



# TRAILBLAZERS

*Campbell University Second Chance Initiative at Sampson Correctional*



## New Beginnings: Graduating Seniors and Sophomores, and Incoming Freshmen

By Christopher Shipley

*Lead Editor, Staff Writer*

This is a time of new beginnings. For the members of Cohort 2, they will be continuing on their journeys. Having already earned their Associate's degrees in Behavioral Sciences and now, having accomplished their ultimate goal of earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Communication Studies - Training and Development with a minor in Addiction Studies, their sights are on their very bright futures.

As for Cohort 3, after two challenging years, they have reached the milestone of becoming graduates, with Associate's Degree in

Behavioral Sciences. Yet, it is a bitter sweet accomplishment as several members of the cohort are moving on to different opportunities, while some will be continuing their journey here at Campbell University as juniors seeking to earn their Bachelor's Degrees.

Regardless of where the road takes any of these accomplished students, each and every one has outperformed expectation and is a FIGHTING CAMEL for life.

On a brighter note, there is a new cohort of Campbell Camels that are now embarking on their journeys as burgeoning students. Each and every individual in the incoming cohort has expressed a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for what lies ahead, and are

more than prepared for the challenges that are in store for them.

So, in spite of what the next chapter will present for any of the past, present, or future members of Sampson Correctional Institution's Second Chance Initiative, they will be more than prepared to overcome any obstacle; confronting it head on thanks to the tools that they have been provided by the Campbell University community.

So, whether it be home, work release, two semesters remaining, or four, the road ahead is considerably less daunting for having been rewarded with this fantastic experience.

Go  
Camels!



Above, from left: Joshua Duncan, Dylan Hulin, Jeffery White, Rafaelle Hauaeuer, Mark Denning, Andy Locklear, David Connard, Michael McCoy, Michael Goff, Christopher Shipley, Alvin Jackson, and Michael Faison (Site Coordinator).

## 2025 Second Chance Initiative Commencement

By Tony Johnson

*Staff Writer*

The melodic notes of *Pomp and Circumstance* floated through the air between the Campbell orange balloons and the special guests who escorted the eleven graduates down the center aisle.

Maury Correctional Institution hosted Campbell University for the Second Chance Initiative's 2025 Commencement Ceremony on August 29. The ceremony marked the program's third biennial graduation for its Sampson Correctional Institution campus. Four graduates received a four-year bachelor's degree in

Communication Studies with a minor in Addiction Studies, and seven graduates received a two-year associate's degree in Behavioral Science.

Special guests and dignitaries honored the graduates with their presence, affirming the importance of education and rehabilitation.

North Carolina's First Lady, Anna Stein, NC Department of

New Beginnings	1
2025 Second Chance Initiative Commencement	1-3
Blazing a Trail to Recidivism Reduction	4
Cohort 4 Student Orientation	5
Campbell University Luncheon	6-7
Narratives from Nowhere: A Prisoners Search for Home	8
Student Writings	9
Wiggins Library Symposium Award Recipients	10
Introducing Cohort 4	11-13
Professor Spotlight	14-15
Broadening Horizons	15-17
Fantasy Football	18-19
Artist Spotlights	20-24

## 2025 Second Chance Initiative Commencement



Adult Correction Secretary Leslie Dismukes, and Second Chance Initiative program benefactor Bob Barker were among the many to attend the graduation.

In April, First Lady Stein toured

**Personal transformation does not happen the moment these men enroll in the Second Chance Initiative and call themselves students. Their metamorphosis occurred through overcoming the daily obstacles of their incarceration to earn a college degree.**

Sampson Correctional Institution, home to the Second Chance Initiative program, visiting with the graduates while they were still Campbell University students. During the commencement address, the First Lady shared what stood out to her when she met the students, "I saw men who are committed to making a difference in the lives of other incarcerated men."

First Lady Stein also commended the graduates, "You are role models for your ability to rise above seemingly impossible odds." First Lady Stein, bestowing the title of role model on these men is significant. Stein considers herself a model to the public in her efforts to end the stigma associated with incarceration. It is important to her that the public sees her leading from the front by interacting with those who are incarcerated.

The graduates serve as role models at Sampson because of their educational experience while

enrolled in the Second Chance Initiative. Mark Denning, who received a bachelor's degree and gave one of two graduate speeches, said, "The Second Chance Initiative has changed my life." He added that before the program, the students all carried the invisible burden of the stigma placed on us by society. "This graduating class is proof that negative stereotypes can be shattered, and obstacles overcome."

Bachelor's degree recipient, Michael Goff, agreed with Denning's assessment that the Second Chance Initiative possesses transformative power. Goff said, "I consider it to have been an honor and a privilege to personally witness the transformation of people into individuals prepared for purposeful lives and meaningful service through the exemplary academic and professional skills gained from this life-changing program." Personal transformation does not happen the moment these men enroll in the Second Chance Initiative and call themselves students. Their metamorphosis occurred through overcoming the daily obstacles of their incarceration to earn

a college degree.

As Sampson's Warden, Robert Van Gorder has overseen the graduates' time in the program and attested to the many difficulties they have overcome. "Many people believed that [the graduates] don't deal with a full college workload, but they deal with far more." The 'far more' includes prison shakedowns where an incarcerated person's property is inspected, living with 35 roommates in close quarters, and limited access to technology, including only having laptops 18 hours a week outside of class.

Yet these men faced every obstacle head-on and endured to earn their degrees. Some challenges were not found inside the classroom or textbooks, but inside themselves. In his speech, Alvin Jackson, an associate's degree graduate, said that it took courage to unlock the truth from within. "Courage to look past our faults, courage to meet life on its own terms, and courage to pursue a future full of potential beyond prison."

The Second Chance Initiative is built upon a cohort system. The collective mindset that carried the



Above: Professors of Campbell University's Second Chance Initiative, along side the two graduating classes.

Below: far left, Secretary Leslie Dismukes; front, center, on left: CU President William M. Downs; front center, on right: Sampson Corr. Warden, Robert Van Gorder; far right, Brooke Wheeler; far, far right, First Lady Anna Stein; standing amongst the 2025 Campbell University, Second Chance Initiative graduating class.

## 2025 Second Chance Initiative Commencement

Page 3

men through difficulties to graduation was emphasized in Denning's graduation speech. He shared words from two of his cohort members.

Bachelor's degree recipient, Joshual Duncan, wanted to share a quote from Al-Jabaly, "True education will improve a person's knowledge and understanding of his [way of life]. It builds in his heart a strong belief that enables him to distinguish between right and wrong." Not only

most of all it is their chance to improve themselves, to open the door to a new world."

Five of the seven men who received an associate's degree will remain enrolled in the Second Chance Initiative to continue their education and pursue a bachelor's degree. One graduate who thirsts for more knowledge is Andy Locklear. "I feel like these last two years will prepare me for the outside world and provide

of my classmates walk across the stage."

Alvin Jackson imparted words of wisdom to the freshmen in his speech. "I encourage you to look beyond as you look within. To give a helping hand even when you need a hand yourself. To press through times that are bad as well as good. To keep your head to the plow, for when it is raised the field will be finished." His wise words will guide the new students into



do these graduates benefit from learning right and wrong, but so does society as a whole.

Through Denning, Dylan Hulin, who also received a bachelor's degree, reiterated the value of the Second Chance Initiative to his fellow graduates and society. "Participating in this program has really made us aware that we have a purpose and that we're able to be of service to the community when we are released, instead of just coming back to prison and being a statistic."

Hulin's message echoed Campbell University founder J. A. Campbell's words many years ago, "School is the greatest opportunity in the world. Here students... become educated men and women, become leaders, but

me with the tools I need to pursue a career." He also looks forward to witnessing the growth of the program's freshmen, who are just beginning their first college semester, as he did two years ago.

Second Chance Initiative Freshman, Cory Salerno, said, "After being accepted into the Campbell University program, I could feel my hopes growing, but to be able to see and participate in the graduation ceremony has crystallized my drive to succeed."

Witnessing the commencement ceremony made it easy for Salerno to envision himself and his entire cohort walking across the stage during graduation. "I can't wait to see all 15

their own college experience, providing them with a solid foundation for success.

Campbell University's Second Chance Initiative has provided these incarcerated men with a second chance at life. The graduates have received their diplomas, but just as Jackson's words demonstrate, their impact on society is just beginning. They now enter a new world created through their education that is not only brighter for themselves but also for all of society.

