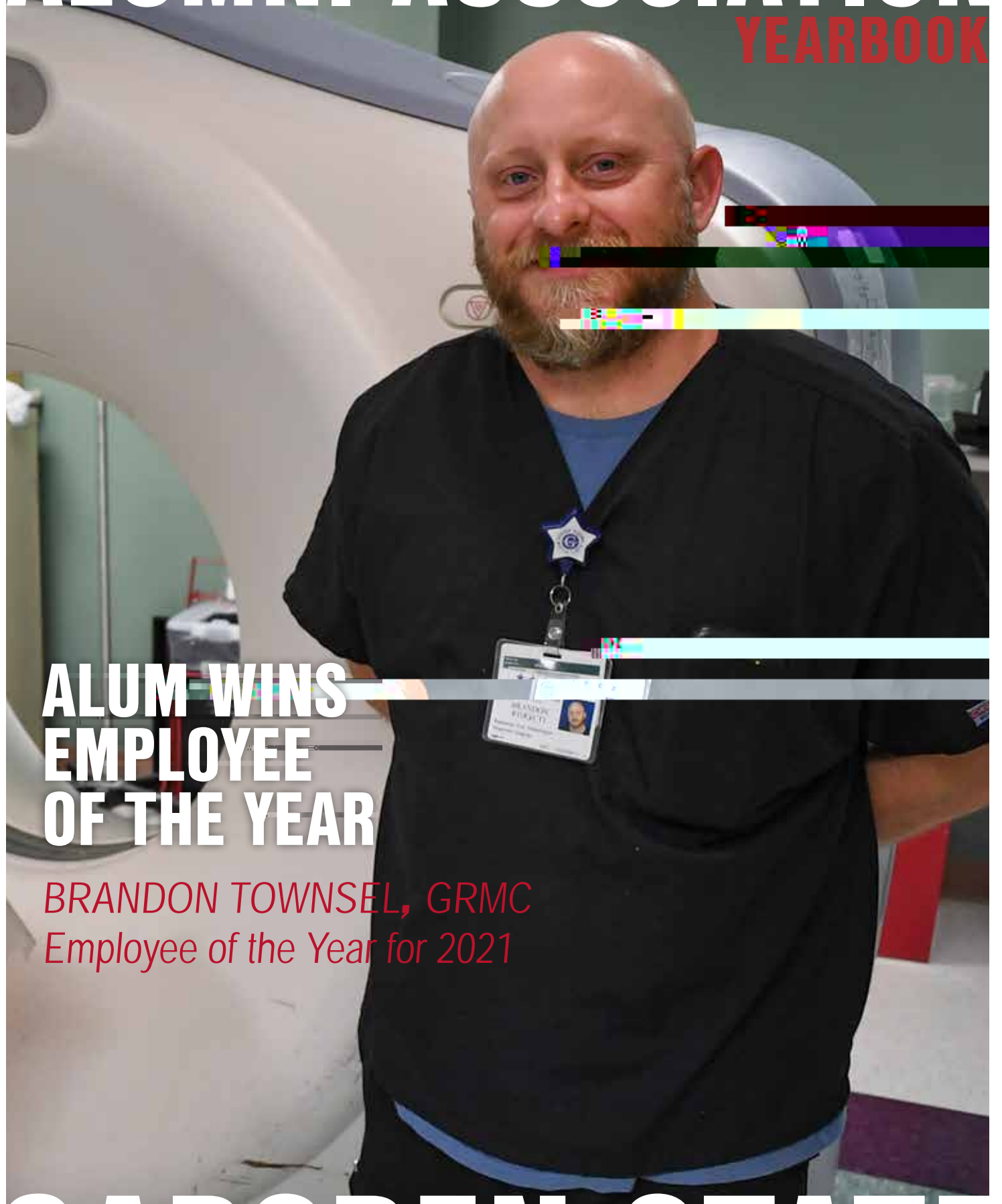


2021-2022

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION YEARBOOK



**ALUM WINS
EMPLOYEE
OF THE YEAR**

*BRANDON TOWNSEL, GRMC
Employee of the Year for 2021*

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**THE WORLD IS
YOUR OYSTER**



It is an honor to serve Gadsden State Community College and our community as chair of the Alumni Association Board of Directors.”

Over the years, our association has given away thousands in scholarships, participated in events and programs and began a brick campaign that allows alumni to honor the time they spent at GSCC as well as others that may have had a significant impact on their lives.

Celebrating the Cardinal spirit, we’ve recognized notable alumni, staff and faculty annually through an awards program and luncheon. We’ve provided outreach activities to encourage others to participate and support athletic programs, career technical competition accomplishments and more.

The association is truly the proudest ambassador of the great foundation that Gadsden State has provided and will continue to provide to hundreds of thousands of students over the years and in the years to come. It is our pride in our campus, our faculty and our future that drives us to lend our talents to build new leaders for tomorrow.

Gadsden State Community College is a game-changer for our community. Whether its reskilling or upskilling in technical degrees and certificates, strong associat621drivr9TJO -1.otcane32 (w)72



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**WHAT'S AGE GOT
TO DO WITH IT?**

Tillis goes from student to director at the Valley Street Campus

[Read more](#)



*Gadsden State Valley Street Campus Director
Ricky Tillis*

I'm humbled and grateful for this opportunity," he said. "I'm in a position where I can really help students, faculty and staff in bigger ways. I want to be a voice for them so that we may see improvements come to our campus."



*Gadsden State Ayers Campus Director
Gerri Langley*

Furthering my education at Gadsden State made a huge difference in my life," said Langley, who was the first in her family to earn a college degree.



Brandon Townsel was

“My instructors were the best,” he said. “They would prepare us in





The Cokers went to college at Alabama School of Trades and gained much more than a skill set that would create long-term careers. They found life-long partners.

“We know that the trade school brought us together,” said Deborah Coker. “It’s really funny how it all came about.”

Deborah graduated from Gadsden High School in 1970 and, a week later, she enrolled at the Alabama School of Trades, now known as Gadsden State Community College’s East Broad Campus. She was in the secretarial studies program, which required students to not only learn the necessary skills of administrative assistants but to also perform housekeeping duties.

“One day, I was sweeping the sidewalk in front of our building,” she said. “We had to dress professionally every day. We had to wear skirts or dresses, even when we were doing our housekeeping chores.”

Jimmy Coker and his best friend, J.L. Armstrong, saw her. Jimmy was instantly smitten.

“I nearly ran a stop sign looking at her legs,” he said. “I couldn’t help it. She was so beautiful.”

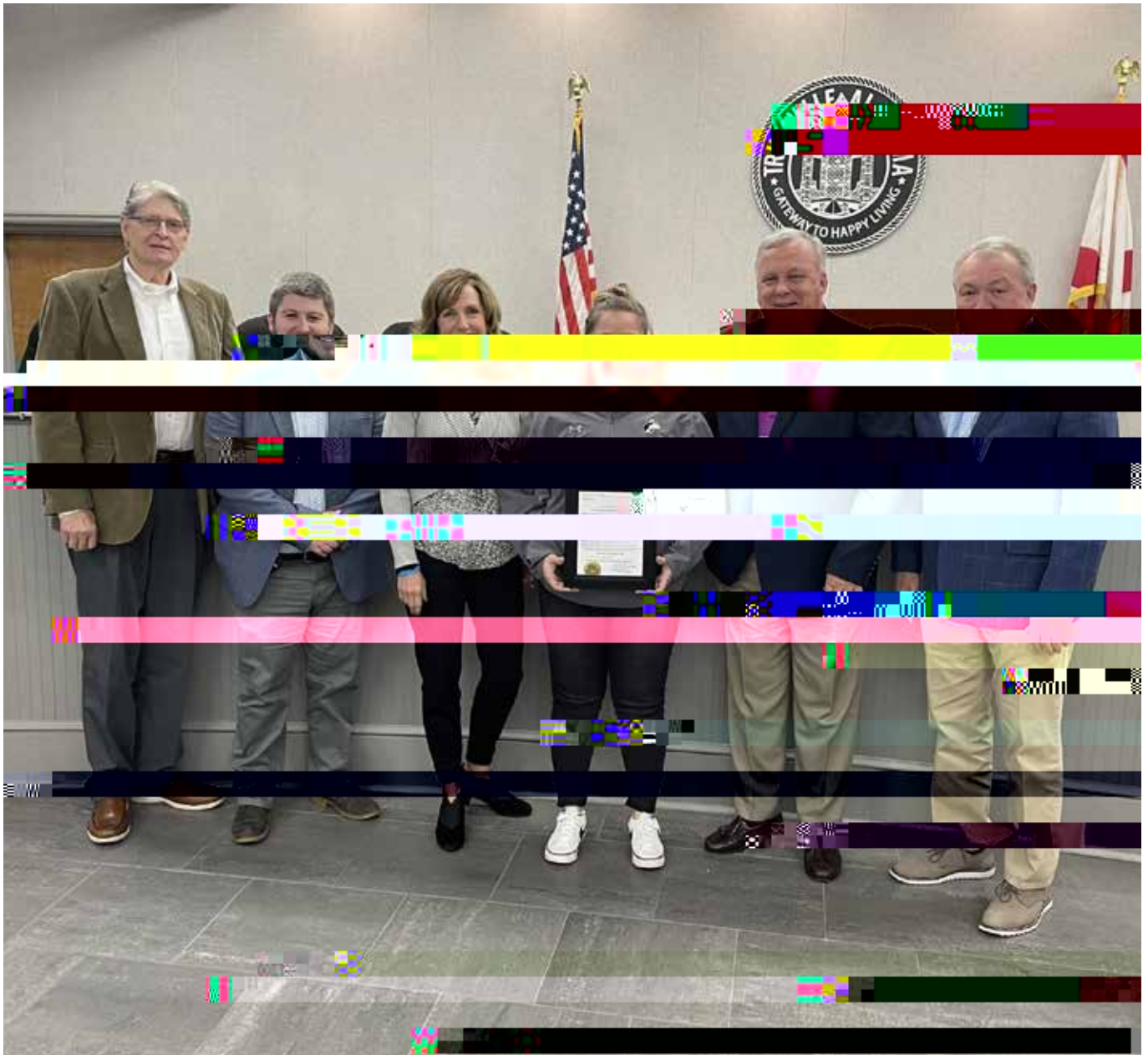
Still, Jimmy was too bashful to speak to her even though he saw her regularly on campus. He told one of his friends, a cosmetology student, that he really wanted to meet Deborah.

“Shueet De3 (d)5 (n)39 (y)88 (.Y{wBeoo b)5 (pus. S)0 (o sTiS)0 (o s)39 t)ill, Jimmookinaentil

Des,”es, even

"We put an innertube in his locker and

2021-2022 GRADUATION PICTURES



previously won in 2019 as well.

While the accolades are special, it's her team's successes that matter most. The Huskies have earned two state championships and two Class 7A Area 6 titles. During the 2022 season, the team was the

runner-up at the Alabama State Class 7A Softball Championship after a 2-0 heartbreaker against Thompson High School.

Burt said nine of her former players now play at the collegiate level.

"I've been very fortunate to coach a number of talented athletes," Burt said. "We have quite a few playing at the Power 5 level."

Throughout her career, she has looked back at her time at Gadsden State fondly. She said she remains close with a number of her former teammates.

FIRST-GEN STUDENT



Just because no one in your family tried before, doesn't mean you can't do it."

Being a first-generation student means that your parent(s) did not complete a four-year college or university degree, regardless of other family members' level of education.

At Gadsden State, the TRiO programs –Student Support Services, Upward Bound and Educational Talent-focus on developing and assisting first-generation, low-income or disabled students. Along with the TRiO programs, they find encouragement during the development of their education courses through the Advisement Resource Center.

Gadsden State recognized the National First-Generation College Celebration with Xun Chen, a 2021 graduate, who shared about her experiences as a first-generation Cardinal in the video below.

Nov. 8 was also chosen to honor the anniversary of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which led to Federal TRiO Programs that provide services for first-generation college students.

Many of the SSS first-gen students have succeeded in completing college and earning direct entry into the workforce or transferring to a four-year university.

