



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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I think it was Walt Disney who said, "When you are curious, you find lots of interesting things to do." TU is a very curious community! When I started working here two years ago, our fall enrollment was 1,157. This fall, we welcomed 1,287. The students come to TU because they are curious and they stay. In fact, they stay at TU at a rate that is 10% above other private colleges in Georgia and 30% over that of public colleges. The fact that 19 of our student-athletes earned the distinction of NAIA Scholar-Athlete confirms that they are finding interest in the right things.

The faculty are curious too. We increased the number of courses taught by Ph.D.s by 30% this past year. And they are doing exciting things. This past year, for instance, our Master of Science Degree in Clinical Mental Health and Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling became the only college counseling program in Georgia and one of just thirteen programs in the nation to receive dual accreditation. Our Business Division joined forces with our Library to hold a colloquium on Women in Business and Entrepreneurship. Our faculty even make plastic bottle caps interesting. The students in Camp STEMtastic are collecting 200 pounds of them to make a 'buddy bench' where schoolchildren can sit and find a friend.

We've set a course for Thomas University to serve as the linchpin between government, industry, and education. We created a Center for Military Life which exists to support the entire life cycle of service for veterans, service members, DOD civilian employees, and their dependents. Initiatives for the Center include being one of only sixty-seven partner colleges in the Air University Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative. We affiliated with the Community College of the Air Force to offer general education coursework, and we established a Veterans Career Services and Transition Center on

campus. Since we are a curious bunch, we also hosted a conference on Gray Zone Conflicts with keynote addresses by U.S. Ambassador Theodore Sedgwick and Major General Michael Lehnert, USMC retired. All of this activity has led to a 33% increase in veteran students within one year and a 51% increase in students from all branches of service. In short, curious people are finding Thomas University, and they are doing interesting things.

With an eye toward helping area economic development, TU has also been engaging local industries. We've signed agreements to provide reduced tuition as an HR benefit with select partners and offered counseling and training for companies that are curious about contract acquisition. We are able to deliver practical training in cybersecurity, project management, and process management as non-credit options for curious employees. The courses are akin to 'just in time' consulting for businesses, and TU even has a pathway for turning the training into college credit. That means working adults can start earning their degrees just by doing their jobs well.

We are also building our residential community. This past January, TU started food service in the Pinetree Residence Hall. Now that we can feed our students, we're expanding student life options and programs for traditional students. TU started an Enactus Team (business students club), and we have created grants to support students who want to engage in music and art while studying on campus. We also just started a bowling club and a Rotaract Club (Rotary for young adults). In short, there are new and interesting opportunities for young people at TU.

I hope this note has made you curious and that you will get more deeply involved with TU. There are interesting things for you to do here. We're glad that you are part of our Night Hawk Nation! Thank you for encouraging our curious community. Your generosity is truly making Thomas University an interesting place.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James A. Sheppard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James A. Sheppard, Ph.D.  
President  
Thomas University

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# CENTER FOR MILITARY LIFE

For many years, Thomas University has been a supporter of our armed forces, current military service members and veterans. The numerous initiatives that launched in support of our military now have a home in the Center for Military Life.

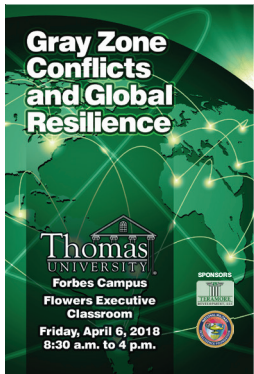
"TU is geographically located in a constellation of military installations in South Georgia and North Florida," said Dr. Andy Sheppard,

Thomas University President. "South Georgia-North Florida is home to one of the largest populations of veterans in the United States. TU's new Center for Military Life is an opportunity for us to be of service to those who served – and continue to serve – our country."

The Center for Military Life is a combination of services including the Veterans Career Services

and Transition Center, the Student Veterans of America chapter, Defense Acquisition University equivalency provider partnership, Community College of the Air Force AU-ABC partnership, the GI Bill Yellow Ribbon Program, financial assistance for military spouses, professional development opportunities, and college credit for military experience and training.

## CENTER HOSTS NATIONAL CONFERENCE



In April of 2018, Thomas University held "Gray Zone Conflicts and Global Resilience," a symposium that addressed issues facing corporations, the military, first responders and diplomatic leaders. "A conference of this sort with this quality of speakers makes an available reference for the entire defense community without the overhead of going to Washington, D.C." stated Dr. Andy Sheppard, Thomas University President.

