



## September 2015

### New Academic Year Arrives



Freshmen Kitty Christie (left) and Richa Patel at Opening Convocation

Austin College's 167th academic year is underway. Opening Convocation officially launched the academic year on Wednesday, August 26, prior to start of classes the following day.

Faculty and the Class of 2016, dressed in academic regalia and robes, filed into Wynne Chapel at dusk. The entering freshman class and transfer students then took part in one of the College's time-honored traditions, as faculty, students, friends and special guests embraced a new year.

Two freshmen--**Catherine "Kitty" Christie** '19 of Nichols Hills, Oklahoma, and **Richa Patel** '19 of El Paso--were selected to hang the banner for Class of 2019. Richa was acknowledged as the first student to secure a spot as a freshman. Kitty was recognized for the most extensive legacy among her peers. Kitty's legacy dates back to her grandparents, **Dottye Richardson Maines** and **James "Bud" Maines** (both Class of 1960), as well as her grandmother's brother, **Joe Mac Maines** (Class of 1963). In addition, Kitty's parents, **Dede Maines Christie** (Class of 1985, MA 1986) and **Byron H. Christie** (Class of 1988) attended Austin College.

Along with choral performances and special readings by students and staff, a new faculty "barbershop quartet," the ACademics, sang. They delivered a new take on the Austin College Alma Mater, recently rearranged by Chris Hebert, brother of Mark Hebert, associate professor of philosophy. ([Hear/see it.](#))

Austin College President Marjorie Hass then delivered the evening's address, "[Education as Intimate Immensity](#)." With the new year at hand, she said, "I look forward to the community we will make together: intimate in size, immense in spirit."

## Teeing Up for Service



*Jeremy Swisher, left, organization secretary; Josh Dickerman, vice president; and far right, Cody Meyers, president, pose with just one of the families their organization has helped.*

A summer 2014 Austin College basketball team trip to Costa Rica resulted in victories on the court but even more important victories were to come. While in Costa Rica, team members volunteered with a nonprofit that assists underprivileged children, serving as role models and father figures for the children. Moved by the experience, teammates Cody Meyers '17, Jeremy Swisher '17, and Josh Dickerman '17 determined to continue serving others. All had family members who had dealt with life-threatening illnesses and had seen the extreme toll upon families. They combined their experiences to establish the nonprofit charity The Extra Step. The organization now assists children with illnesses and has been able to share \$10,000 with families in Dallas who are struggling to meet the medical costs of their children's illnesses. Partnering with Children's Medical Center in Dallas, the teammates have offered assistance to 20 families through their own summer jobs and donations from friends and families.

A growing number of requests for assistance has led to a fundraiser this month, and the young men encourage all of 'Roo Nation to participate.

### **TopGolf Tournament - TopGolf Allen, 1500 Andrews Parkway**

September 26, 2015 | 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Ticket: \$75 - includes entry & 1 raffle ticket

See full details of prizes, lunch, raffles, etc., at [www.theextrastepfoundation.org](http://www.theextrastepfoundation.org).

Registration requested by September 16.

## Sabbatical Quests Generate Greater Knowledge



*Arctic polar bear caught on camera during previous research trip*

The Austin College faculty 2015-2016 Sabbatical Series for fall begins September 23. Bob Cape, professor of classics, will open the series with his lecture: "Why Go 'Back to the Future?' The Centrality of Classical Greece and Rome for Visions of the Future in American Literature and Film." (Think *Hunger Games* or *The Lightning Thief*.) The event will take place in the Wright Campus Center (4 p.m. reception, 4:30 p.m. talk). *Cape holds the Chase Professorship of Classical Languages.*

As Cape prepares for his talk, seven other faculty members will begin their own sabbaticals. Some have packed their bags or started commuting back and forth between research sites and campus. Others, like George Diggs, professor of biology, are heading out of the country. For Diggs it's the "High Arctic," tracing the route of the famous Northwest Passage through northern Canada and Greenland.

Last year Diggs traveled to Iceland and Svalbard (northern Norway) to observe a variety of wildlife species from polar bears to reindeer. Diggs, an evolutionary biologist, has long been interested in evolution in extreme environments. Ultimately, he plans to present his findings to the Austin College community, along with a future Jan Term to be titled "Life at the Extremes." *Diggs holds the Donald McGregor Chair of Natural Sciences.*

Germany is the destination of Don Salisbury, professor of physics. Salisbury is serving as a visiting scholar at the Max Plank Institute for the History of Science in Berlin. Along with his research related to quantum gravity and history of general relativity, he is helping organize a special celebration. One hundred years ago, Albert Einstein, who lived in Berlin in 1915 (before immigrating to America in 1933), created his general theory of relativity. The Austin College physics professor will also serve as a plenary speaker at a workshop in Germany focused on the Golden Age of relativity.

### Sweet Sixteen Now At Austin College



'Roos take on Rhodes College at Apple Stadium in 2014

Yes, it's true! Austin College is competing now in 16 sports, adding men's and women's distance track to the College's sports program this year.

The 'Roo athletics calendar has never been quite so full. Already, student-athletes are on the gridiron, soccer fields, and in the gymnasium, preparing to host their first opponents from out-of-town. Tuesday, September 1, Mary Hardin-Baylor University men's and women's soccer teams face the 'Roos in Sherman.

Friday, September 4, Macalester College Scots travel from St. Paul, Minnesota, to challenge Austin College's women's volleyball team. Then Saturday, September 5, the 'Roos open their football season, taking on Hendrix College in Apple Stadium. Later this month, men's and women's cross country teams travel to McMurry University for the Bill Libby Invitational.

For upcoming sports events--games, meets, tournaments and invitationals--[check here](#) for additional dates and times.

### You Make It Possible



*Fresh new faces among the Class of 2019*

More and more talented young students, representing a greater variety of backgrounds across the country and around the world, call Austin College home. Thank you for your support in helping make this possible.

To give to Austin College go to: [www.austincollege.edu/support](http://www.austincollege.edu/support).

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