[CLICK HERE](#) learn more about Gadsden State's TRiO programs!



Lesa Young Osborne's focus is to build a better Gadsden through commercial recruitment and development so that Etowah County residents don't have to travel for enjoyable shopping and dining experiences.

"We are always working hard to bring new retailers to the city of Gadsden," she said. "More retailers mean more economic growth in our community."

Osborne is the director of the Gadsden Commercial Development Authority, a non-profit organization that acts as a liaison between the city and the development community as well as promotes the development of city-owned property. It also assists with tax rebates on commercial projects; guides developers through the permit process; maintains an extensive database of available development opportunities; provides demographic profiles to developers and assists in the development of

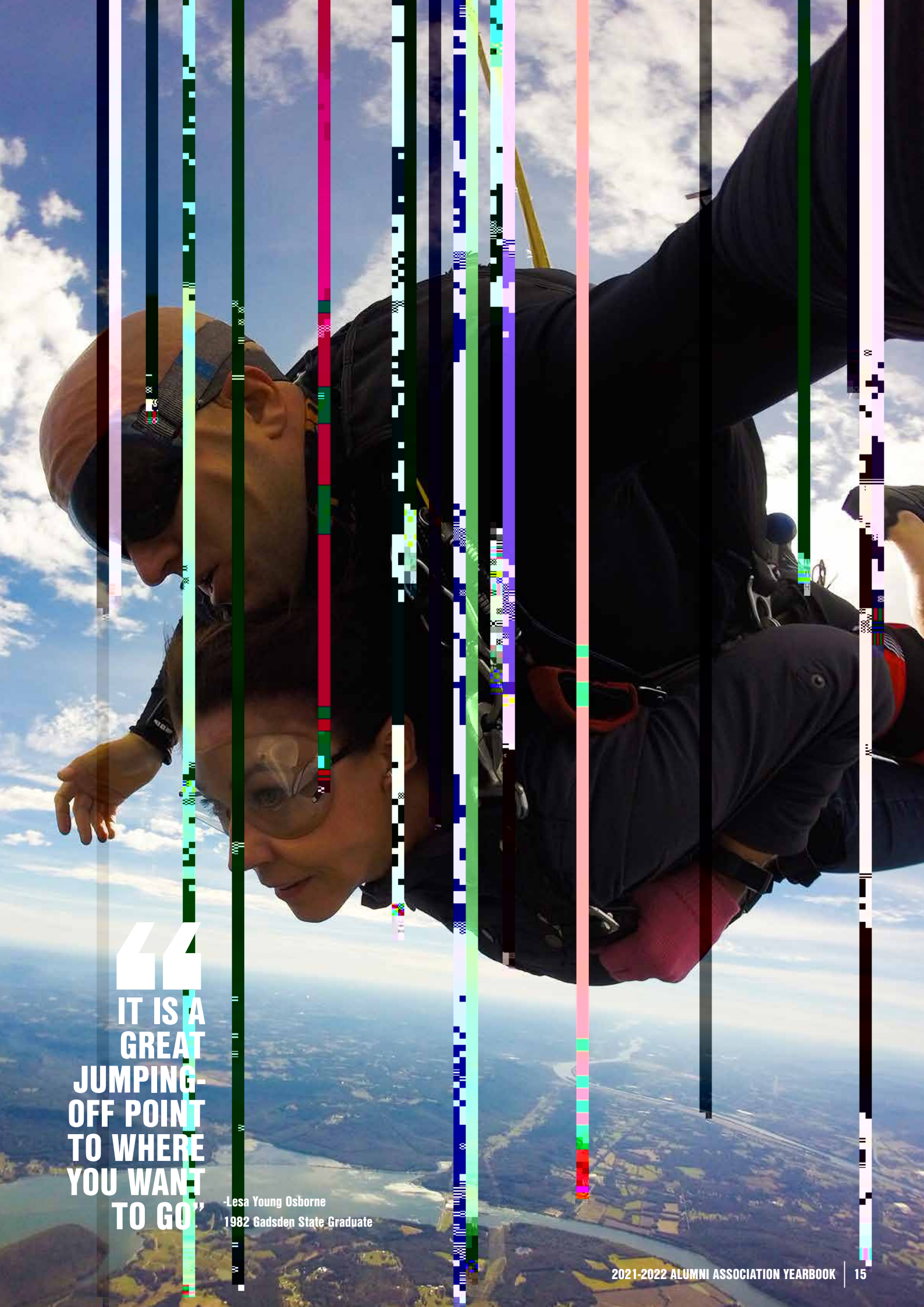
tax rebates on commercial projects.

