



No Obligation Inspections
731-236-8811
 Serving West Tennessee

UP TO
\$2,600 OFF
 Reason To Call?

Roofing

Repairs • Gutters • Siding



JUNE 2026



THE
 N'WEST
 TENNESSEE

VOLUNTEER

IN GOD
 WE TRUST

Serving Henry, Obion & Weakley counties in N'West Tennessee since 2006

UT Martin's Clinton Smith to receive national teaching honor



From: University of Tennessee Martin

WASHINGTON — Dr. Clinton Smith, professor of special education at the University of Tennessee at Martin, will be awarded the 2026 Higher Educator of the Year award from the National Education Association this July in Denver, Colorado. Smith will

be presented with the honor and a \$10,000 award funded by the NEA Foundation at the 2026 NEA Representative Assembly.

The Higher Educator of the Year award recognizes a postsecondary education professional who continually engages in outstanding student-centered professional practice,

exemplary state/local labor-based advocacy, and robust community participation. “Clinton embodies exactly what it means to be an educator, a role model and a leader for our students,” said NEA President Becky Pringle. “Clinton not only cultivates critical thinking in his classroom and in his union work, but he empowers the voices of those around him. “On behalf of the NEA’s three million members, we congratulate Clinton for the dedication and commitment he has shown to his students and community.”

Smith received a Bachelor of Science in Education degree from Arkansas State University, a Master of Arts in Religion and Education from Mid-America Baptist Theological

Seminary, and a Master of Science and a Doctor of Education from the University of Memphis. “As a faculty member at the University of Tennessee at Martin, Dr. Smith has cultivated a learning environment that is both rigorous and deeply supportive,” said Tennessee Education Association President Tanya T. Coats.

“His passion for teaching extends beyond the classroom, where he intentionally fosters meaningful connections with students and empowers them to reach their fullest potential. “His approach reflects not only academic excellence but also a genuine investment in the holistic

See **SMITH**
 Page 5

West Tennessee Healthcare, Philips, & hellocare.ai expand connected ICU Care

From: West Tennessee Healthcare

Jackson, TN: June 3, 2026 - West Tennessee Healthcare is continuing to strengthen critical care services across the region through the expansion of its systemwide eICU program powered by Philips eCareManager and integrated with the hellocare.ai virtual care platform. Serving 19 counties and more than 600,000 people across West Tennessee and Southeast Missouri, West Tennessee Healthcare partnered with Philips and hellocare.ai to implement supplemental virtual monitoring technology in 127 ICU beds and 17 mobile emergency department carts across the healthcare system.

The program combines Philips eCareManager, a centralized platform

that aggregates and analyzes patient data to provide actionable clinical insights and decision-making support, with hellocare.ai’s virtual care program platform for intelligent room technology and collaboration. Together, these technologies enable a more connected care environment by linking remote clinicians with bedside teams and delivering timely information to support coordinated patient care.

The platforms help remote clinicians monitor patients, conduct virtual evaluations, and collaborate with bedside teams.

By surfacing clinically relevant data and alerts and extending oversight beyond the bedside, they help care teams prioritize attention,

See **CARE**
 Page 5

VETERAN
 owned & operated



SEALING • ASPHALT • TAR & CHIP • CURBING • STRIPPING
 38 Years Experience Serving Western Kentucky & West Tennessee

RESIDENTIAL | COMMERCIAL
 CALL FOR AN ESTIMATE

Clarksville
 931-645-2689

Paris
 731-644-0949

Lexington
 731-967-9542

Murray
 270-753-1965

UT Martin hosts Jr. Kid College



Quinn Brown runs to give University of Tennessee at Martin mascot Captain Skyhawk a hug while Kalista Hollingsworth waits her turn. The two students were participating in UT Martin's Jr. Kid College, held May 26-29 on campus. Jr. Kid College invites students advancing into kindergarten, first or second grade to take part in several fun classes, including Karate Kids, Arts & Crafts Lab and Japanese Culture. Jr. Kid College and other summer camp adventures are coordinated through the UT Martin Office of University Outreach. For more information about summer camps at UT Martin, visit utmcamps.com. For more information about UT Martin, visit www.utm.edu or call 1-800-829-UTM1 (-8861).



Hah! Taking part in the Karate Kids class at the University of Tennessee at Martin's Jr. Kid College are (l-r) Emmie Clark, Logan Bonar and Cole Cooper. The students were participating in UT Martin's Jr. Kid College, held May 26-29 on campus. Jr. Kid College invites students advancing into kindergarten, first or second grade to take part in several fun classes, including Arts & Crafts Lab and Japanese Culture. Jr. Kid College and other summer camp adventures are coordinated through the UT Martin Office of University Outreach. For more information about summer camps at UT Martin, visit utmcamps.com. For more information about UT Martin, visit www.utm.edu or call 1-800-829-UTM1 (-8861).

UT Martin graduate has commencement 5,000 miles from campus

MARTIN, Tenn. – Most graduating university students complete their courses, take their finals and walk the line at an on-campus commencement ceremony to receive their degree. For one student, the University of Tennessee at Martin brought the commencement exercise to her, 5,000 miles from campus.

Jada Curlin of Drummonds officially graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture May 6 via Zoom, four days after her classmates received their diplomas in Martin in the scheduled formal ceremony in the Kathleen and Tom Elam Center.

Curlin was on one side of the Atlantic at the Società Dante Alighieri di Siena of the University of Siena, Italy, taking a study-abroad course in agricultural education with Dr. Will Bird, associate professor of agricultural education and Curlin's college adviser.

"Since I am an ag education student, my last semester consists of just student teaching," Curlin said in an email. "Therefore, I completed most of my student teaching in the United States in my hometown at Munford High School. This study-abroad program did not end until May 12, so that is why I was unable to attend graduation in person."

Bird said that it was his

pleasure to arrange the special commencement for his student.

"(Jada) has been one of the most reliable and hard-working students I've ever worked with," Bird said in an email. "Moreover, she has worked in our (Department of Agriculture, Geosciences and Natural Resources) office the last two years until she began student-teaching this spring."

Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. was on the other side of the ocean in UT Martin's Hall-Moody Administration Building when he presented her degree. Curlin and Freeman were dressed in cap and gown, but Curlin did not know about the special arrangement until she saw the Zoom setup.

"The hardest part was coordinating the surprise on our end in Siena," Bird said. "Jada brought her graduation robe and hat with her to Siena to take pictures. The other UTM students tricked Jada into bringing those items to our 'farewell dinner' with our Italian host school (Dante Alighieri). It was just a matter of getting her out of the room long enough to set up the Zoom call and arrange the room."

Curlin was joined by friends in Siena, while Freeman was joined by members of the Office of the Chancellor and the Office of University Relations. Dr. Todd Winters, dean of the College of Agriculture

and Applied Sciences, and other guests also joined the ceremony virtually.

Curlin said she was unaware of the surprise commencement until she saw Chancellor Freeman on the computer screen.

"My mouth dropped when I realized what was going on," she said. "The biggest emotion that comes to mind is complete gratitude. I am so grateful to attend a university that truly cares about their students."

Curlin is a first-generation college graduate, which made her graduation even more meaningful.

"I've had a very difficult senior year," she said. "My dad passed away in September, so having this graduation that my dad always wanted me to achieve meant the world to me. I know it made him proud, and it is a moment that I was always cherish and remember."

Freeman opened the May 6 ceremony much the way that he did May 2, encouraging those attending live or virtually to applaud for the graduates – or, in this case, one graduate – and opening with a quote.

"One of my favorite quotes comes from Mark Twain, and he said, 'The two most important days in your life are the day you were born and the day you find out why.' This famous saying emphasizes finding your life's purpose or



UT Martin graduate Jada Curlin is shown on-screen on the left after receiving her degree in agriculture, with Chancellor Yancy Freeman Sr. in the foreground. Also shown on-screen is Dr. Todd Winters, dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences, who officially recommended Jada Curlin for the degree as part of the online ceremony.

meaning," he said.

"My hope for you, Jada, is as you prepare for the next step in your life's journey, that your time at UT Martin has helped you discover your 'why.'"

Winters formally recommended Curlin for conferral of her degree to Freeman, who then invited Curlin to reflect on her parents, teachers and others who helped her get to this point in her life. Freeman then conferred the degree upon her:

"By virtue of the authority of the state of Tennessee vested in the board of trustees of the University of Tennessee and, by them, delegated to the president and me, I hereby confer upon you the respective degree for which you have been recommended, with

all rights, privileges, honors and obligations appertaining thereto," he said.

"You are hereby recognized as a university graduate and an alumna of the University of Tennessee at Martin. Congratulations, Jada!"

Curlin graduated magna cum laude from UT Martin, and was one of two students to receive the Sam and Gladys Siegel Agricultural Award at UT Martin's Honors Day on April 12.

Curlin said she has two plans for the next year.

"I am currently applying for teaching positions in West Tennessee – specifically, as an agricultural teacher and FFA adviser," she said. "I do not have a job yet, but I am actively seeking and applying.

"I am also applying for an online graduate program through UT Knoxville, a master's degree in agricultural education, leadership and communications. I want to be teaching while doing my master's online. My future goal is to one day get my doctorate."

Curlin said her career dreams fit in with her UT Martin studies. She always wanted to pursue a career that made a positive impact in the community and, while in high school, she decided to get a degree to agriculture education.

"I just completed my student teaching this past semester, and that experience confirmed to me my love for the classroom," she said. "I saw that I was able to make that positive impact on students' lives just like many teachers did for me."

Curlin said that she was pleased with the work she put into getting her degree and with where it is bringing her.

"I feel very proud and happy to receive my degree," she said. "I have worked hard for four years with many trials in the middle. Being the first in my family to receive my degree is also a huge accomplishment."

"I am forever thankful for my family, friends and UTM for helping me achieve this goal I've had since elementary school. I cannot wait to get into the classroom this upcoming year."

SMITH from Front Page

development of every student he serves." Smith has been a professor of special education at UT Martin since 2012. His students are the state's future special-education teachers, and they come to him for essential lessons on "how to change outcomes for the most vulnerable students," said Dr. Amanda Batts, a UT Martin associate professor who nominated Smith for NEA's award. Before Smith came to higher education, he taught students with disabilities for more than a decade at Shadowlawn Middle School, in Bartlett, Tennessee. "This recognition reflects not only exceptional teaching, but a lasting commitment to student success, academic excellence and leadership in higher education,"

said Dr. Matthew Bice, dean, UT Martin College of Education, Health and Behavioral Sciences. "Being named the Higher Educator of the Year is a testament to passion, innovation and dedication to the students we serve. I could not be happier for Dr. Smith" Smith said that receiving the recognition is humbling and not about recalling past accomplishments but rather "about shining a light on the incredible potential of the students and future educators I am privileged to work with every day." "No one reaches a moment like this alone," Smith added. "I am profoundly mindful of the dedicated teachers, visionary leaders and selfless mentors who have poured into me throughout my life and career. "They modeled what true advocacy

looks like, challenged me to grow, and ignited my passion for this field. This recognition is a direct reflection of their investment in me, and it is a privilege to pass that torch to the next generation of professionals." The NEA is the nation's largest labor union, representing nearly three million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, students preparing to become teachers, health-care workers, and public employees. Learn more at www.nea.org. (Portions of this story courtesy of the National Education Association.)



West Tennessee HEALTHCARE™

CARE from Front Page

respond quickly, and support patient safety across the healthcare system. "In healthcare, building a connected ecosystem starts with the right partnerships," said Teresa Freeman, Chief Nursing Informatics Officer at West Tennessee Healthcare. "This requires a balance of shared vision and operational synergy with a singular purpose in mind. West Tennessee Healthcare, Philips, and hellocare.ai found that balance with the implementation of our systemwide eICU program. This service places an extra set of eyes and evaluation on our most critical patients with a goal

of improved safety and better outcomes." "Virtual care technology is becoming an essential part of critical care delivery," said Jackie Taylor, Executive Vice President and Chief Physician Executive at West Tennessee Healthcare. "By integrating Philips eCareManager with hellocare.ai's intelligent room technology, we are creating a more connected ICU environment that supports our clinicians, improves collaboration, and enhances patient care across the enterprise." The partnership reflects West Tennessee Healthcare's ongoing

commitment to bringing innovative healthcare technology and advanced care solutions closer to home for the communities it serves. About West Tennessee Healthcare: West Tennessee Healthcare is a public, not-for-profit healthcare system with locations serving 19 counties in West Tennessee and Southeast Missouri. The mission of West Tennessee Healthcare is to improve the health and well-being of the communities we serve while providing exceptional and compassionate care. For more information, visit www.wth.org.

DAVY CROCKETT SENIOR CENTER
 (Located at 515 S 1st St)

Efficiency & 1 BR Apartments
 Now leasing to Ages 50 + (62 and over take priority).
 Must be able to pass credit and criminal checks.
 Rent is based on income.

Call (731) 885-9431 or apply online at <https://8873354aff.onlineleasing.realpage.com/#k=70416>

This institution is an opportunity provider and employer (800) 545 1833 ext. 339 TDD

CHAPTER 13 or CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY

Call for FREE CONSULTATION

1-800-748-9889

Ken Walker • Richard Walker • Bethany Garland

3 LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!
 JACKSON - LEXINGTON - DYERSBURG

We are a debt relief agency. We help people file bankruptcy relief under the bankruptcy code.

STAMBAUGH ROOFING INC.

COMMERCIAL • INDUSTRIAL RESIDENTIAL

731-885-4679

HUNTING LAND **COUNTRY HOMES** **FARMLAND**

WE SELL RURAL PROPERTIES NORTHWEST TENNESSEE

WATERFRONT **AUCTION SERVICES** **TIMBERLAND**

JAKE MEYER
 NORTHWEST TENNESSEE LAND SPECIALIST
 ☎ 731.333.1949
 † 217.285.9000

WHITETAIL PROPERTIES REAL ESTATE
 HUNTING | RANCH | FARM | TIMBER

2025 BEST BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY
 Whitetail Properties Real Estate, LLC DBA Whitetail Properties, DBA Whitetail Properties Real Estate
 Licensed in TN - Tim Burnette, Jeffery Evans, and Josh Monk, Brokers.

The Hearth Restaurant

Monday - Friday Lunch Buffet \$12.99
Meat and 3 \$10.99

Monday - Friday Dinner Buffet \$14.77
Full Breakfast Menu Served Until 11 AM

613 N. Lindell St. | Martin TN 38237
731-587-9700