The keynote speaker was Maj. Gen. Michael Lehnert, USMC, retired. General Lehnert had a distinguished career that included serving as the Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installation and Logistics. In January 2002 he deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as Commander of Joint Task Force 160, where they constructed and operated detention facilities for Taliban and Al Qaeda detainees.

Other presenters at the symposium included David Danelo, Field Researcher, Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime; Bob Rhodes, Chief Technology Officer, Thomson Reuters Special Services; Ilona Teleki, Chief

Operating Officer, the Center for European Policy Analysis; Theodore Sedgwick, former U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic; and Jason Thomas, Chief of Innovation, Thomson Reuters Special Services.



## CENTER FOR MILITARY LIFE ADVISORY BOARD

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## BENJAMIN HONEY

Retired military and Thomas University student Benjamin Honey proves that it's never too late to earn a degree. Honey is pursuing a Pre-Physician Assistant degree while also running his own business.

After high school, Honey joined the Army. He began in the infantry. Then he was chosen for recognition. He ended his military service as a sniper team leader. He was discharged in 2007, and then spent an additional 7 years with the government.

With a total of 12 years in government service, Honey became part of a defense combat training business called BDC, Inc. This company services the Department of Defense and law enforcement agencies in seven states including Georgia. His business provides equipment like vehicles, personal armor, night vision goggles, etc. He brought this business to Thomasville where he works from his home.

"We have traveled the world for business and pleasure," Honey said. "Thomasville has something that meets our current family needs that cannot be replicated."

The reason he came to Thomas University was due to the relationships he made with some of the first people he met while on campus.

"School wasn't on my mind at the time but when choosing a university, TU stuck out to me because of the people I met," Honey said.

Honey said he believes that TU has a fantastic team working behind the lines for a military transitional organization. He also believes the job TU is doing to help people go into the military as well as assisting retired military transition out is amazing.

For more information about TU's Center for Military Life, visit [center4militarylife.org](http://center4militarylife.org). To learn more about any of TU's programs for active military, veterans or their families, email [military@thomasu.edu](mailto:military@thomasu.edu).

***"School wasn't on my mind at the time but when choosing a university, TU stuck out to me because of the people I met."***



## VETERANS CAREER SERVICES AND TRANSITION CENTER

The Veterans Services and Career Transition Center opened in the spring of 2017 and is located next to the TU Library on the Forbes Campus. The center partners with organizations to provide services.

"The Center offers a wide range of services, such as assistance with VA education benefits, mental health counseling, referrals to external support services, academic support, and career services, such as résumé and interviewing prep," stated Stephen Ferguson, Associate Vice President. "The Center is open to all veterans regardless of affiliation with Thomas University, including active duty service members, National Guard, Reserve and military dependents."

Several groups have already partnered with TU to work with veterans at the center, including the Georgia Department of Labor, Aetna, Hopes and Dreams Riding Facility, as well as TU's Student Veterans of America Chapter and SALUTE Veterans Honor Society.



# ATHLETICS

## LEADERS ON THE FIELD AND IN THE CLASSROOM

In 2018, Thomas University and Adidas partnered to provide student-athletes with equipment and apparel. "We feel this is a great step forward in our evolution as a quality program and anticipate a fantastic relationship with Adidas," stated Mike Lee, director of athletics.

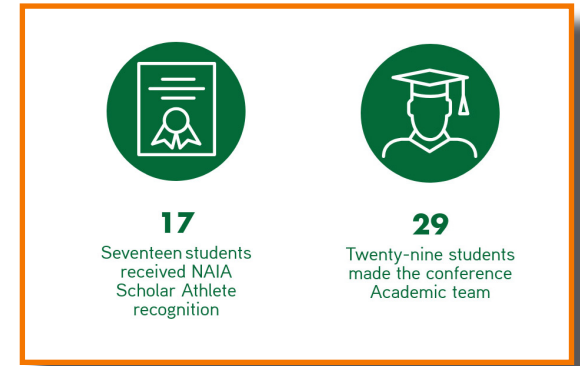
The TU Night Hawks continued to receive national, regional and conference recognition as scholars and athletes in 2017-18. "I couldn't be prouder of the dedication our coaches have to the success of our athletes and of the students and how well they represent the University both

on and off the field," Lee stated. "The culture that has been established in our department is reflected in the development of our student-athletes as both athletes and productive citizens that will affect positive change in their communities moving forward."

## ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS:

The NAIA listed seven teams from Thomas University as Scholar Teams. Teams must carry a 3.0 GPA for the academic year in order to receive the award. Women's Swimming led the way with a 3.48 GPA followed by Women's Soccer (3.38), Men's Soccer (3.33), Softball (3.28) and Women's Basketball (3.26), Men's Golf (3.22) and Baseball (3.03).