Osborne is instrumental in completing a number of development projects such as Walmart and Coosa Town Center and, most recently, securing a deal with Olive Garden.

"I am most pleased with the Rivertrace development project in East Gadsden," she said. "It was exciting to be involved with a project for three years. It is amazing that it started as a golf course and now is a shopping hub for the people in Etowah County and beyond. It contributes to our area's economic growth and provides employment opportunities for our people."

In 1982, Osborne graduated from Gadsden State Community College with an associate degree in Banking and Finance. At that time, she was 18 and independent in search of a promising future that could provide her financial stability. She accepted a job at Exchange Bank in Stowers Hill before working in human

resources at Alacare and as a branch manager for Compass Bank. In 2000, she took a position at The



“
IT IS A
GREAT
JUMPING-
OFF POINT
TO WHERE
YOU WANT
TO GO”

-Lesla Young Osborne
1982 Gadsden State Graduate

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Members of the Gadsden State Alumni Association talk about what GSCC means to them.



The Gadsden State Community College
Alumni Association honored three
members of the faculty and staff and

Center, where she is a registered obstetrics/gynecology sonographer.

“She is always willing to step up and fill a gap where needed to serve her community and Gadsden State students,” Watson said.



Mark Condra

The ***Distinguished Service Award*** was presented to **Ma C d a**, the past president of the Cardinal Foundation.

“Mark is a wonderful community volunteer and supporter,” Watson said.

Condra is an active member of Gadsden First United Methodist Church. He has served as the chairman of both the Gadsden Cultural Arts Foundation and the membership committee for The Chamber of Gadsden/Etowah. He has served as a member of the District Committee for the Boy Scouts and the project coordinator for a four-church campaign to serve the community in school clean-up projects.

“Mark has done a wonderful job in leading the foundation and helping grow its assets,” Watson said. “He is a true leader in every way, and we are immensely honored and proud to recognize him in this momentous way.”



[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about the Alumni Association and how you can support student scholarships.



2021 ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The Gadsden State Alumni Association gives student scholarships each year. The Alumni Association awards scholarships annually to two currently-enrolled Gadsden State students. *The scholarships are applied toward tuition, fees and books.*



Stephanie Hamby

Stephanie Hamby is the daughter of Lisa & Howard Clark and Rodney Hamby.

She is majoring in general studies with a focus on business management.

She plans to graduate and pursue a career in finance management and human resources.



Torance “Torie” Morgan

Torance “Torie” Morgan is from Attalla and is the daughter of Matthew and Candice Morgan.

She enrolled in the surgical tech program and after graduation, Morgan would like to work as a surgical tech in an operating room.

GADSDEN STATE STUDENT EXCITED ABOUT EARNING DEGREE

Earning a college credential is one of the greatest milestones achieved in a person's life. A college education can result in a better quality of life thanks to greater success in today's job market and higher wages. For Cortney Joseph, her college degree from Gadsden State Community College is more than that. It is also proof that she can achieve all things with hard work, dedication and support from family and friends.

"Walking across that stage to get my diploma is my moment to show that I did this; I succeeded," she said. "My kids can now see that if they fight hard enough, if they work hard enough, they will achieve their goals."

Joseph shared her story as one of the student speakers at the December 2021 commencement ceremony held at Gadsden State Cherokee Arena in Centre. She was one of three student speakers to share their Gadsden State story during the ceremony.

Joseph, who lives in Centre, graduated from Gaylesville High School in 2010. She got married, enrolled in Georgia Highlands College and soon found out she was pregnant. After her daughter Aubree was born, she got a divorce. She said being a single mom who also juggled work and school wasn't easy.

