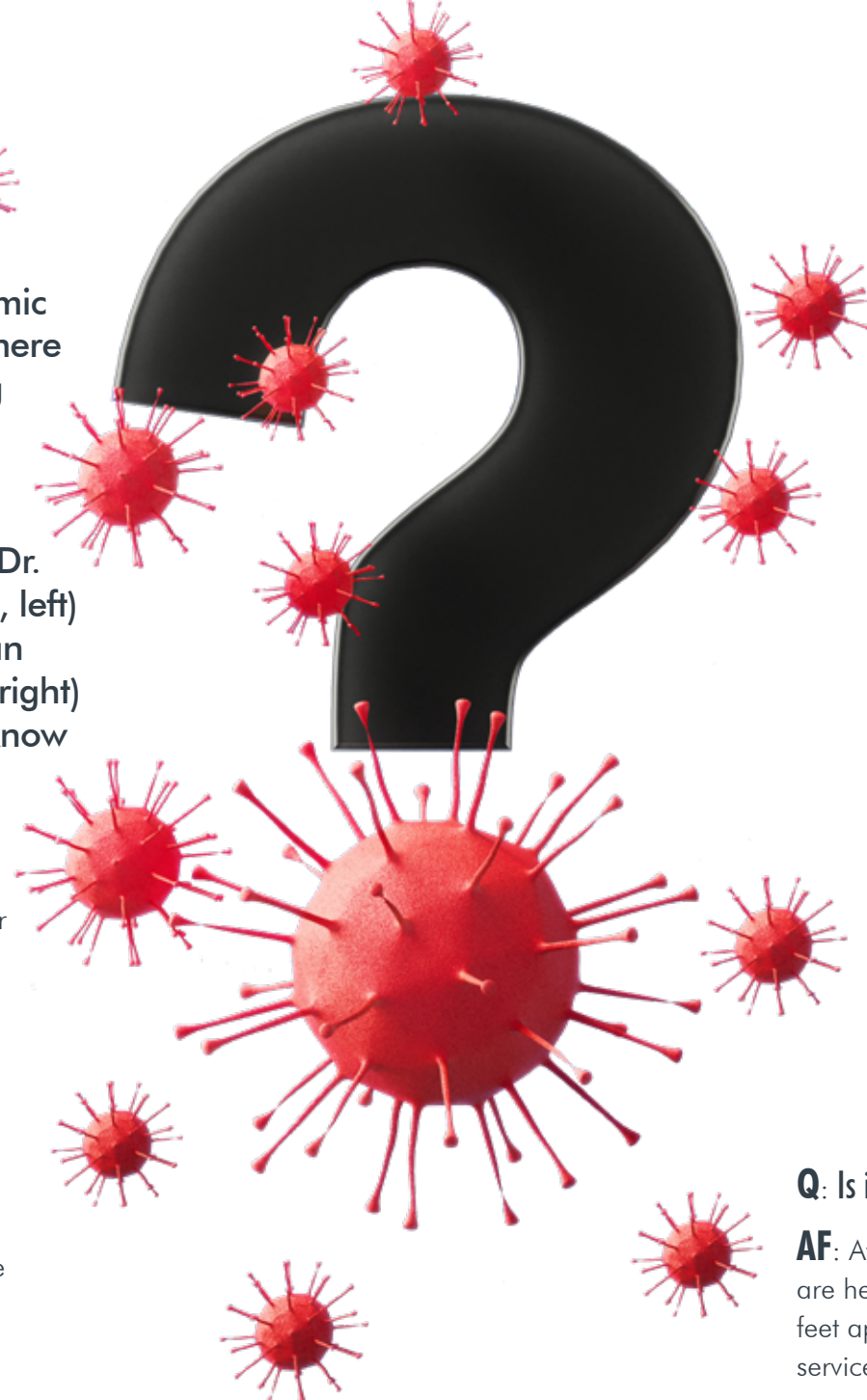
Geaux Colonels,

Dr. Jay Clune

ASK THE EXPERTS



We know the pandemic is complicated and there is a lot of developing information in the media to digest. We turned to science education professor Dr. Aimee Hollander (AH, left) and campus physician Dr. Anna Falcon (AF, right) to explain what we know so far.



Q: Why is this scarier than the flu? Is it scarier than the flu?

AF: Both can spread from person to person when an infected person is coughing, sneezing or talking. This is because both viruses travel through the air. One difference is the transmission through the airborne route since COVID-19 is found to stay in the air for several hours. There are several other differences between the two, which reinforce why COVID-19 must be taken so seriously. First, the incubation period for influenza is 1-4 days compared to 2-14 days for COVID-19. This results in many people infected and asymptomatic potentially exposing others for a longer time. Another difference lies in the hospitalization and mortality rates. With influenza, those numbers are 1-2 percent and 0.1-0.2 percent, respectively. With COVID-19, they are 10-20 percent and 1.5 percent in the United States. Also, there is no definitive treatment, nor is there a vaccine for COVID-19 at present. However, there are some medications that show promise treating coronavirus symptoms, and a lot of work is being done to make a vaccine.

Q: What can we do to protect ourselves?

AF: Since there is no vaccine at present to prevent coronavirus disease, the CDC recommends avoiding exposure to this virus. This requires taking steps to protect yourself from getting sick and protecting others. The best ways to protect yourself include cleaning your hands often and avoiding close contact with others. The CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water because it significantly reduces the amounts of all types of germs and chemical. An alcohol-based sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol can also be effective. Another way to protect yourself is to proactive social distancing by staying at least 6 feet apart from others. This is also necessary to "flatten the curve" or to slow the rate of the virus' spread. We all need to do our part to slow the spread of this virus. This will help our hospitals handle the numbers of people needing treatment, hospital beds, medications and ventilators.

Q: What can we do to protect our families?

AF: You can also take steps to protect others by cleaning and disinfecting surfaces daily; wearing facemasks if you are sick; cover all coughs and sneezes; and self-isolating if you are sick after seeking medical care.

Q: What is herd immunity?

AH: When most of a population is immune to an infectious disease, this provides indirect protection to those who are not immune to the disease. This is called herd immunity or herd protection. For example, if 80 percent of a population is immune to a virus, four out of every five people who encounter someone with the disease won't get sick (and won't spread the disease). This is how the spread of infectious diseases is kept under control. Vaccinations create herd immunity hence how we eradicated diseases like polio.

Q: Why is "let's all get exposed and get over it" not a good idea?

AH: If we abruptly end social distancing, we could overwhelm our healthcare system, which is already extremely busy with COVID-19 infected patient. People are still having babies, still need to have surgery and are still getting sick with other diseases that need hospitals capable of taking care of these patients. Additionally, we see that people who seem healthy with no other diseases are getting severely ill and even dying. These social distancing guidelines are to keep as many people safe and well as possible. In the next year, we should have a vaccine for this disease. If enough people get vaccinated it should create herd immunity against the disease.

Q: Is it safe to exercise outside as long as we maintain our distance?

AF: Avoiding close contact and "social distancing" does not mean to stay indoors at all times if you are healthy. It is okay to go for a walk, hike or bike ride with someone else as long as you keep 6 feet apart. This is also a time to take advantage of the modern advances of technology by utilizing services such as online meetings which can help you "virtually" gather with your best friends.

Q: It seems cases are leveling off; can I go out without a facemask?

AH: Currently, the CDC recommends you still wear a facemask when going to the store or other public places. These face masks are to protect you from spreading the virus. Scientists now recognize that those who have recovered from the disease or are asymptomatic carriers could still be shedding the virus.

Q: What do you think of Nicholls' response?

AF: You can always be grateful for being a member of the Nicholls State University family. Our university has done and continues to do a great job of looking out for the health and success of its students at this stressful time.

STAYING AFLOAT

Louisiana small businesses have a lot of questions as they struggle to survive the COVID-19 pandemic. And Jimmy Nguyen and the Louisiana Small Business Development Center at Nicholls State University are helping with the answers.



The SBDC is playing a crucial role in keeping local business afloat during the pandemic. Nguyen, assistant director and senior business consultant, says he works with clients every day to identify solutions to survive this societal shut down.

In some cases, it's pivoting operations, such as the distillery that is now making hand sanitizer or the restaurants that have become caterers. Other times it's about identifying available funding and grants, such as the Facebook Small Business Grant, the Verizon Small Business Recovery Fund or the Terrebonne Economic Development Authority Bayou Business Recovery grant. Nguyen is searching for those opportunities and alerting his clients.

"There are a multitude of programs available," Nguyen says. "It's about finding those that work for my clients and letting them know."

The pandemic has dealt a blow to the economy and that will be tough to overcome for a lot of small businesses.

There will be fewer customers and even fewer opportunities. The businesses that will survive this crisis, Nguyen says, are the ones willing to work hard, evolve and prepare for the future.

"This is going to make a lot of businesses better because they're going to have to be at the top of their game," he says. "A lot of them were hardly staying afloat, they weren't trying to be competitive. They will go away. But the ones who will make it, they are spending their time honing their craft. They are giving their best effort and will come out a better business."

As the world slowed around him, Nguyen began reaching out to his clients and assuring them they were in this together.

"The first thing that came to my mind is what can I do to help," he says. "I know that we're in this together and that we're going to come out of it stronger."

As state and local governments began placing restrictions on businesses, many of Nguyen's clients were feeling overwhelmed. But he says he has started to sense a change in their mindset.

"They're feeling optimistic," he says. "They are seeing the programs available that can help keep them afloat and they feel like they will recover and that it's going to get better."

Nguyen is encouraging his businesses to use this time to prepare for the future. They can participate in the daily webinars published at LSBDC.org. He is working with many of his clients on developing a resiliency plan.

"We want to be prepared for the next time something like this happens, that



"We want to be prepared for the next time something like this happens, that our businesses can act quickly."

our businesses can act quickly," he says.

Nicholls and the Small Business Development Center are working closely to help the local economy recover. A new business incubator sponsored by the Office of Community Development will foster local entrepreneurial spirit. A pitch competition held by Nicholls, the SBDC and Chevron will encourage innovation. And a relief fund developed by the SBDC and the College of Business Administration will support sustainability.

"We're prepared to help the community and we have the resources to pick people up," Nguyen says. — Jacob Batte

Being There, From Afar

Classes are essential to Nicholls' mission, but student services are a critical component to the Nicholls experience. They aid in education, research, mental health, physical health and much more.

"We needed to maintain some sense of normalcy," says Adrienne Naquin-Bolton, director of the Counseling Center. "We needed to provide students some reassurance that the people they rely on will still be there for them, even if the mode of delivery is different."

During COVID-19, services that could move online did.

The Academic Services Center contains many important resources to students and prospective students. Advisors and tutors are working with freshmen through email and Zoom. Transfer transcripts are still being reviewed. The Academic Testing Center is operating through a third party service. Dual enrollment students are meeting online.

"Some students are a lot more talkative about what they want in advising over the phone than they are in the offices," said David Zerangue, director of the Academic Services Center.

A big challenge is providing quality tutoring. And it is one that is of particular importance to many students.

"You may never even need it, but I think knowing it is there provides a comfort," Zerangue says. "And we all need that in this time as we try to stay healthy and safe." The Counseling Center has remained in contact with clients virtually and even taken on new clients.

"Some students have existing mental health issues, and this is just exasperating it flipping their way of living upside down," Naquin-Bolton says. "Some older issues might also resurface stronger. Many will also be impacted by the isolation, so it is important to be someone they can reach out to."

Staying on top of your mental health is

also crucial during quarantine as physical and mental health are interconnected.

"For example if your anxiety is keeping you up at night, you will not get a proper night's sleep and that causes a lot of physical issues," Bolton says. "If your mental health isn't taken care of, you are putting your body in a compromised state."

The Ellender Memorial Library offers a lot more than physical books. Services include research consultations to students and faculty, digital books and databases.

Library Director Elizabeth Batte and her staff are working to make what they can do online, better. For example, they created tutorials to help students use them.

"You may never even need it, but I think knowing it is there provides a comfort. And we all need that in this time as we try to stay healthy and safe."

David Zerangue

"Our chat usage has very much increased," Batte says. "It is funny that we are getting chats about all kinds of things, some are not even library centric. But we are happy to provide help and be an instant connection to students as they transition to online courses."

Students also often share textbooks. To help with this, Batte says they have been working to provide digital copies of textbooks where available. Some are more difficult to provide, though, and she encourages professors to be mindful of how available your textbook is going forward.

All three directors believe this experience will make the university stronger, and could even add to the options that Nicholls provides students going forward. — Cain Madden



Adrienne Naquin-Bolton



David Zerangue



Elizabeth Batte



ROLLING WITH THE PUNCHES



KEEPING CAMPUS SAFE

Emma Bourgeois was practicing for Songfest when news broke that the NBA suspended its season after two of its players tested positive for COVID-19. She didn't know it at the time, but that would be her last event on campus.

"I'm still coming to terms with the fact that I had my last class ever at Nicholls, that I won't even be able to experience my last Crawfish Day," says the senior health sciences major from Thibodaux. "I didn't savor my last events because I didn't know they were my last ones. That has been so hard."

Since that afternoon, the reality of the Nicholls State University campus has changed. All classes and labs are online. Employees are working from home. As Student Government Association President, Bourgeois was involved in most of those discussions.

"[My role] is changing every day, and more people are reaching out to me than before," Bourgeois says. "Students are really more interested in this than other things the SGA has done in the past and everyone is expecting answers. We're doing the best we can to help spread the

message of what we hear from the administration and the University of Louisiana System."

The SGA uses Zoom to hold committee meetings and for their full senate meeting. Each meeting is open to the public.

"Whatever gets thrown your way, you just have to roll with the punches," says Tyler Legnon, SGA vice president

A senior health sciences major from Gibson, Legnon manages the SGA Senate. But since the shift to a virtual campus, he's taken on a larger role as a communicator. Now, he searches social media, looking for ways to answer questions.

"We are a liaison between the students and the administration. We are taking questions and relaying that information to them," he says. "I spend more time on Twitter and Facebook, monitoring what questions our community is putting out in the atmosphere so I can try to pass on that information or correct any misconceptions."

Legnon says he can sense anxiety from his peers, especially his international friends. They don't know if they'll be able to return in the Fall.

"I think they're in a state of shock," he says. "Things are changing day-by-day and we don't know where they are going to end up. We're rolling with the punches and letting them know that the university is trying their best to make decisions that benefit our students in the best way."

Students and leaders are still processing that we are even in this situation.

"I'm still coming to terms with the fact that I had my last class ever at Nicholls."
Former SGA President
Emma Bourgeois

"It was a heady time," says Arrington Blanchard, president of the Black Student Union. "People are just moving off of campus and then you read about people who are dying. It's tough."

The senior psychology

major from Zachary considers communication one of his strengths. That's imperative as the leader of an influential campus organization. While he is organizing video meetings to determine the BSU's direction, the new reality is making that difficult.

"It's a little harder because we can't meet. My role as a communicator hasn't changed, but it's getting our people together," he says.

Campus leaders also must deal with the transition to online classes. Bourgeois had her study spot on campus and has had to find a new one at home. Legnon and Blanchard are struggling with time management after their routines were upended.

Everyone is maintaining their sanity in their own way. Legnon has been vigilant in communicating with the student body. Bourgeois stays connected with friends and spends time outside. Blanchard is doing a lot of reading, listening to music and checking in with his siblings.

"All of this is going to be alright, as long as we do what we're supposed to do," Blanchard says. "We're going to be okay." — Jacob Batte

While most of our faculty and staff have begun working from home, some have stayed behind. Their job is to keep campus safe and clean. When the students, faculty and staff return to campus, they hope you only notice that facility projects have advanced.

"We're trying to keep the campus going while everyone else is away," says Scott Williams, superintendent of facilities and project management.

Custodians cleaned buildings in the days after most of campus went home. Now, they are wiping down entryways and labs with disinfectant. Custodians are on a rotating schedule with minimal time to high-risk workers to maintain their safety.

"I'm really proud of our group. They're coming to work everyday with a positive attitude, and they're ready to work" Williams says. "We'll continue to do this as long as they allow us to. Hopefully, we'll be able to bring more and more people back to campus."

Maintenance has also remained on campus. Projects include the new Desalvo-Callais Convergence Media Center and Ameen Art Gallery in Talbot Hall. Williams says construction will begin on the Barker Hall Expansion Project soon, too.

"We're trying to limit our focus to

essential projects," Williams says. "We want to work to move the university forward but we also want to be safe, as well."

Police officers also remain on campus to enforce the rules set on campus by the administration.

"The police department acts as a support unit during a pandemic of this kind," Chief Craig Jacuzzo says.

That means focusing on protecting the buildings on campus and other assets. It also means enforcing any gathering rules or curfews put in place.

"We track and maintain who is on campus inside of our facilities and the allotted time they are on campus," Chief Jacuzzo says. "We act as a resource for our campus community on the latest information regarding restrictions set by the campus or state of Louisiana."

Chief Jacuzzo says his group is also prepared to assist with crowd and traffic control should the situation become more dire and the university have to serve another function for the public such as testing or screening.

When the time comes for the rest of campus to return, it will be in part because of the hard work from facilities and UPD. — Jacob Batte



Above, Nicholls State University Police work to keep an eye on campus during the pandemic. Below, custodian Kia Johnson works to kill germs on a door in College of Sciences



KNSU-TV Station Manager Brandon Thomas works with MACO Professor Lance Arnold to record a message to the community from Lafourche Parish Sheriff Craig Webre. Next page left, KNSU-Radio Station Manager Dylan McElroy cuts a message from President Jay Clune for the airwaves. Right, Thomas makes sure his station is clean as he works on putting together a video.

FINDING THE ANSWERS

With his sister and brother at home in Luling, it was tough for Brandon Thomas to convince his parents that he should remain at Nicholls.

Once classes moved online, he could come home. Yet, he is the station manager of KNSU-TV. Though he was not required to stay, he wanted to keep fellow student informed.

“In a situation like this, it is important to make sure people have accurate information from their news about campus and the community,” Thomas says. “Today, it is all about what do I see on social media for how people get information. So we have to ensure that KNSU is putting out the right info, timely and accurate.”

“Today, it is all about what do I see on social media for how people get information. So we have to ensure that KNSU is putting out the right info, timely and accurate.”

Brandon Thomas, KNSU-TV Station Manager

Together with the Nicholls Worth and KNSU-radio FM 91.5, student journalists are reporting on not only the latest university updates, but on ways to cope with this new reality.

They have interviewed Nicholls President Dr. Jay Clune, Lafourche Sheriff Craig Webre, Thibodaux Police Chief Bryan



“Tragedies show us how much larger the world is than a single individual, and how impactful our actions can be together if we put ourselves in the shoes of someone less fortunate and act on that, rather than acting for ourselves.”

Collin Brazan, Nicholls Worth Editor

Zeringue, as well as healthcare experts and various campus services personnel. Stories have also leaned into campus news, such as SPA and SGA meetings. But they also tackled angles such as birthday celebrations during a pandemic, unemployment among Nicholls students and how the release of Animal Crossing: New Horizons might help you cope. And when the pandemic is over, Brazan says they will be here for exploring what returning to normalcy might mean for students.

“Our job is to help students understand every aspect of the crisis, and find answers to their questions so that they can be better informed, protected and hopefully find some sense of comfort,” says Collin Brazan, Nicholls Worth editor.

Reporters for the Nicholls Worth are working from home to conduct interviews. Brazan says keeping the Nicholls Worth updated, along with his school work, was at the top of his priority list.

“Most importantly, it teaches us empathy,” he says. “Tragedies show us how much larger the world is than a single individual, and how impactful our actions can be together if we put ourselves in the shoes of someone less fortunate and act on that, rather than acting for ourselves.”

Radio Station Manager Dylan McElroy understands how this pandemic can affect people more than most. His lost his job as a

DJ when the bars closed on March 16.

He says these experiences help him empathize with other students going through this and other issues. It helps him recognize the importance of his role in student media.

“I think it is important that we get the facts out,” McElroy says. “We are out of toilet paper and bottled water at the stores, and that’s because people are treating this like a category five storm. They are misinformed, and we have to do what we can to change that.”

McElroy says the station is livestreaming their updates and music on live365.com for listeners who can’t pick up the station’s broadcast.

The experience has been surreal, says Thomas. Earlier this semester, he recalls being quizzed on this virus developing in China and now it is in our backyard and changing our way of life.


“I had a general idea about how to cover a hurricane in the fall semester,” he says. “But in the spring? I never expected something like this, Especially not to this magnitude.”

One silver lining is this situation has made him grow. Thomas says if a hurricane were to hit in the fall, he would know how to keep the station running and the student body informed. —Cain Madden



Colonel Pride

JANUARY 21
First reported case of novel coronavirus in the United States.



MARCH 11
First presumptive case of novel coronavirus in Lafourche Parish. Nicholls announces it will test virtual classes on March 16.


MARCH 9
First presumptive case of novel coronavirus in Louisiana.

MARCH 12
Nicholls announces classes will move online for the foreseeable future. Southland Conference suspends all athletic play through March 30, cancels Men's and Women's Conference Basketball Tournament.




MARCH 14
Southland Conference cancels spring sports competitions and championships.

MARCH 15
Nicholls announces it will test employees working from home on March 17.




MARCH 18
Classes officially moved online through the remainder of the Spring semester. Remaining student residents urged to return home. University offers refunds to students who have left their dorms.


MARCH 19
Ellender Memorial Library moves online through the end of the semester.



MARCH 23
Spring Commencement postponed. Virtual Conferal Ceremony planned for May 16.



MAY 1
Dr. Jay Clune announces initial plan to return to campus safely.




FEBRUARY 5
Nicholls prohibits travel to China.



MARCH 13
Remaining events, meetings and extracurricular activities canceled. Drop date for classes extended to April 20.


MARCH 17
Nicholls announces employees will work from home for the foreseeable future.

MARCH 22
Gov. John Bel Edwards issues statewide shelter-in-place order.



MARCH 27
Nicholls student tested positive for COVID-19.

APRIL 2
Nicholls Foundation creates Emergency Fund to help students impacted by the pandemic.



APRIL 3
Nicholls announces new academic guidelines, giving students a chance to retake classes.



NICHOLLS COVID-19 TIMELINE

OPPORTUNITY LOST

The Nicholls Women's Basketball team was on the bus, 30 minutes from the arena in Katy, Texas, when the news broke. The Southland Conference had canceled the men's and women's basketball tournaments.

Senior guard Tykeria Williams says she didn't believe it was real until later.

"It took a minute for it to actually kick in, but once we had our meeting and I saw my fellow seniors crying, I knew that it was really over," she says. "I couldn't believe I played in my last game of collegiate basketball unknowingly."

Just weeks before that, Nicholls making it to Katy at all seemed bleak. The team had started off 6-16. In Southland play, the Colonels had lost their first five games.

"We had a rough rocky start," says Airi Hamilton, a redshirt senior guard. "It was frustrating because the games were close but a lot was not going our way, and we were not finishing well."

At that point in the season, Williams says coach DoBee Plaisance was real with the team about the prospects of making the tournament. They'd have to win their last seven games to have a hope.

"We did just that," Williams says. "There was no way we could go without making it to Katy. We took each game one at a time, and let nothing stop us from not making it."

The Colonels knew they were a better team than their record. Hamilton says it was just a matter of stringing some wins together for their confidence to really kick in. And by the tournament, the team was ready to show the world just how good they were.

"We were the hottest team going into the tournament," Hamilton says. "I felt like we would have shocked a lot of people. We definitely would have been there a while."

But they never got to the courts.

The spread of COVID-19 ended the tournament before it began. And for winter sports, like basketball, that was it. The NCAA ruled that athletes in the spring sports – not winter – would receive another year of eligibility.

"I was heartbroken," Hamilton says. "I had played my last game and didn't even realize it was my last game. This tournament, I was going to go out there and leave everything on the court. That is how it was going to be, but I didn't get the chance."



Both players feel like all collegiate basketball players were robbed.

"Although I would love to come back and play for Nicholls another year and get a chance at the tournament championship, I highly doubt it will happen," Williams says.

Despite feeling like they were stripped of the opportunity to end their basketball careers like they wanted to, the seniors had a good time at Nicholls.

Now, it is time to move on, and Williams says she plans to coach basketball and continue her passion for the game by coaching others.

"My time at Nicholls was amazing,"

Williams says. "I met some great people that I will never forget, and I got the opportunity to make history and win a championship – which is one of my main reasons why I chose Nicholls. So leaving Nicholls, having met a big goal, I feel somewhat accomplished."

Hamilton's next step is to marry her fiancé, Corey Abraham, and then return to school to be an ultrasound tech.

"It was a lot of fun," Hamilton says. "I have been through a lot on and off the court. It was a great journey. I am happy that I chose to come to Cajun Country." -Cain Madden



0 TYKERIA WILLIAMS



5 AIRI HAMILTON

A Different Kind of Game Time

The Nicholls Beach Volleyball team was preparing for a tournament in Houston when they found out their season was over. Many of the girls were looking forward to it for several reasons. One of those reasons was Lockhart's mom would cook for the team before the tournament.

"I was excited to come play in front of my family, and my mom was excited because she loves gatherings like this," says Kylie Lockhart, a sophomore from Houston. "A lot of us wanted to play in the tournament because we know a bunch of the girls playing. A lot of girls from the Houston area sign with Southland schools so we know each other."

But Lockhart knew something was wrong when head volleyball coach Kallie Noble attended the team's workout. Sometimes she would poke her head in to check on the team, but it was rare for her to spend the whole workout there.

"As soon as we got done, she called us over to talk to us. They stopped everything," Lockhart says.

As the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the country, sports were no longer a priority. Men's and women's basketball lost their chance at a Southland Conference Tournament title. Baseball, softball, beach volleyball and the outdoor track-and-field seasons were canceled as players and coaches from all sports were sent home.

Coaches keep in touch through virtual meetings and teammates

stay in touch through group messages. Staffs are using this time to emphasize academics and taking a mental break. The strength and conditioning staff have sent each player an individualized plan that includes bodyweight workouts and conditioning.

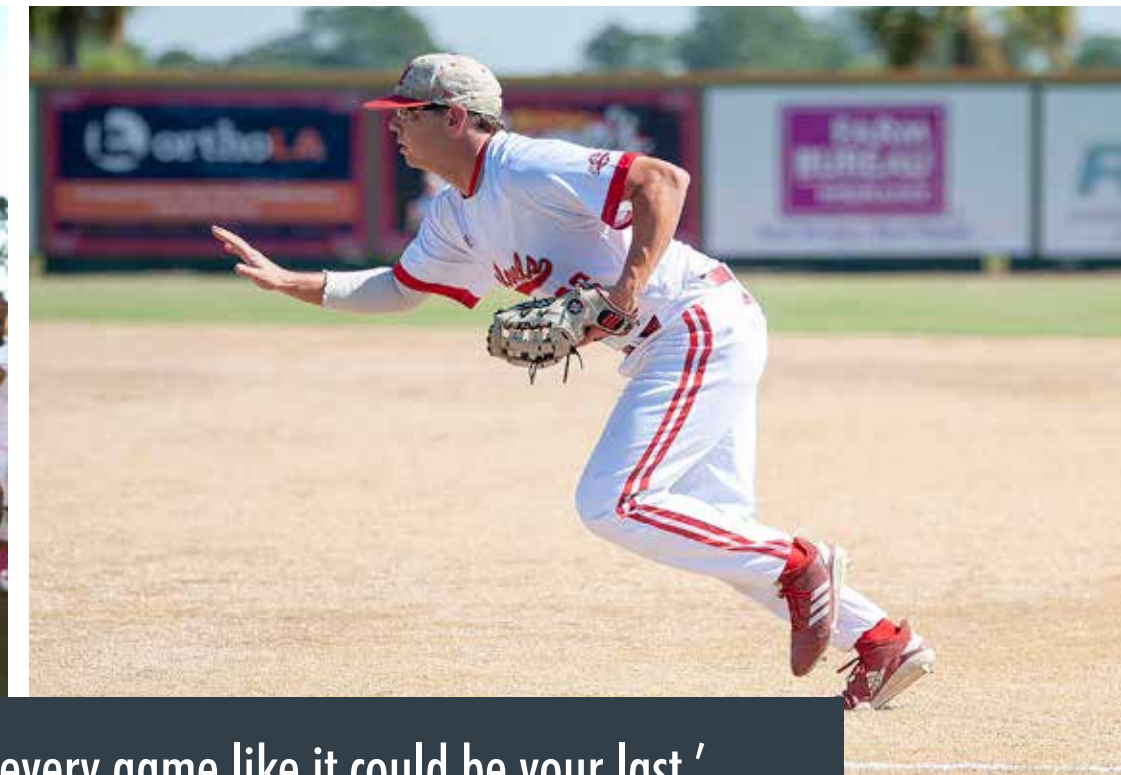
This was supposed to be a crucial spring for the Nicholls Football team looking to replace a historic group of seniors who led the Colonels to two Southland Championships and three playoff appearances. Head Football Coach Tim Rebowe says that isn't important, now.

"First of all, we have to realize how serious this is. Things like football really get put on the back burner," Rebowe says. "We're making sure all of our players are doing the right thing, staying home and keeping away from contact. We'll get back to football. Things will get better. Right now it's about working out, staying in shape and keeping themselves in the best condition."

Instead, the coaching staff is meeting online a couple times a week, and each position coach is checking in on their players. Rebowe says he is emphasizing to his staff that football isn't as important.

"We're not really talking much football. They are going to make sure each of their guys is staying on their academics and staying in shape, but mostly just checking in on how they are doing," he says.

Head Track-and-Field and Cross Country Coach Stephanie



“They say, ‘Play every game like it could be your last.’”



Slekis says her heart is with her players right now. Sophomore Omo Oboh just capped a successful indoor season and was looking forward to improving her time in the outdoor 400 meter hurdles. Last year, she cracked the Top-10 in the Nicholls record books. Another sophomore, Jeremy Rogers, finished ninth in the Southland in javelin as a freshman, and was improving. Neither will get a chance this spring.

"Obviously they understand why they have to do this," Slekis says. "It's the correct decision but it's hard when you have so many plans, and now they have to wait a whole year before they get to do those events."

NCAA rules limit the contact between coaches and players. That adds a layer of stress for coaches with international student-athletes who are back in their home country. Distance runner Augusta Marie Christensen is quarantined in Denmark and Julia Garcia Verges is under lockdown in Spain.

"Through all of this, it's crazy now that we can't meet face-to-face," she says. "We are still going to meet as a team. We still have plans for next year."

The NCAA has added a year of eligibility for spring student-athletes. Baseball player Adam Tarver was in the middle of his senior season when everything came to a halt. Though he continues

to follow the prescribed workout recommendations for the strength and conditioning staff, he hasn't decided if he will return for another season or begin his career as a financial advisor.

"It's odd. I don't really have a sense of closure. But I have put in my time and done everything I could do. It's weird," he says. "They say, 'Play every game like it could be your last.'"

Head Baseball Coach Seth Thibodeaux held team meetings as the threat of the virus grew closer. Tarver says that helped as the world around him became more and more uncertain.

"He did a great job communicating with us and letting us know what was going on," he says. "And since we've been home, he's been great. He lets us know that this is just an obstacle in life. It's how you get through it. He says, 'Bad things don't happen to you, they happen for you.' It's about how you handle adversity."

Rebowe has taken to social media to spread the message of how important it is to stay home and stay safe if they want to watch Nicholls football in the fall.

"I want to tell everyone reading this on behalf of Nicholls Football and our athletes, we have to realize how serious this is," Rebowe says. "For us to get to where we want to be in the fall, it's important to heed the advice that's coming from President Clune. Let's isolate. Let's be smart." — Jacob Batte



◀ This is the face we'll make when we see our students again in the Fall.

The Nicholls experience doesn't just take place in the classroom. It also happens out in the environment. ▶



Past Homecoming King Jae'veric Bradley and Homecoming Queen Ken'nadi Broussard ignite the Homecoming Bonfire in September. ▶



▲ Our students were overjoyed when the new Bollinger Memorial Student Union reopened.

While The Quad is known for its numerous activities, it can also be a perfect spot to study for class. ▶

THIS IS NICHOLLS

Nothing beats campus life at Nicholls State University. From pirogue races in Bayou Lafourche to bonfires for homecoming to playoff games in Guidry Stadium. We can't wait to get back and share a plate of Crawfish with you at Crawfish Day and congratulate our graduates as they walk across the stage at Commencement. But until then, here's a look back at the memories.



◀ Is there anything more relaxing than resting in a hammock outside the Student Union on a sunny day?

Our students are given unique undergraduate research opportunities, such as finding new viruses as part of the SEA-PHAGES Research Program. ▶

Pretty soon we'll be rocking into the night during Alive at 5. ▶



The student section cheered the Colonels on to victory against North Dakota during the first round of the FCS Playoffs. ▼



◀ Commencement brings out the joy in us all.



Top Left: At Nicholls, students can learn from professors, like Dr. Solomon David, who love to get into the thick of their topic.

Top Middle: Students enjoyed hot chocolate and card games during Chi Alpha's In-A-Mug held in August.

Top right: Past Homecoming Queen Ken'nadi Broussard watches the flames of the Homecoming Bonfire in September.

Bottom Left: When we see you again, we'll be all smiles.

Bottom Right: Head Coach Tim Rebowe and the Nicholls Football team celebrate winning the Southland Conference Championship after defeating rival Southeastern in Hammond.

KEEPING A



PROMISE

BY JACOB BATTE

They should be enjoying spring break. They should be thinking about final projects and exams. They should be thinking about commencement and the students they have watched grow over four years. But they're not.

Instead, professors at Nicholls State University are trying to transition their classes online.

THE BEST WE CAN

Many professors are continuing to hold classes at their regular time through group video sessions on Zoom or G-chat. Some have moved the time of the class to work with their students. Others are recording lectures and uploading them to Moodle, YouTube or Vimeo. If they need to have a 1-on-1 conversation with a student, they're using Skype or FaceTime. Discussions are



• Dr. Richmond Eustis

"I'm trying to boil down my classes to the bare essence of what I can convey to my students. I've likened it to trying to play guitar wearing oven mitts," Eustis says. "I can see my students are rattled and, frankly, I am, too."

That's because campus has become virtual in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"Whatever teachers have been able to do, it's been a difficult scramble," says Dr. Richmond Eustis, associate professor of English and Spanish. "I'm in awe of what some of my colleagues have been able to pull off. It's super impressive and above and beyond what anyone would expect."

Eustis describes his new reality as, "triage mode."

"I'm trying to boil down my classes to the bare essence of what I can convey to my students. I've likened it to trying to play guitar wearing oven mitts," Eustis says. "I can see my students are rattled and, frankly, I am, too."

using message boards and group messages.

Routine has been important for Dr. Alyson Theriot, associate professor and department head of teacher education. Her only face-to-face course met three times a week at 7:30 a.m. for two hours. Even though her students are no longer on campus, they still meet at the same time. She uses the breakout room feature on Zoom to replace the partner work her students do in class.

"The biggest difference is that instead of delivering my lectures from the classroom, I'm doing them from my kitchen," she says. "Other than me being able to physically reach out and touch someone, I'm doing the same thing that I would have done before COVID-19."

But that online environment can't replace the classroom experience. Things get lost in translation, even if the resources available allow the professors to get

the essential lessons across.

"It's the interaction," says Dr. Solomon David, assistant professor of biology. "It's the acknowledgment you get when they are learning or the groan they make when I tell a dad joke. That's the stuff I feed off of as a teacher."

Dr. David has had to figure out how he can replace the field experience component of his classes. In a normal semester he



• Dr. Solomon David



would take his students out on boats in the bayou to study local fisheries. He is trying to replicate that experience by sharing images and videos – some of which he captured – along with other publications and media.

“There is no substitute for getting students out in the field. But with the technology at our fingertips today it allows us to at least be effective,” he says.

Eustis says it’s in his literature classes where the students are missing the most. Those classes aren’t about what students can memorize but what they can analyze and contextualize from the text. The real learning, he says, happens in the class discussions and feedback. He estimates he’s losing about one-third of what he wants to get across.

“In a classroom setting, there’s a feedback loop between the students and the instructor. You can get a sense for when they’re with you, and when you are losing them and need to go in a new direction,” he says. “It’s a shared performance art piece with little moments that can’t be repeated. Right now, we’re not getting that. It’s not the same



• Dr. Alyson Theriot

educational experience, and I miss that a lot.”

He commends his students for taking it as well as they have.

“They’re doing their best,” Eustis says. “They’re rattled, but they’re continuing to work very hard. I think they’re doing the best they can under the surprise circumstances.”

RECREATING EXPERIENCES

Moving labs and clinicals online has proven to be even more difficult. They took longer to transition online and some professors have had scrap crucial components.

Nursing undergraduates had to transition their in-person classes and labs to a virtual environment. Professors in the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute have abandoned their professional kitchens.

Chef Amelie Zeringue has transitioned two kitchen labs to an online version. Her students no longer have access to professional kitchens and she can no longer observe them live while they prepare that week’s lesson. Many students don’t have access to the pots, pans, utensils and ingredients they would at the institute.

“At first I was stressed out. I’m a perfectionist and I was trying



• Chef Amelie Zeringue



to think how we could make this work,” Chef Zeringue says. “[Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs] Dr. Sue Westbrook told us to just do the best we can. That brought me back to reality. As a faculty, we started collaborating, just trying to get creative.”

Now, Chef Zeringue films herself every time she cooks at home and shares it with her students. She encourages her students to do the same. She maintains an ongoing group message for her classes where they can have an ongoing discussion.

“The main thing is being realistic,” she says. “Instead of

forcing a recipe, we’re focusing on techniques. This week, for example, we’re pureeing soups. I told them they can change out the vegetables as needed. If you can’t find butternut squash, that’s okay, use whatever you have.”

FOCUS FORWARD

It’s clear that students are anxious, confused and scared. Seniors are even more emotional as they realize they didn’t savor their last days on campus.

“We’re just trying to reassure our students and let them know they’re still going to get to experience things, like commencement,” says Melissa Clay, instructor of nursing and MSN program coordinator.

She adds, “We have no choice. We have to ensure a quality education.”

Clay only teaches online classes. But that is because her students are working full-time while seeking their masters. It is her students who are feeling the direct impact of this virus. Many of them – especially those working in New Orleans – are working 60 hour weeks in hospitals across South Louisiana dealing with an abundance of upper respiratory-type illnesses. To help her students, Clay stays in regular contact with each of them and adjusts the deadlines of their homework to help them balance work and school.

“Our students are balancing working overtime to keep up with the COVID-19 patients in their hospitals, along with their school work, and that is a challenge,” Clay says.

“We have no choice. We have to ensure a quality education.” –Melissa Clay



• Melissa Clay

Even when the pandemic passes, its fingerprints will be all over Nicholls for the foreseeable future, no more so than in the College of Nursing.

“Right now we’ve been able to use it as a learning tool for how nurses have to adjust to the current situation,” Clays says, “We have always taught pandemic response in our classes, but I think moving forward we will have real

life experiences to discuss in our classes with our students.”

Clay says the nursing faculty is using the current crisis as a learning tool in their curriculum.

“We can talk about how nurses have to adjust to the current situation,” she says. “We’ve been able to use simulations and how they would have to adjust if they were currently learning in the hospitals. We have always taught

pandemic response, but in the future, we’re probably going to have to go further.”

Dr. Theriot says her students and faculty have responded with commitment and earnestness. She believes that is because the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences has embraced technology.

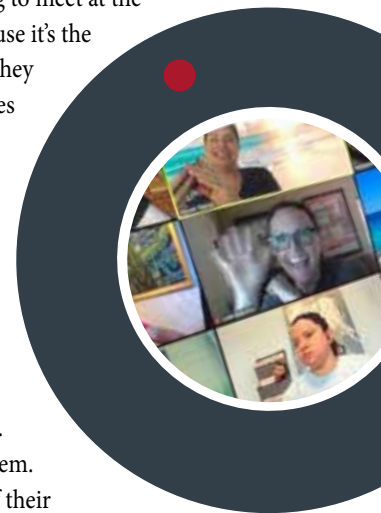
“I have had a couple of students reach out to me to say they’re glad we’re continuing to meet at the same time because it’s the only normalcy they have in their lives right now,” she says.

Having a routine doesn’t just help the students.

“It helps to see their faces,” Dr. Theriot says. “I can call on them. I have met all of their fur babies, their parents, their siblings and any children they are babysitting. It seems to be going really well.”

Everyone is dealing with the pandemic differently. Dr. David has tried to approach it as a scientist, with logic. But he’s human, and it’s not that easy.

“Having my students and family to consider gives me purpose and a focus day-to-day,” he says. “It’s important to have some optimism that we will be okay and we will make it through this. We really have to take care of each other moving forward and know that things will be alright.”



A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Photos & Words by William Guion (BA '75)

Having worked in creative jobs much of my life, quiet time alone is no stranger.

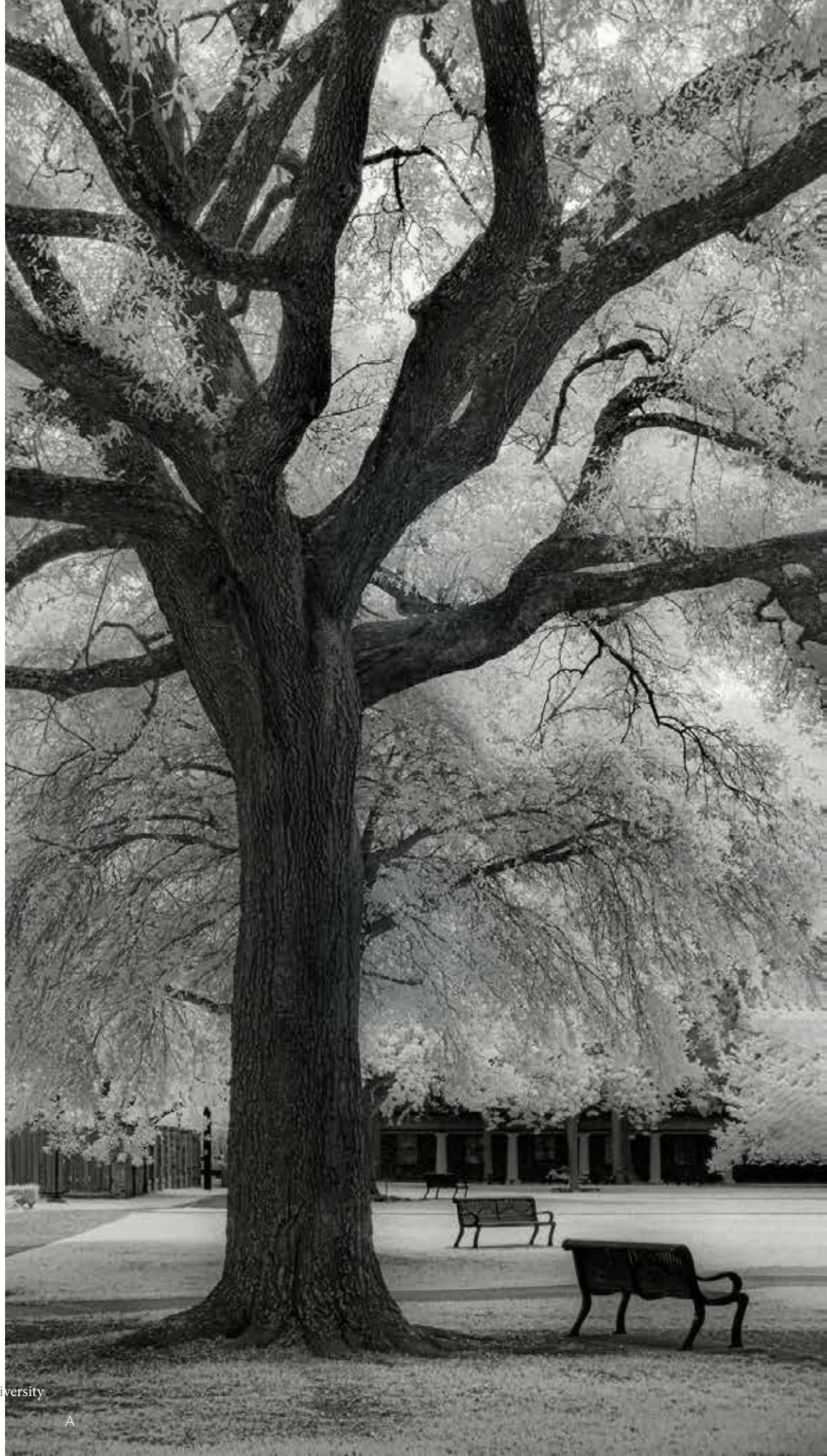
In fact, it's a good friend for most of my work projects. Still, the nearly deserted Nicholls campus has made my daily walks here feel like I stepped into an episode of the Twilight Zone.

So, I used these odd circumstances to take a different perspective on the Nicholls campus.

I started recording the landscape and trees using a pocket-size, hand-held camera adapted to photograph the infrared light spectrum. With infrared photography, the light spectrum that we ordinarily see is stretched and transformed. This makes things appear bright and otherworldly.

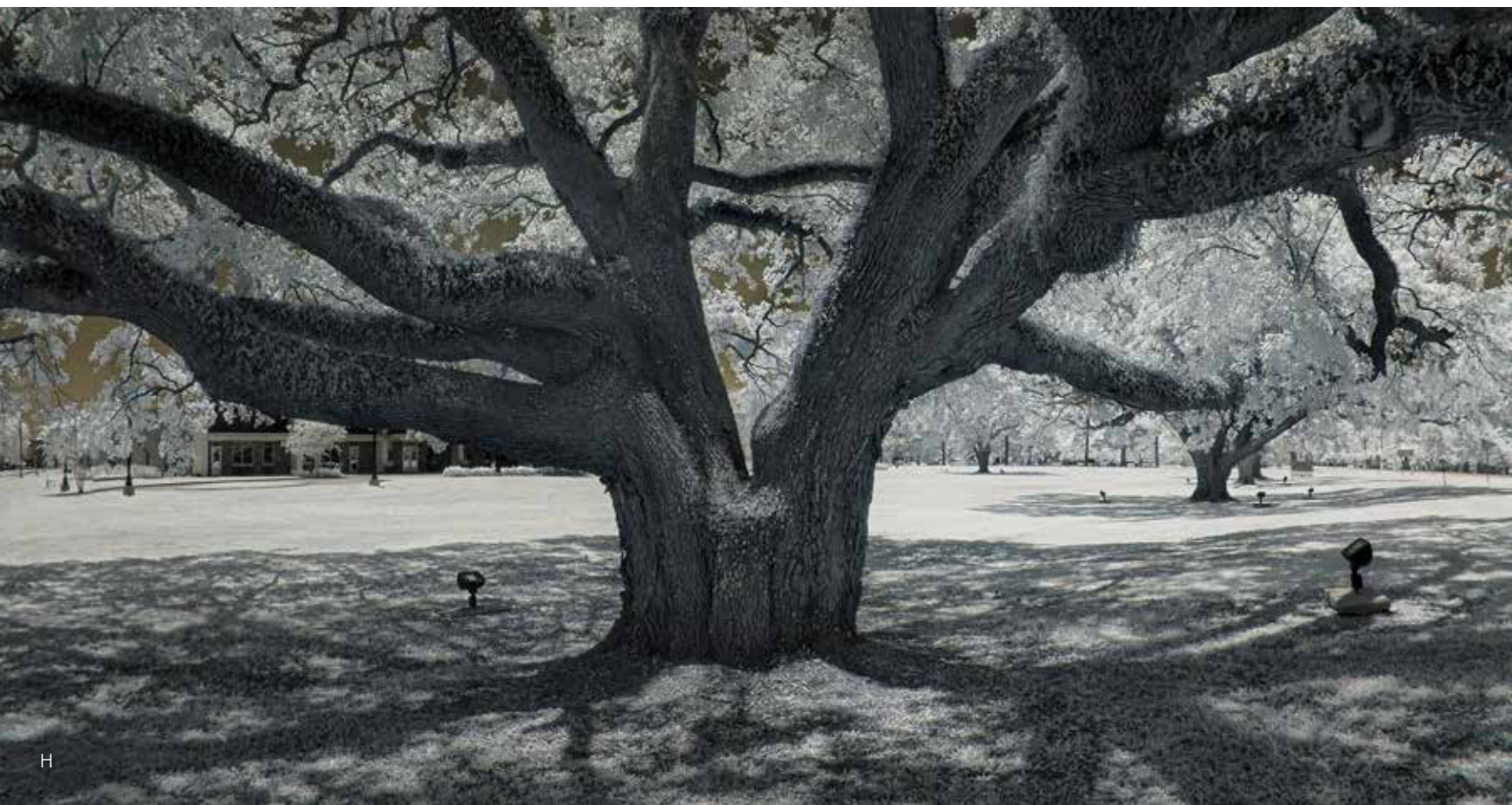
This seemed fitting for a time when the normal world seems suddenly vacant, quiet, and yet full of the fresh greens and shining energy of spring.

Empty yet full.



A





INDEX OF IMAGES:

A. Oak and three benches, east side of Quad; B. Two oaks on Quad sidewalk, looking toward Beauregard Hall; C. Oak on the southeast corner of Candies Hall, view toward Powell Hall; D. Oak and bench, northeast corner of Quad, looking toward Powell and Elkins Halls; E. Oak limbs, southeast corner of Candies Hall; F. Looking east from the courtyard between Beauregard and Peltier Halls; G. Oak, table and benches, looking west toward the northeast corner of Polk Hall; H. Oaks along Hwy. 1, looking toward Ledet Culinary Building; I. Oak and bench, southwest corner of Quad; J. Pine trees and oak, northwest corner of Quad near Glenwood Dr.; K. Entrance path near Quad L. Elkins Hall from entry to Rienzi Circle.

Fine-art prints of these photos of the Nicholls campus are available for sale through Guion's website www.williamguion.com in the "portfolios" section. Guion will donate 50 percent of all sales of these prints to the Nicholls State Art Department to support their ongoing work with students.



“My boss was in tears in the hallway after telling us this,” she says. “I’ve seen other nurses in their cars crying after shifts. I know this is not what the hospital wants. It’s not what anyone wants. They are not doing it as punishment. It is what it is. **We will get through this.**”

Chelsi Falcon is, by trade, an operating room nurse. Today, she spends more of her time working in one of two COVID-19 designated wings at Our Lady of the Lake hospital in Gonzales.

Falcon urges you to take this pandemic seriously. Even in communities like Gonzales that were not hit like New Orleans, the transition wasn’t easy.

“Stay home,” Falcon says. “People are dying alone in hospitals because their families cannot be let in. If you want that to happen to one of your family members, then don’t take it seriously.”

Fellow nursing alum Binu Basyal works at Terrebonne General Medical Center and at the time of this story, was still working in the cardiac unit. However, that doesn’t mean her life hasn’t changed as undiagnosed and diagnosed COVID-19 patients end up under her care.

“It has been a very difficult time as we have been encountering more and more of COVID-19 patients,” she says. “Not having proper protective equipment has

been the biggest challenge in taking care of patients.”

The changes at hospitals are happening fast, as the medical systems were not fully prepared for this outbreak. Falcon says she went through a quick orientation before being switched to the COVID-19 unit. But she emphasizes the switch is almost like a job change in which you’d receive at least two months of training under normal circumstances.

Nurses are receiving limited orientation during a global pandemic, as thousands in the state are dying. But Falcon says there isn’t another choice.

“My boss was in tears in the hallway after telling us this,” she says. “I’ve seen other nurses in their cars crying after shifts. I know this is not what the hospital wants. It’s not what anyone wants. They are not doing it as punishment. It is what it is. We will get through this.”

The hospitals didn’t get ahead of this because the U.S. didn’t act fast enough, Basyal says. And she says she understands why it happened because at first, she also underestimated the virus.

However, she also hopes this is a wake-up call.

“I think with this pandemic; we have realized how broken our health system is,” she says. “I hope this realization will encourage the leaders and health committee board to work toward the

betterment of the whole system.”

The hospitals are doing their best to keep nurses and doctors safe. They are washing their hands more often, and kept quarantined in their wing during shifts. They are being extra careful to wipe everything down.



“Be prepared to serve the community at its best and its worst time.”



Binu Basyal, RN

But at the end of the day, they are being exposed to it. Our Lady of the Lake has been fortunate to have enough equipment to go around, but in many hospitals nurses are reusing masks, goggles and gowns.

“All you can do is be vigilant,” Falcon says. “We cannot social distance in healthcare. Everyone has a lot of anxiety and fear about our safety, and our patients’ safety.”

Both nurses recommend following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to protect yourself and limit the spread of the virus.

Basyal and Falcon say they lean on the training they received in the Nicholls nursing program.

“Like at Nicholls, the unit I work with has a strong sense of family,” Falcon says. “In clinicals, that’s what we did. No one slept as they worked on their care plans. Everyone was on the verge of a mental breakdown, but we had our family there going through it to pick us up. We all made it. I hope that applies to this situation.”

Even when not in a time of global pandemic, nursing is a tough but rewarding profession. If you are a student considering it, Basyal says to make sure your heart is in the right place.

“Be prepared to serve the community at its best and its worst times,” she says. “However, it is a blessing to be able to take care of the people when they need us the most.”

19%
of confirmed cases have
been health care workers.

9,300
U.S. health care workers
contracted COVID-19

55%
think they were exposed
while at work

Information from www.CDC.gov April 9, 2020

Changing Roles



Sheri Eschete has spent more than three decades in healthcare and she’s never seen anything like the COVID-19 pandemic.

The assistant vice president ancillary services for Ochsner Health Systems oversees labs, the pharmacy, infusion center and cardiopulmonary centers at Ochsner St. Anne’s Hospital in Raceland and the Leonard J. Chabert Medical Center in Houma.

Ochsner was monitoring the spread of COVID-19 from the beginning, but talks about South Louisiana began to pick up in the first week of March. That was a lot to take in for Eschete.

“You talk about it, you hear about it, but you don’t think it’s going to happen to you in your town, in your small area,” she says. “That first week seemed like an eternity. It just kept escalating really quickly. What really brought it to light for me, was when the churches shut down.”

Eschete says the focus of her role now is to support hospital staff and make sure they have what they need. That includes physical supplies, like masks, face shields, goggles, gloves, isolation gowns, ventilators and other protective gear. It can also be about providing moral support.

“My role pales in comparison to what the people on the front lines are doing,” she says. “We’re here to be empathetic to their situation. It’s new to them, it’s new to all of us. We’re all scared. So we need to make sure we support them and make sure they have what they need.”

There have been challenges when it comes to supplies, but Ochsner has been able to get what they needed quickly because of their national connections. That includes coronavirus tests that take 5 minutes to produce results.

“We knew we needed to get testing and we needed to get a better turn around time on those test results. We needed transport media to send them off. We needed supplies, and we really had two weeks to get this done,” she says. “That’s the good part of being in such a large healthcare situation, we have been able to get these things and rely on guidance from the system rather than figure it out on our own. Having relationships on a national level has really helped us bring those services to our community.”

In times of crisis, Eschete says it’s important to hang on to hope. Feeding her hope has been the support from the community.

“Food always makes everyone feel better, and the communities in Raceland and Houma have stepped forward feeding the day and night shifts at both hospitals,” she says.

If there is anything good that comes from the pandemic, Eschete believes it has raised awareness among the community to the sacrifices that healthcare workers make, and to the seriousness of taking care of your health.

“Everybody plays a role and at this point, it makes us proud to see how the community is reaching out with support and recognizing what our healthcare workers are going through,” she says. “There’s a saying written on one of our white boards and it says, ‘We fall, we break, we fail. But then we rise, we heal, we overcome.’ That’s perfect for our people and our situation.” —Jacob Batte

A Colonel Call to Action

Supporting the Nicholls Campus Emergency Fund



When I was first asked to write this Colonel Call to Action to support the Nicholls Campus Emergency Fund, the state of Louisiana had a total of 196 known cases of COVID-19 with only four deaths related to the virus. At the time of me completing this message two weeks later, not only does the state now have over 10,000 cases with 370 deaths, but the Bayou Region has over 300 cases with five deaths. My point being

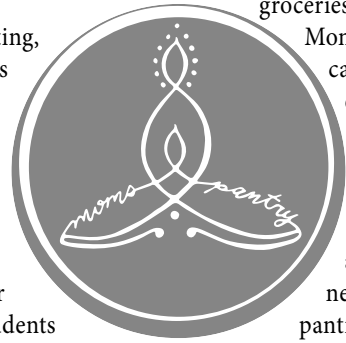
much can change in a very short amount of time.

What did not take two weeks to change was Nicholls going to all online instruction and testing in just a couple of days as the university was one of the first in the state to do so. Overall, many of the students, and even the faculty, have been able to adapt to learning in a new manner. However, the change has not been easy for all students and that is where your support of the Nicholls Campus Emergency Fund is crucial.

With online testing, proctoring services are required for each test along with a cost for each test. The university was able to negotiate a price reduction for the testing, but students will have to pay an average between \$50 - \$200 for testing to complete the Spring semester. Many students also need to

purchase a webcam to add to their computer for testing and their class. While this might not be a large amount of money for some, imagine being a student with a part time job on the wait staff at a restaurant or having a job at a "nonessential" business and being told you have no job and still have to pay for taking tests, a cost you never expected when budgeting your semester.

On a different yet related note, now imagine being that same student and having to buy basic groceries. Here is where Mom's Pantry on campus plays an essential role by being a stocked cabinet open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for any student in need of food. The pantry is located on campus to provide food to students to help bridge the gap between hunger and success. I understand that many who



are reading this article might be in a similar situation of having a reduction in pay or even worse, losing a job; but I know that there are many who have been able to get through this horrific virus situation without much loss. I ask you to consider making a gift to the Nicholls Campus Emergency Fund because you never know, the Nicholls student being assisted from this fund might become the nurse taking care of you in the future or your grandchild's teacher or the financial planner taking care of your retirement.

For more information on how the Emergency Fund will support Nicholls students with the transition to online learning and Mom's Pantry, please contact me at 985-448-4006 or jeremy.becker@nicholls.edu.

With Colonel Pride,

Jeremy Becker
Executive Director
of the Nicholls Foundation



Not even a pandemic can stop the Nicholls campus from evolving. »

Our devoted maintenance staff have continued to move projects forward, even as faculty, students and most of the staff have been sent home. When you return, you'll come back to a campus that is better and stronger.



Student Media Center to Open in the Fall

Construction has continued on Phase II of the Callais-Desalvo Convergence Media Center. Renovations are expected to be complete this summer, with doors ready to open in the Fall. This new student media center will bring the Nicholls Worth, KNSU Radio, KNSU-TV and La Pirogue all under one roof. It was made possible by a \$300,000 donation from Tina DeSalvo-Callais and her husband, Corey.

Barker Hall Construction Underway

The \$6.5 million Barker Hall extension project is noted for including the largest donation in university history at \$2.5 million. Construction began on May 4 and is expected to be complete next spring. Once complete, the renovated Barker Hall includes office and meeting space for all 17 athletic programs, as well as new state-of-the-art facilities for football.



Phase II of Nicholls Greenhouse is Ready to Begin

Donor-funded Phase I of the Nicholls Greenhouse Renovation, which involves the classroom building, is underway. Phase II of the project, which will be paid for by the state, involves the glass greenhouse with hydroponic plant towers and other amenities. An architect has been selected for Phase II, and it is expected to begin after the completion of Phase I.



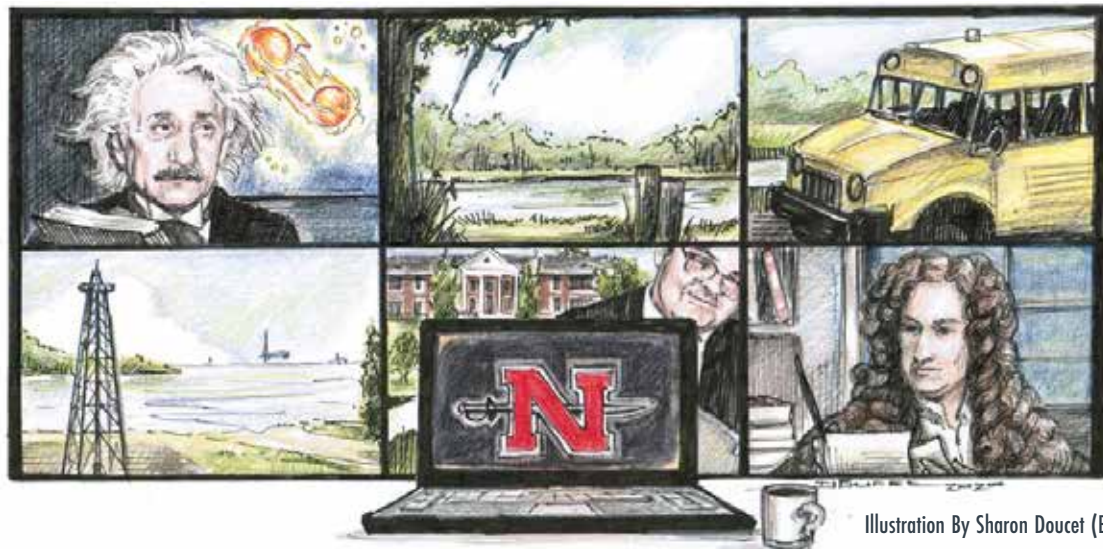


Illustration By Sharon Doucet (BA '78)

Springtime on Earth is always a special time in the universe. It was in the springtime of 1916 when Albert Einstein published his general theory of relativity, a set of ideas that updated understandings of gravity and the cosmos established 250 years earlier by Isaac Newton. One of the first things Einstein taught the world was that, because the light we use to observe things flows at constant speed, both the time and distance of our observations change relative to one another. The idea that distance is relative is particularly meaningful for higher education in the springtime of 2020, as universities around the country like Nicholls work carefully and diligently during the current pandemic to deliver the best avenues of distance learning to their students.

Nicholls is no newcomer to distance education. In 1948, when Einstein was still dreaming of a grand theory to unify all the laws of physics, folks of the bayou region were no longer dreaming of going to college. The doors of Nicholls first opened in September of that year. Those doors, however, were not doors to a dormitory where students would reside during semesters of study. In fact, the

campus would not see a dormitory for another 16 years. Nicholls would be a commuter campus, with classwork in Thibodaux and assignments and study undertaken at home from a distance.

The conundrum of getting students to campus from distant bayou villages along craggy, swampy highways was solved in advance by innovative local leadership. For the first time in the history of higher education in Louisiana, parishes would provide free transportation to college students to and from their homes. Beginning in 1948 in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes and continuing for almost four decades, school buses would carry hundreds of students to and from Nicholls every weekday — a model soon adopted by neighboring parishes and by other colleges around the state. Nicholls students would learn from professors on campus by day and then by evening continue learning at a distance from home. In between those times, the school bus served as a mobile student union, where commuting students could reinforce skills in English and math as well as card playing during rides that sometimes lasted two hours or more each way.

The concept of busing students

to classes wasn't the only innovation in distance education that Nicholls would offer. To accommodate the needs of offshore oil field workers in its oil-rich service region, Nicholls began its now well-known "7-and-7" program in the summer of 1973 — the first of its kind in the state and likely the entire country. With this program, students employed by seven-day shiftwork could now take double-length classes in alternative onshore weeks and complete schoolwork and study both at home and the rig during off-duty hours. This innovative program was supported not only by the oil industry but also by faculty across disciplines who specially accommodated these students in addition to teaching classes during the normal weekly schedule. Nearly 150 students enrolled for the 7-and-7 program in its first year.

Further, seven decades of tropical disturbances prepared Nicholls to deliver college education from a distance. In late August 2005 when Hurricane Katrina interrupted the lives and Fall semesters for tens of thousands of university students in Louisiana, Nicholls was well-versed in accommodating students from

devastated communities, meeting needs both locally and distantly from the New Orleans area. Offices for enrollment, transfers, housing and faculty all extended operations to help displaced students continue learning and remediate lost course time.

In an historical parallel to today's situation at Nicholls and around the country, Einstein's predecessor in the arena of gravitation theory, Isaac Newton, was forced to leave Trinity College in London in 1665 to avoid contracting the plague, which had become epidemic. Sequestered at his farmstead home, Woolsthorpe Manor, surrounded by sheep and apple orchards, Newton took advantage of distance and spent time deeply studying and thinking through the undergraduate lessons of his professors. By the time he returned to campus, he had invented a new form of mathematics, which today we call calculus. By embracing the new opportunities that distance learning affords during these times, imagine what Nicholls students can invent from their professor's lessons in a place where falling tree fruit — like satsumas or mespilus — is softer and less concussive! — Dr. John Doucet

COLONELS

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