- Seventeen students received NAIA Scholar-Athlete recognition.
- Twenty-nine made the conference academic team.



## ATHLETIC HIGHLIGHTS:

Men's Basketball filled the stands last season with a loud and supportive fan base. They finished 3rd in the regular season and were a conference tournament semi-finalist.

Men's Soccer finished 3rd in regular season and was also a conference semi-finalist. Women's Soccer was a conference tournament quarter-finalist.

- Two students made the United Soccer Coaches NAIA regional teams.
- Twenty-five were placed on the Conference Team or made honorable mention.
- Ten were named NAIA All-Americans.



The TU Softball team was the regular season champion and tournament champion. Lauren West was Conference Pitcher of the Year.



Bill Wilson, Softball Coach, was named Conference Coach of the Year.



Perry Lindo was the NAIA National Champion in the 50-yard freestyle.



Swimming Coach Malcolm Hosford, was awarded NAIA National Coach of the Year.



# STUDENT LIFE

## FOOD SERVICE ADDED FOR RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

The start of spring semester brought more than just new class schedules for Thomas University students. It also brought the opening of TU's first-ever dining hall and TU's first meal plan. Located inside the Pinetree Residence Hall, the new dining facility opened its doors serving breakfast and dinner. Meals are available to all TU students, faculty and staff.

"This meal plan – which provides nutrition, quality, quantity and variety – is already a success for two reasons," said Dr. Robert Bohman, TU's Vice President for Student Life. "One, the meal plan was a proposal made by our students in focus group settings, so the idea of a meal plan was a direct result of our students' input.

Two, we have received great reviews from our students in terms of both quality and variety of food being served. The current meal plan calls for serving 10 all-you-can-eat meals per week for breakfast and dinner Monday through Friday. Our students have provided us with great ideas on how to improve on the existing plan. We have already begun investigating ways to implement some of their ideas."

The food is served by MMI Dining Systems, based in Wesley Chapel, Florida. "They specialize in food service operations, especially for smaller universities," Bohman said. "With their assistance, we are able to offer an extremely competitive meal plan to our students."

Cooper Balfour, a TU freshman from Karratha, Australia, regularly eats in the dining hall. "I believe it's a fantastic idea," he said. "I love the food that is served, and I think it's a great time for us to wind down and spend time with the other residents."

The Hawk's Nest, a café on TU's Forbes Campus, remains open as a convenient location near most classes. The Hawk's Nest continues to serve breakfast, lunch and supper Monday through Thursday.

## CAMPUS ACTIVITIES BOARD (CAB) PLANS EVENTS



An energetic group of 14 student volunteers work hard to make sure residential students have opportunities for fun and enjoyment while at Thomas University. From concerts at the residence halls to Movies on the Green, speakers,

intramurals and free novelty items, CAB works diligently to provide great college memories.

"The Campus Activities Board at Thomas University is a student-led organization with the goal of identifying and planning engaging



programs on campus," said Courtney Sinclair, Coordinator of Student Activities.

"CAB officers and members obtain first-hand experience in planning, marketing and executing activities at Thomas University while meeting the needs/interests of all students. Leadership skills are fostered through their experiences as well as other professional skills, such as time

management, organization, communication and teamwork. CAB officers and members are taught fiscal responsibility throughout the event planning process as well as the importance of networking while developing career skill sets."



# HELPING TO BUILD BUSINESS

## BUILDING A STRONG WORKFORCE

Thomas University's efforts to reach beyond campus include partnering with corporations to provide higher education for their employees. In addition to the academic degrees TU already offers – associate, bachelor's, master's and education specialist – TU now provides certification preparation training programs in specific areas of information technology and leadership skills.

TU has long partnered with Archbold Medical Group in efforts to provide advanced education to its employees in the areas of nursing, medical laboratory science and business management. In October 2017, TU began a similar partnership with WILO-USA. Headquartered in Rosemont, Illinois, WILO-USA also has factories in Thomasville, Georgia; Cedarburg,

Wisconsin; and Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Under the agreement, TU provides a discount for WILO employees who enroll in TU's certificate training programs as well as a tuition discount for employees and their dependents who enroll in degree programs at TU.

Thomas University's outreach efforts include agreements with 14 law enforcement agencies for their employees who choose to enroll in TU's completely online Associate of Science Degree in Law Enforcement and the completely online Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice.

"We want to make education accessible for anyone who's willing to do the work to earn a degree," said Susan Backofen, TU's Vice President for Enrollment Management. "This is

an opportunity for companies to use their tuition remission benefits to assist with employee recruiting and retention. Businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit and retain qualified employees. By providing a flexible and convenient opportunity for their workforce to earn a bachelor's or master's degree, they are investing in their work force. Their employees appreciate the opportunity."

Each agreement is customized based on the organization's needs and availability of educational funding. The goal is to provide a convenient and cost-effective pathway for employees to earn a degree while continuing to contribute to the organization. Partner organizations are also eligible for reduced fees for customized non-credit training through TU.

### ROGER PIERCE

Roger Pierce is a full-time nurse, a husband and a father of three. He's also a full-time graduate student at TU pursuing a Master of Science in Nursing Degree. Roger said he chose Thomas University because of its proximity to his home and the prestige that comes with a TU Nursing degree.

As Roger follows his heart to help others, he's also been dependent on others helping him. Roger was able to attend college thanks to financial assistance from his employer, Archbold Medical Center's Hospice of Southwest Georgia. His dream was made possible because of donors and supporters who believe in the mission of Thomas University and in students like Roger.

TU's Corporate Sponsors have helped Roger and many students like him realize their dreams by providing the financial assistance they need to obtain a world-class education at Thomas University.

Roger believes that obtaining this degree is important. Not only will the master's degree provide more career opportunities and financial benefits for his family, but Roger wants to be a role model for his children.

"I have had the privilege of teaching Roger in the RN to MSN program," said Dr. Eleanor Hall, a faculty member in the Division of Nursing. "It's been a wonderful opportunity to observe Roger mature in his perspective on health care as well professionally. Working full-time and taking care of his family while continuing his education is challenging. However, Roger has not been deterred. Instead, he is energized by the knowledge gained, so much so that he intends on pursuing a nurse practitioner's degree."

Roger will earn his Master of Science in Nursing Degree from Thomas University in 2019.





## CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND ACQUISITION TRAINING

Thomas University will be launching contract acquisition and management non-credit training to businesses and governmental personnel on both a local and national level. This training is important for individuals who are currently participating in the contracting field as well as those interested in becoming sub-contractors for local, state and federal organizations.

"Georgia receives over \$63 billion each year through grants awarded to businesses in our state," said Dr. Andy Sheppard, TU President. "There are many other businesses, especially

in southern Georgia, that could benefit from receiving of federal and local grants to help grow their organizations and our local economy."

The courses are eligible for use toward contract management certifications through the National Contract Management Association (NCMA), Defense Acquisition University (DAU) and Federal Certification in Contracting (FAC-C). The training courses will include mandatory, assignment-specific and continuing education training for acquisition personnel within the

civilian workforce, state, local and federal government and the Department of Defense.

"We were very fortunate to be approved as a DAU course equivalent provider and to have received a grant from a local foundation to develop this training," stated Stephen Ferguson, Associate Vice President. "We are looking forward to offering some beginning contracting seminars very soon followed by these certification-level courses."

## INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION TRAINING

Training is quickly becoming a key differentiator between companies competing for talent. Personal and professional development is an important focus area for today's workforce in both recruiting and retaining quality employees. To meet this growing need, Thomas University established the Center for Professional Learning. A variety of industry certification training is available for individuals and organizations.

"Our initial offerings center around cyber security, as this is a growing need in today's business environment," stated Susan Backofen, Vice President for Enrollment Management. "These training programs are offered online in a virtual classroom, online self-paced— or for organizations interested in training groups of employees— we can also offer these in a classroom setting"

TU also offers customized non-credit training to businesses interested in additional professional development in specific skills such as leadership, budget management and customer service. For more information concerning available programs, please visit [centerforprofessionallearning.org](http://centerforprofessionallearning.org).

### CYBER CERTIFICATION TRAINING PROGRAMS

#### CompTIA

A+  
Network+  
Security+

#### EC COUNCIL

Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH v9)  
(ISC)2  
Certified Information Systems Professional (CISSP) PMI

#### PMI

Project Management Professional (PMP)  
Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPAM)

# THOMAS UNIVERSITY ALUMNI

## TU ATHLETE ALUMNI TAKE ON STUDENTS AT REUNIONS

Both Men's and Women's Soccer alumni returned to TU in March 2018 to take on the current Men's and Women's Soccer teams. Current students prevailed in both games.

Following a dinner for all current and former members of the TU Softball Program, the inaugural alumni game was held on the newly renovated Armory Field in January 2018. The current TU ladies won the day!



## ALUMNI HONORED AT HOMECOMING

Thomas University presented its annual alumni awards during the Homecoming Brunch in Thomasville in October 2017. Participating in the event are (from left) Marvin Dawson, President of the TU Alumni Board of Governors; Felton Ivey, recipient of the Distinguished Recent Graduate Award; Dr. Debra Gresham, Assistant Professor of Social Work and award presenter; Lori Battle, Assistant Professor of



Criminal Justice and award presenter; Grady D. Sanford Jr., recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award; Miriam Jackson, TU alumna and award presenter; Brett Reichert, who accepted the Alumni Ambassador Award on behalf of his late mother, Waunell Reichert; and Dr. Andy Sheppard, TU President.

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# 2018 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

The composition of Thomas University's Endowment Fund net assets as of May 31, 2017 and May 31, 2018 were as follows:

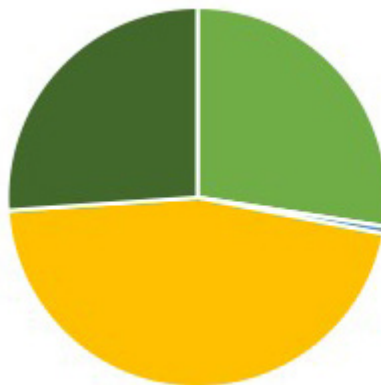
	YEAR ENDING MAY 31, 2018	YEAR ENDING MAY 31, 2017
<b>ENDOWMENTS</b>		
Operations	\$711,182	\$685,970
Scholarship	\$2,820,065	\$2,654,090
Academic Programs	\$2,164,576	\$2,076,876
Academic Support	\$13,106	\$12,801
Student Services	\$13,299	\$12,597
	<b>\$5,722,228</b>	<b>\$5,442,334</b>

## HOW GIFTS ARE USED:



Unrestricted	\$2,694,115
Temporarily restricted	\$1,444,246
Permanently restricted	\$1,583,867
	<b>\$5,722,228</b>

## WHERE GIFTS COME FROM:



Corporations	\$178,470	27%
Foundations	\$4,144	1%
Private Funds	\$298,025	46%
Individual	\$169,673	26%
	<b>\$649,674</b>	



# CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

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In higher education, we often talk about transformations. Those transformations include helping students improve their lives or the lives of their family members through education. I think it's time we stepped back and took a look at one of the greatest transformations that has happened at Thomas University – the transformation of the university itself.

So much has happened since TU began as a small two-year college. In TU's first class of students, there were nine students from South Georgia. Now the university serves nearly 1,300 with students from across the U.S. and around the world. Majors that didn't exist in the 1950s now draw considerable numbers of students to TU. Classes are now held not only in Thomasville, but around the state and virtually.

TU is now launching initiatives to reach even more students in a variety of formats including traditional degrees, but also non-credit training and certification preparation. Collaborations with government, defense and corporations, as well as educational institutions, increase the university's ability to continue to transform the lives of students we serve. TU has significantly evolved from a sleepy hunting plantation to a global learning community.

As Thomas University embarks on this new phase, we realize that all this is possible because of the support of donors like you. You provide the financial resources, talent and time that it takes to make TU possible.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your commitment to TU and to the vision for its future.

Sincerely,

Rankin Smith, Jr., Chairman  
Thomas University Board of Trustees

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# WAYS OF GIVING

The information below is intended to provide general guidance. Please discuss with your tax advisor the best way(s) for you to contribute to Thomas University.

## CASH DONATIONS

Outright gifts of cash (which include donations made via check, credit card and payroll deduction) are often the simplest for you to make. The key is to make sure you keep record of the gift as required by the IRS. Thomas University will provide a gift receipt via mail, when a mailing address is provided. Please consult with your tax advisor, as needed.

## STOCK DONATIONS

Publicly traded stock and other securities which you have held for more than one year may potentially have accumulated long-term capital gains, and could make one of the best charitable gifts. Why? Because you may be able to deduct the current fair market value and avoid the capital gains tax that you may be required to pay if you were to sell the property outright.

However, you may not want to donate stock that is worth less than your basis. Instead, you could sell the stock outright so that you might be able to deduct the loss and then donate the cash proceeds to Thomas University. Please consult with your tax advisor, as needed.

## GIFTS IN KIND

As demonstrated above, gifts of cash or stocks are relatively simple and may provide tax savings benefits, but many taxpayers make other types of donations, such as vehicles, collectibles, or services as in-kind contributions. Please consult with your tax advisor, as needed.

## PLANNED GIFTS

Many other contribution vehicles are available, such as Wills, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, Charitable Gift Annuities, etc. Please consult with your tax advisor, as needed.

Thank you for your support and for considering Thomas University in your philanthropic and estate planning.



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