In 2013, Joseph married her husband, Clay, and was accepted into the nursing program at Georgia Highlands College. When she became pregnant with their son, Parker, she temporarily withdrew from the nursing program just one semester shy of completing requirements to become a registered nurse.

Parker was born in June 2015 with a chromosomal defect and died three months later. This experience left

Joseph heartbroken and unwilling to resume her college education.

"I had to take some time to accept what I had just been through before I put myself out there again," she said. "I wasn't ready to go back to school."

When Joseph unexpectedly got pregnant again, she made the decision to stay home to raise her son, Cooper, now 5. She stayed home for the next three years until one day she made the decision to continue her education once again.

"I wanted to do something for myself," she said. "I wanted to do something that would be beneficial to me and my family, so I decided to apply to Gadsden State in 2019."

She initially wanted to be a part of the Registered Nursing Program at Gadsden State. When that didn't work out, she decided to take general studies courses.

"I didn't want to waste my acceptance to Gadsden State so I decided to go ahead and take courses that will one day transfer to a four-year university," she said.

Joseph enrolled in English 102, history and sociology courses for the 2019 fall semester. She applied to the nursing program for a second time and was rejected again. Far from being defeated, Joseph's advisor talked to her about applying to the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program at Gadsden State.

"I researched sonography," she said. "I talked to my sonographer from when I was pregnant, and she told me that I would be great at it with all I've been through myself. I decided to go for it."

In August 2020, Joseph started the



highly-competitive DMS program with 19 other students. She said it would be hard for her to graduate without the support from her classmates.

"When you are placed in a class with 20 people, you all become more than friends. You become like family," she said. "People outside of our circle don't understand what we go through as DMS students. It can be chaotic. It can be challenging, but we all pitch in to be there for each other. We wouldn't be successful if we weren't looking out for one another. We aren't out for ourselves in the DMS program. We all want to cross that finish line together."

Rebecca Southern, the DMS program director, said Joseph was a model student. She was the president of the Cardinal DMS Society, was an embedded tutor and a member of Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society. She also earned the Student of Distinction Award and remained on the coveted President's List for a 4.0 GPA, a feat she accomplished throughout her time at Gadsden State.

"Cortney embodies the definition of a leader," she said. "She has a servant's

heart and goes above and beyond for her cohort all while setting an example of excellence. She excelled in the classroom and in her hands-on skills.”

Southern called Joseph a “unicorn” for achieving the rare accomplishment in earning certifications from the American Registry for Diagnostic Medical Sonographers in all three modalities - vascular, abdomen and obstetrics/gynecology.

“Each individual credentialing exam takes months of preparation,” Southern said. “Many seasoned sonographers only hold one of these credentials. To obtain three before graduation is an extremely challenging feat; however, it exponentially increases their marketability when job searching.”

Joseph said earning the credentials is certainly something that makes her proud.

“I’m honored to be specialized and registered in all three modalities,” she said. “It was certainly an accomplishment I worked very hard for. I had to know everything about each modality, so I had to know all about the signs, symptoms, labs and pathology in vascular, abdomen and OB/GYN.”

Joseph said she studied a lot for the credentialing exams in addition to attending class, being a wife and mother and completing clinicals in Birmingham and Rome, Ga.

“I studied day-in and day-out,” she said. “I was very focused on those exams, and it was all worth it.”

Joseph said she earned her vascular certification on Oct. 19, her abdomen certification on Nov. 16 and the OB/GYN certification on Nov. 30. She is so happy that the pressure of achieving the certifications is over and that she can, once again, focus on her family and her new career.

“I think the toughest thing about all of this is the ‘mom guilt,’” she said. “I went from being there all of the time for my children to not getting home until 6 p.m., eating a quick dinner and then studying again. Not being there all of the time for my children was tough. It was the hardest thing for me as a mom and a student.”

She gives thanks to Clay for helping her achieve her goals.

“It was hard on my husband,” Joseph said. “He really stepped up and took care of everything from picking them up at the end of the school day to doing homework to cooking dinner. Plus, he worked full time. It was tough but we made it through.”

Thanks to her degree and credentials obtained at Gadsden State, Joseph landed a job as a sonographer at the Redmond Regional Medical Center in Rome, Ga.

“Graduating from Gadsden State is a testament that I am no longer a college drop-out,” she said. “I faced rejection twice and I still made it out of Gadsden State with a degree. I have achieved my dream. I did it!”



the Registered Nursing Programs at Gadsden State,” said Valerie Roberts, who worked with him in SSS. “I knew as soon as I met Brian that he was not going to give up.”

Roberts said he willingly sacrificed his own time to help his fellow classmates while he worked to excel in his own courses.

“Most importantly, he always gave back to his community and Gadsden State by participating in various community service projects during his time as a GSCC Cardinal,” she said.

Roberts witnessed him in various study groups, many of which he organized. He’d even show up on days classes were not in session to study more.

“I am not surprised at all that Brian Galimore accomplished his goals,” Roberts said. “I am extremely proud of him and hope that his dedication and drive can inspire others to do the same.”

As Galimore gained further confidence in balancing student, work and life as a Gadsden State Cardinal, he harnessed it to hold a presidential role for the Circle K Club. During his time as president, the club’s membership grew exponentially.

From 2018 to 2019, he inspired members to join him in orchestrating and assisting with therapeutic parties for adults with disabilities.

“Brian was already representing himself as a professional caregiver with attention to details and engaging the attendees of the parties,” said Brandy Hyatt, advisor for the Circle K Club.

As leader of the club, the members earned hundreds of volunteer service hours for these activities and others, but also mentored them with life-long lessons about the local communities’ needs.



Brian Galimore on the day he received his acceptance letter into the Nursing program.

Galimore’s dedication to the Gadsden Kiwanis Club and Circle K went beyond the campus and the community. He (o)6 (r)2..368 Td[K w]32 (en)26 (t



accomplishments and look forward to watching him grow as a successful registered nurse and a hard-working community supporter.”



Award for his participation in the growing student chapter of the Alumni Association, Phi Theta Kappa, the Student Government Association, Students Without Borders, the Math, Science and Engineering Club and the Circle K service organization.

Galimore also supported the community by helping build beds with Sleep in Heavenly Peace, taking part in Clean Home Alabama, assisting with the Etowah Water Festival, participating in a bowling fundraiser for Big Brothers/Big Sisters, raising money for the Ronald McDonald Foundation and volunteering for Comfort Care Hospice.



Galimore was honored with other awards throughout his tenure at Gadsden State. He received the Student of Distinction Award and Outstanding Achievement in American Literature. The Student of Distinction Award is bestowed on those who are nominated by the faculty and staff at Gadsden State, maintained a 3.5 minimum GPA, completed at least 54 credit hours by the end of the spring semester and demonstrated leadership at the college and service to the community. He remained on the President’s List every semester from 2018 to 2021.

Galimore received his RN pin at the 2022 Nursing Pinning Ceremony. He also received the Academic Achievement Award from the Health Science Division, which recognizes those students with above-average grades and performance.

“Brian Galimore is committed to our community and to Gadsden State,” Hyatt said. “He decided to reinvent himself and proves that you can do it at any age. We are proud of his





GADSDEN STATE COLLEGE



BECOME AN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBER TODAY!

Get Alumni Perks Today!

Start using your Alumni Association Benefits when you complete the membership application.
\$25 Annual Membership Dues or a one-time \$300 Lifetime Membership Due

The Gadsden State Alumni Association is an advocacy group comprised of alumni, students, faculty, staff and community supporters. Its purpose is to advance, support and promote the interests of the College, its students, the alumni and its members.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMBER BENEFITS



Free Gear Rental w/Purchase of Day Pass

\$10 Off Adjustments for Private Payers

15% Off Lunch Purchase
@ Gadsden Variety Store and Café

10% Off Entire Purchase
@ Dang Girl, What's Poppin' Boutique

10% Off (excludes alcohol)
Blackstone Pub and Eatery

\$1 Off Regular Snowball
@ Pelican's Snowballs

10% Off Play
@ The Alley

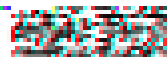
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