## Blazing a Trail to Recidivism Reduction

By Christopher Shipley  
*Lead Editor, Staff Writer*

**T**railblazers, continuing to forge ahead, braving challenging terrain in order to chart new territory. On Friday August 29, 2025 at 11:00 am, the collective efforts of Campbell University, Sampson Correctional Institution, and the high aspiring students of the Second Chance Initiative were recognized in an electrifying commencement ceremony. Everyone in attendance saw the seeds of hard work and aspirations that were sown by these eleven incarcerated men bear fruit when they received the degrees—for which they had worked so diligently—and turned their tassels. This ceremony was attended by an ensemble of staunch advocates of the Second Chance Initiative program, from the super supportive family members of the graduates, to First Lady Anna Stein herself. First Lady Stein has displayed an unwavering enthusiasm for this program and many others of its ilk.



higher education programs in correctional settings, and all of these contributors are doing their part to slow the turn of the revolving door of recidivism that plagues this great state.

On the day of this commencement, a major impediment was jammed into the mechanics of the carousel ride that we know as prison recidivism, when these eleven men walked across the ceremonial stage and accepted their college degrees from the President of Campbell University, Mr. William M. Downs. Seven of these graduates were the recipients of their Associate's of Science degrees, while four—having

degree, while incarcerated, dramatically reduces the likelihood of recidivism for the recipient (2015). This rate of reduction is applicable over all measures that are used to define recidivism: re-arrest, re-conviction, and re-incarceration. Also, cited by the North Carolina Judicial Branch, 40% of all ex-inmates are reincarcerated within three years of their initial release (2025). The state of North Carolina is purported as having one of the highest recidivism rates in the nation. The alarming rate of these statistics truly brings home the severity of NC's recidivism cycle, and truly emphasizes the extraordinary nature of the accomplishments that were acknowledged on this day.

It must be reiterated that the totality of laudable accomplishments do not just encompass the efforts of the graduates alone—who undoubtedly defied some major odds by excelling in their studies despite their harrowing circumstances—but also include the dedication to providing a challenging and quality curriculum displayed by the many professors that are so devoted to the Second Chance Initiative, the staff at Campbell University who expend a monumental effort to make the program work, and the innovative thinking and optimistic approach of the Sampson Correctional Institution staff. This assemblage of hard working, forward thinking individuals has collaborated to deliver a significant victory in the fight to amend the recidivistic culture that exist within the North Carolina judicial system.



Aside from this being a celebration acknowledging the efforts and accomplishments of all parties involved, it was also an opportunity to take a moment and consider how all of the strenuous efforts of the many individuals who surround this program are working in concert to positively affect the recidivism rates that are so prevalent in North Carolina. Ultimately, this is the goal of

already earned their AS degrees—accomplished their ultimate goal of earning their Bachelor's Degrees, majoring in Communication Studies, with a minor in Substance Abuse Counseling.

According to a study published in a scholarly journal article titled, "Education and Recidivism: Toward a Tool for Reduction" authored by Lori H. Hall, the attainment of a college

## Cohort 4 Student Orientation

Page 5

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

The 2025 freshman class of Campbell Camels officially began their journey as college students on Monday, August 18, 2025, by attending a weeklong orientation session. The orientation session is intended to give them a better idea of just what is ahead of them, acquaint them with the Campbell University Second Chance Initiative Adult Online Education Handbook, and give them an opportunity to hear more about the experiences of the upperclassmen who, just two years ago, were sitting in the same seats that they are now seated in.

Anyone who has ever endured the strenuous curriculum of a Campbell University course load can attest to the challenge that faces this new cohort. So, it is the duty of everyone who is involved with the Second Chance Initiative at Sampson Correctional to ensure that these budding scholars are as well prepared as possible for the rigors that a college work load presents.

The first day of orientation was opened by Assistant Dean of Adult Online Education, Mrs. Kelly Morin. Mrs. Morin covered much of the basic information that is involved with the Second Chance Initiative program, such as ensuring that all of the preliminary paperwork that is necessary before the students begin classes is filled out, and signatures are gathered. Also, she administered student handbooks, and covered the Campbell University mission statement, and code of conduct, ensuring that each student was aware of just what is expected of each and every Campbell University Student.

After covering the basics, Mrs. Morin allowed the students of Cohort 3 to speak with the members of the new cohort and share any words of wisdom or advice, and to help them to gain a clearer understanding of just what they have to look forward to. Everyone involved in the Second Chance Initiative firmly believes that hearing first hand from someone who has experienced what is ahead of you, and gaining their perspective, is

a major advantage that can build confidence and assuage some of the stress that is generated in anticipation of their first semester of classes.

After Cohort 3 shared their thoughts, the new cohort was addressed by the warden of Sampson Correctional Institution, Mr. Robert Van Gorder. Typically, when a warden addresses a population of inmates, of any size, there is a feeling of trepidation within that population. Yet, Warden Van Gorder defies conventions, shattering any preconceived notion that an inmate may hold towards a warden. When he speaks about this program and what it means to him, as well as the optimism and belief that he expresses concerning the redemptive prospects of the men in this program, he sets himself apart from all of his contemporaries in the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction as a warden who truly believes in the "correctional" aspect of the system in which he is employed. These character traits, of warden Van Gorder, are on full display for the incoming group of freshmen attending the 2025 orientation, and like every previous cohort to attend Campbell

University, they will be even more motivated because of it.

The remainder of the week was spent familiarizing the new cohort with the many elements that enable the students at Sampson Correctional to navigate a curriculum that is the mirror image of what the students on campus are presented. They are visited by the IT Department so that they may be introduced to Blackboard, and learn how to effectively navigate the system. They were also visited by Abigail Pore and Hattie Smith of Wiggins Memorial Library, so that she can teach them how to submit sufficiently detailed requests for research material.

The activities of this week are intended to lay a solid foundation in order for the new scholars to begin to erect their soaring tower of knowledge. Welcome Cohort 4 to the wonderful world of education. Welcome to Campbell University!



Cohort 4 is appreciative to all Campbell faculty who supported us during the week of orientation. A special thanks to those behind the scene, that make so much of this possible. We will take with us, all the information and tools you provided and make this an experience worth remembering.



In closing, I will forever be grateful for this opportunity, whereas life is full of obstacles and failures. I've definitely had my share, yet still I rise. I look forward to this being the building block and start of something new and rewarding for my future. I believe in dreaming big and going after what it takes to achieve it. This time, I will win this fight.

—Jamaal A. Connelly

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

—Nelson Mandela



By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

**O**n Friday, August 22, Campbell University, and Sampson Correctional staff expended a great amount of effort to provide a catered luncheon for the members of Cohorts 2, 3, and 4, in celebration of the graduating seniors of Cohort 2, and the graduating sophomores of Cohort 3. Along with the student body, this luncheon was attended by Facility Warden, Mr. Robert Van Gorder; Education Coordinator, Mr. Parrish; Vocational Officer Mr. Libby Wilson; Campbell University's Assistant Dean of Adult Online Education, Kelly Morin; Budget and Program Director & Re-Entry Academic Advisor, Juliana Mehrer; Site Coordinator & Advisor, Anthony Faison; Esteemed Professor of English, Dr. Sherry Truffin; and Adult and Online Education Student Financial Services Counselor, Stefani Bennett.

This luncheon was a catered meal consisting of savory baked chicken, juicy fried chicken, delicious macaroni and cheese, northern beans, cornbread, delicious cupcakes (homemade by Mr. Van Gorder), yellow cake with chocolate icing, and of course, the southern staple, ice-cold sweet tea.

This meal was a perfect method of bringing together correctional staff, university staff, and the student body, breaking bread as one in a show of togetherness that exemplifies the spirit of what the Second Chance Initiative is all about; a group of people rising above any labels or stigmas that would typically be associated with a gathering as diverse as this, in the pursuit of the common goals of education and rehabilitation.

Prior to the blessing of the meal, there was an impromptu presentation

of awards—created by Jeffrey White, on behalf of the student body—to Warden Van Gorder, Kelly Morin, Julianna Mehrer, Anthony Faison, and Officer Libby Wilson, in recognition of their above and beyond approach towards the Second Chance program, and the success of the students. This was a moment for everyone involved in this program to show just how

some for their next steps on their journeys. Also, there were the incoming freshmen, who were able to experience their first true taste of just what it really means to be a part of the Second Chance Initiative community. All of these feelings were shared among the group in an empathetic example of just what it means to be a Campbell University student here at



deeply they appreciate each other, and their contributions to the overwhelming success of the student.

There was an overwhelming feeling of unity—of both companionship and purpose—that permeated the atmosphere of the luncheon. The graduating seniors were essentially saying goodbye to the program, and celebrating their successful completion of four hard years of collegiate curriculum. Yet, there was not a feeling of sadness on their parts, but one of anticipation for what comes next. The, soon to earn their associate's degree, sophomores experienced the same feelings of anticipation. Some for the final two years of their educational journey, and

Sampson Correctional.

During this luncheon, the students were treated to some poignant words from Mr. Van Gorder, Mrs. Kelly Morin, and the much esteemed Dr. Sherry Truffin. Each of these individuals were greeted with much cheer, and the messages that they delivered to the outgoing, continuing, and incoming students, left each and every one of them fully energized and prepared to face the new chapter that they are so looking forward to.

So, all that there is left to say is...GO CAMELS!!



## Campbell University Luncheon

Page 7



“...correctional staff, university staff, and the student body, breaking bread as one in a show of togetherness that exemplifies the spirit of what the Second Chance Initiative is all about”



## Narratives from Nowhere: A Prisoner's Search for Home

By Michael McCoy  
Assistant Editor, Staff Writer

**D**uring the 2025 academic year, I was fortunate to be selected as a student researcher in the Ester H. Howard Research Fellows Program. This program, offered to Campbell students with special academic interests, allows them the opportunity for extended research during the summer session alongside their mentor, as well as receiving a financial award to aid in achieving their individual researcher goals. During the grant period, individual student researchers follow program guidelines, including informative sessions with Campbell University staff with the overall objective to present their findings

**"Working alongside my mentor, Dr. Sherry Truffin, I found early on in my research that my story would not follow the traditional narrative arc like the works I had previously studied."**

during a research poster session held on campus where students and staff may admire their work and ask questions.

Being selected to participate in this grant was an amazing opportunity, and through the summer months, I gained new skills related to becoming a better student and learning how to effectively present my findings to both academic and non-academic audiences. The title of my project is "Narratives from Nowhere: A Prisoners' Search for Home." Initially, my interest stemmed from a personal place of despair, having spent decades behind bars, during which I read several popular prison narratives, and afterwards, was moved to consider what change and rehabilitation meant on a personal level.

My research began with the modest goal of preparing a polished draft of my existing manuscript to be submitted to an editor with hopes of future publication. I was particularly interested in learning the forms and functions of narrative style writing that lived behind contemporary memoirs, and learning the editing skills necessary to achieve these ends. This research was aided by several student progress meetings. Working alongside my mentor, Dr. Sherry Truffin, I found early on in my research that my story would not follow the traditional narrative arc like the works I had previously studied. Rather than a redemptive story, whereby one overcomes incarceration and returns to society a changed man, I would need to adopt a more hybrid approach, which would be more reflective and thus geared towards creativity instead of discovery. Additionally, I was overwhelmed during the student meetings by the anxiety of meeting strangers and the fear that I would be judged negatively as an offender. In reality, my experience was quite the opposite.

In one meeting, I expressed a concern. I noticed that while writing out scenes covering a typical day in prison, the scenes that I did develop seemed forced. What I believed the manuscript needed was a deeper look at the carceral setting, and details I may have missed. I told the other student researchers that I felt I possessed all of the answers, but not the right questions. As a result, I received several messages of support from students accompanied with ideas of how to conduct more effective narrative research. From these comments, I discovered that my research could be enhanced by focusing on understanding the

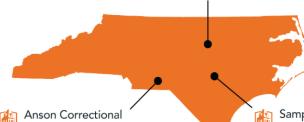
differences between creative and discovery narrative methods, meaning that going forward, I would focus on drawing my narrative arc out across a forward moving creation than retrospective redemption.

In sum, the Campbell University faculty did an excellent job of accommodating my needs, yet held me and my mentor responsible for deadlines and meeting agendas. Every week, I grew more confident. The most rewarding aspect of this research period was working outside of the classroom and the manner in which it has allowed me to see myself as a contributor, willing to further the conversation in my area of interest much like my fellow researchers. This opportunity has made me more academically responsible and more willing to communicate with others, while aiming for the stars. I encourage all student to considering submitting a proposal during the next grant period.

I am thankful to my mentor Dr. Sherry Truffin, Ms. Ester Howard, and Campbell for this amazing opportunity.



Women's Re-entry Higher Education Initiative, Raleigh, NC



Anson Correctional Institution, Polkton, NC

Sampson Correctional Institution, Clinton, NC



Pictured: Dr. Sherry Truffin and Michael McCoy

## Bitter Sweet

Page 9

By Raffaelle Hanaeuer  
Cohort 3 Student

**A**s I sit here at the edge of graduation, it's hard to believe how fast the years have flown by. I feel like just yesterday, we were awkwardly figuring out what our classes were, stressing over finals, or bonding over group projects at the last minute.

Now, some of us are heading out and moving on to better opportunities, and a few of us are still figuring it out—no shame in that. But, no matter where we go we carry with us, not just degrees, but the friendships, late-night conversations, and

shared meals that brought us closer. I'm proud of us all. We survived two years of college and that's no small feat.

Honestly, at times it felt like I wasn't in prison, because in prison no one makes you write a 10-page paper on postmodernism in order to "assert their dominance\*." In all seriousness, thank you for the memories, the laughter, and the support. I wish each of you success, peace, and purpose—in whatever journey comes next. Stay curious, stay kind, and if we ever cross paths again, I hope it's not in a lineup.

In all seriousness, I'm

grateful for the laughs, the friendships, and the memories we've made here. You all are brilliant, weird, wonderful humans, and I can't wait to see what you do next, especially if you become wildly successful, in which case I'll pretend that we were super close so I can name drop you at parties.

Congrats fellas we finished half. Now I'll go out there and make the world slightly more tolerable. Or, at least mildly more entertaining.

\*Inside joke with Dr. Truffin



By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

**I**n a room with windows covered by steel mesh which blots the view of the heavenly bodies that adorn the night sky, still, a man is stargazing.

Now, onlookers may think he has his head in the clouds, but no, his

**"...time heals all wounds, and eventually his eyes once again began to see clearly, and to search, and to yearn for the wonderous visualization of possibility."**

sights are set much further.

Early in life, his first thought was to peek past Venus. A lofty goal indeed,

but the Sun did not agree. He lost sight of his path for too bright were the rays that marked that trajectory as self-destructive.

Luckily, this man was not the type to repeat futile actions, for that is insanity, and insane he surely was not.

Yet, and unfortunately, that brief look to the Sun took a toll on his vision, barring him from even the consideration of peering too far. So, he kept his gaze squarely here on earth, not daring even to peek beyond his immediate surroundings.

But, time heals all wounds, and eventually his eyes once again began to see clearly, and to search, and to yearn for the wonderous visualization of possibility.

Fully furnished with the knowledge gained from enduring the consequence of past decisions, he turned his eyes to the moon. The moon, only bearing a mere reflection of the searing rays of the sun was a much more auspicious vista.

Bolstered by this seemingly minor success, the man came to fully realize that

he was not earthbound as he had believed after his last folly, and his stellar sized ambition could finally find a place to stretch its legs.

Next stop, Mars.

But, the man thought, why stop at Mars? 'You can look,' he told himself on yonder to Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus on to the stars, just keep your head out of the clouds and you can see far.

So, he dared to dream and let his mind search far beyond that room to sights truly amazing, to a time where he would be free to soar beyond simply stargazing.

Ad Astra Per Aspera (To the stars through difficulty).



## Wiggins Library Symposium Award Recipients

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

This year's Wiggins Memorial Library Symposium was the largest in its 15-year history. It was the most widely participated in and attended symposium to date, with 127 student participants over several categories, and over 700 student and faculty attendees.

**"Both of these accomplished students are members of Sigma Gamma Honor Society at Campbell University..."**



All of these participants were selected for the exceptionalism of their work and all should be extremely proud of their accomplishments.

Among these participants were two students from the Campbell University Second Chance Initiative at Sampson Correctional Institution., Mr. Jeffrey A. White and Mr. Christopher Shipley.

Campbell University Junior Mr.

Clockwise from top: Jeffrey White and Christopher holding their Certificates recognizing the honors awarded to them for their performance in the 2025 Wiggins Memorial Library Symposium;

Jeffrey White and Christopher Shipley's Certificates recognizing the honors awarded to them for their performance in the 2025 Wiggins Memorial Library Symposium;

Cover page of Jeffrey White's Merit Honor awarded presentation on Sylvia Plath's "Lady Lazarus";

Cover page of Christopher Shipley's High Merit awarded presentation concerning the ethicality of fracking in America.

Jeffrey A. White was the presenter of two bodies of work. The first was a presentation entitled, "Indigenous History and Public Schools: A Moral Perspective," and was sponsored by Dr. Kenneth Vandergriff, his Debating Ethics professor. This work explored the ethicality of Indigenous history being widely ignored in the public school system. Jeffrey's second presentation was titled, "'Lady Lazarus,' the Jewish Phoenix and Patriarchy." This presentation was focused on how the author of the work Sylvia Plath's focus on the Jewish Holocaust, and the Jewish Phoenix was a metaphorical method of challenging patriarchy. This presentation was sponsored by English Professor Dr. Sherry Truffin, and went on to be awarded a well deserved "Merit" honor.

Jeffrey A. White is extremely passionate about Indigenous culture, and matters of inequality and social justice, and this passion shines through in the intellectual presence of his work.

The second student in the Second Chance Initiative to participate in this year's symposium is Campbell University Junior Mr. