



Rhodes College

DIVISION OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Rhodes College Highlights & Achievements

Spring 2023

Rhodes College has continued to receive considerable media coverage related to faculty expertise and thought leadership, student engagement, annual rankings, campus events, promotions, awards, and achievements.

College Rankings, Achievements, and Awards

Rhodes continues to garner recognition across categories on college ranking lists. The Fall 2022 semester was no exception. Rhodes placed highly on lists organized by U.S. News & World Report, *Forbes*, The Princeton Review, and on other rankings, noting Rhodes' value, the beauty of the campus, and the ways the college's outstanding liberal arts education equips students to be socially mobile in a rapidly changing society.

- [Rhodes College comes in at No. 10](#) on *Best Degree Programs*' "30 Most Beautiful Small Colleges." (Dec. 30, 2022)
- [Rhodes College and The Steve and Riea Lainoff Crop Trust Fellowship in Honor of Cary Fowler recently celebrated 10 years of partnership.](#) For the past decade, the Crop Trust has supported exceptional students at Rhodes College in pursuing their interests in global affairs and conservation. (Dec. 12, 2022)
- [Rhodes College is recognized by MSN as the Most Beautiful College in Tennessee](#) on its "Most Beautiful College Campus in Every State" list. (Oct. 24, 2022)
- [Rhodes College ranks 81 out of 900 U.S. higher education institutions](#) and comes in at No. 2 for colleges and universities in Tennessee according to WalletHub's "2023 Best Colleges and Universities Rankings." (Oct. 17, 2022)
- [Billboard recognizes Rhodes as a "2022 Top Music Business School."](#) (Oct. 11, 2022)
 - The Mike Curb Institute for Music was also [featured by WMC](#) as a "5-Star Story" (Nov. 1, 2022)
- [Rhodes has been recognized as one of Architectural Digest's Prettiest College Campuses in America.](#) Reviewers praised our "beautiful wooded campus with uniformly Collegiate Gothic buildings." (Sept. 20, 2022)

Rhodes College's Twenty-First President

July 2022 marked the arrival of Rhodes' twenty-first president. President Jennifer Collins has been covered extensively in local media. ([WHBQ/FOX](#), [WPTY/ABC](#), [MSN.com](#))

- President Jennifer M. Collins Is interviewed by WMC/NBC Anchor Joe Birch (July 20, 2022)
- [Rhodes President is featured in *Memphis* magazine's "A Conversation with Dr. Jennifer Collins."](#) (Oct. 2022)
- [The *Memphis Business Journal* also featured Rhodes' president in "Jennifer Collins' journey to Rhodes, and her plans as the next president of the institution."](#) (Sept. 29, 2022)
- [President Jennifer Collins Is Interviewed on WKNO's "Behind the Headlines."](#) (Aug. 5, 2022)

Faculty Expertise, Thought Leadership, and Achievement

Faculty expertise is one of the college's greatest assets. Faculty lead research projects of significant impact and contribute to Rhodes' institutional profile. Rhodes faculty are often sought out and featured by local and national media outlets.

- A collective of Urban Studies and Health Equity faculty including professors **Kendra Hotz**, **Duane Loynes**, and **Peter Hossler** have secured over \$400,000 in grant funding to develop and deliver health equity curricula and workshops, as well as train-the-trainer sessions for more than 3,000 advocates at Humana of Louisiana and Nurse Family Partnership. (Dec. 2022)
- Music professor **William Skoog** was the invited conductor for a world premiere of a cantata for choir, orchestra, and soloists composed by Keith A. Ferguson titled "A Journey of the Heart." This endeavor included a full performance and professionally produced recording of this work. (Nov. 2022)
- International Studies professor **Chien-Kai Chen** was interviewed as an expert commentator by both the New Tang Dynasty Television (a Chinese-language news channel based in the US) and by *Epoch Times* (a Chinese-language newspaper based in the US). (Nov. 2022)
- [Mathematics professor Ross T. Sowell collaborated with Eight Rhodes students](#) to run a set of demonstrations in the "Robot Room" at the ScienceWriters2022 conference, in addition to presenting at the conference. (Nov. 29, 2022)
- [Sociology professor Earl Wright II was honored at the annual meetings of two sociology associations.](#) His work was featured as the topic of the "Author Meets Legacy" session at the Conference for the Association of Black Sociologists. He also received the Thomas C. Calhoun Excellence in Mentoring Award at the Mid-South Sociological Association's 48th Annual Meeting. (Oct. 25, 2022)

Other Faculty Achievements

- Religious Studies professor **Patrick Gray** published "[About That 'Immaculate Reception': The Pittsburgh Steelers' 1972 Miracle and the Theological Doctrine for Which It's Named](#)" in the *Wall Street Journal*. (Dec. 22, 2022)
- Urban Studies professor **Austin Harrison** published "[Restorative Planning in Action: Lessons from Mound Up!](#)" on the American Planning Association's blog. (Nov. 22, 2022)
- History Professor Emeritus **Michael Drompp** presented "[Mobile Cosmopolitanism:](#)

[Diversity and Exchange in the Uyghur Steppe Empire \(744-840\)](#)” for the 16th Annual Leon Levy Lecture, a lecture series held by the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World at New York University. (Nov. 3, 2022)

- Physics professor **David Rupke** is part of a research team working to analyze new cosmic data uncovered in the first discoveries of NASA’s James Webb Space Telescope. He is quoted in “[Webb Uncovers Dense Cosmic Knot In The Early Universe](#),” published by the *European Space Agency*. (Oct. 20, 2022)
- Urban Studies visiting instructor **Andrea Jacobo** [serves on a committee of community members advising on and crafting public initiatives](#) for Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris. (Oct. 12, 2022)
- Researchers from Rhodes contributed to “[Factors influencing terrestriality in primates of the Americas and Madagascar](#),” a large-scale study of the effects of deforestation on 47 species of monkeys and lemurs published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. (Oct. 11, 2022)
- [English professor and award-winning poet Caki Wilkinson was featured as poet of the day on Poet Daily](#), a poetry anthology website. (Oct. 6, 2022)
- [Chemistry professor Shana Stoddard received the 2022 Henry C. McBay Outstanding Teacher Award at the 49th annual meeting of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers](#). She delivered a speech titled “Believe Without Boundaries.”
- Research from Educational Studies professor **Zachary Casey** is featured in “[The Key to More Equitable Schools? Deep Commitment](#)” published in *Education Week* magazine. (Sept. 6, 2022)
- [Media Studies professor Joy Brooke Fairfield, alumnus Yifei Zhang ’21 \(known as Yash\), and student Janay Kelley ’24 had their film works featured at the 54th Indie Memphis Film Festival](#). (Oct. 13, 2022)

Student Achievement

Rhodes students are exceptionally engaged and shine among their peers. Our students work in local and national contexts weighing in on pressing issues, contributing ground-breaking research to their chosen fields, and serving as changemakers throughout various communities.

- Environmental Sciences major **Maggie Lindsay ’24** is a key contributor to the Memphis Zoo’s Scientist Spotlight Features. She has published several features that live on the Memphis Zoo’s blog.
 - [Memphis Zoo Blog](#)-Nov. 8
 - [Memphis Zoo Blog](#)-Nov. 21
 - [Memphis Zoo Blog](#): Jan. 3
- [Psychology major, Bonner Scholar, and Gender and Sexuality Alliance \(GSA\) president Vaniel Simmons ’24 conducted research with Bill Short on the history of the LGBTQ+ community at Rhodes](#) after discovering a cache of old articles from the *Sou’wester* on the topic. (Nov. 18, 2022)
- [Computer Science and Media Studies major Jackson Hendrix ’24 revived the Audubon Sessions music series in Fall 2022](#), bringing small-scale, intimate concerts back to Elvis’ first home. (Oct. 6, 2022)

More Student Achievement Stories

- **Brittany Ashley '23, Avery Comish '24, Elizabeth Griffin '23, and Isabella Brewer '24,** led by art and art history professor Miriam Clinton, [travelled to Porto Rafti, Greece, to become part of the archaeological survey project known as BEARS](#)--the Bays of East Attica Regional Survey. (Dec. 5, 2022)
- [In September 2022, for the first time since the outset of the pandemic, the Rhodes Equestrian Club sent a team to a collegiate competition.](#) They placed in the top five in several events. (Nov. 21, 2022)
- [International Studies, Economics, and Chinese Studies major Anne Entz '23 was the recipient of the prestigious Boren Scholarship, which funds study abroad with the goal of immersing students in a language critical to U.S. national security interests.](#) Entz studied Mandarin Chinese in Taipei, Taiwan, at the National Taiwan University for the Fall 2022 semester. (Nov. 21, 2022)
- [Rhodes' Comedy Improv Group Contents Under Pressure performed regionally at the Magnolia Arts Center in Arkansas.](#) (Nov. 8, 2022)
- [Economics and Mathematics major Joshua Nguyen '23 was a 2022 recipient of a STEM Scholarship from New Orleans-based chemical manufacturer Cornerstone Chemical Company.](#) (Oct. 28, 2022)
- [Rhodes' RHOK-SAT team, which is composed of a diverse group of faculty and students working in collaboration with the University of Oklahoma,](#) built a ground station on campus to test satellite communications in preparation for their 2024 launch. (Oct. 19, 2022)

Staff Achievement

Rhodes staff also are recognized leaders. They not only contribute to campus operations and exceptional student experiences but also the local community.

- Chief Human Resources Officer [Claire Revels Shapiro was nominated for the 2022 HR Excellence Award by the Society for Human Resource Management \(SHRM\)-Memphis.](#) (Nov. 21, 2022)
- Senior Development Officer **Mike Palazzolo '86** spoke to *The Commercial Appeal* about his plans for his third term as the mayor of Germantown, Tennessee. (Nov. 7, 2022)
- Assistant Director of Admission Piyush Kumar was featured as an expert in the *Memphis Parent* article "[The Changing World of College Admissions.](#)" (Sept. 19, 2022)

Alumni Achievement

Rhodes alumni shine in their respective fields, bringing attention to the college across various industries and organizations. Several Rhodes alums currently serve in positions of high prestige with organizations that perform world-renowned work in Memphis and beyond.

- [Dr. Russ Wigginton '88 will deliver the commencement address and receive an honorary doctor of public service degree at Maryville College's 2023 Commencement.](#) (Dec. 15, 2022)
- [Dr. R. Allen Blackwood Jr. '88 was named University Physician and Director of Student](#)

[Health at Washington and Lee University](#). (Dec. 12, 2022)

- [Priya Tummalapalli '21](#) is featured in “[‘Full of Everything I Needed’ — Orphaned Scholar Chooses Memphis](#)” in the *Daily Memphian*. (Nov. 27, 2022)
- [Jasmine Crockett '03](#) was recently elected to represent Texas' 30th Congressional District. (Nov. 17, 2022)
- [Robyn Barrow '15](#) and [Alexandra Cronin '15](#) recently published their debut novel [Cicadas Sing of Summer Graves](#) under the pen name [Quinn Connor](#). (Nov. 3, 2022)
- [Joshua Coker '19](#) of the Calgary Stampeders was one of 128 footballers nominated for the Canadian Football League's Most Outstanding Rookie award. (Oct. 19, 2022)
- [Joshua Smith](#) was named the new Director of Construction for Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis. (Sept. 19, 2022)
- [Maryam Taysir '22](#) was the recipient of the 2022 Emerson National Hunger Fellowship, which allowed her to continue her work impacting poverty and food insecurity among historically marginalized populations in the United States. (Sept. 19, 2022)
- [Kate Dowd '09](#) was named Senior Vice President and Chief Legal Officer for Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare. (Sept. 8, 2022)

Enrollment and Student Body

As of January 2, 2023, the Office of Admission has received 4,679 total first-year applications, compared to 4,382 last year, resulting in a gain of 6.8%. To date, the Office of Admission has received 87 deposits, compared to 84 last year.

Athletics

Rhodes student-athletes enjoy a level of support that allows them to have strong, fulfilling college experiences. Professors and coaches work together to ensure players have opportunities to excel in and out of the classroom.

- [Field Hockey](#) was crowned SAA Regular Season Champions after going 5-0 in conference during the regular season. **Sophie Croci** was named SAA Offensive Player of the Year and **Coach Katie Gerzabek Salem** was named Co-Coach of the Year. First team All-SAA selections: **Sam Hutchinson, Grace Utz**. Second team All-SAA selections: **Courtney Kelly, Sheela Vasan, and RC Kugler**.
- [Men's Soccer](#) was crowned SAA Regular Season Champions after an undefeated regular season conference slate. They were recognized with numerous awards for their efforts this season. **Coach Lamb** won SAA Coach of the Year and **Mitchell Fenton** won SAA Defensive Player of the year. The following were named to SAA All-Conference 1st Team: **Mitchell Fenton, Eli Pilcher, Sam Khomtchenko, and Jesus Tadeo**. The following were named to SAA All-Conference 2nd team: **Max Hughes, Ben Barfield, and Spencer Bernard**. **Jeffrey Mason** received honorable mention for SAA All-Conference. Jesus Tadeo also was named to the SAA All-Tournament team.
- [Women's Soccer](#) was recognized with numerous honors for their efforts this season. **Megan Propp** was named to the SAA All-Conference 1st team. The following were named to the SAA All-Conference 2nd team: **Grace Culver** and **Mary Gale Godwin**. The following received honorable mentions for the SAA All-Conference teams: **Madison Castro, Esther Lamb, Sophia Rall, and Olivia Barfield**. Grace Culver was also named to

the SAA All-Tournament team.

- [Volleyball](#) Senior **Gabrielle White** was named to the SAA All-Conference 2nd team for her efforts this season. White had a very impressive season, finishing with 264 points, 203 kills, and 79 blocks.
- **Men's Basketball** 8-2 start is the best start to a season in 22 years for the Lynx. **Jalen Essick** has been named SAA Player of the Week twice in 5 weeks. The team currently leads the conference in defensive stats.

Fundraising, Stewardship, and Community Engagement

[Rhodes has received a \\$2 million gift from the estate of Dr. F. Elaine Donelson '59 to establish an endowed chair in the Department of Psychology.](#) Additional funds from Donelson's estate will endow a fellowship program in psychology.

In addition, the former [New Dining Hall West has been renamed in memory of Tina B. McWhorter '66.](#)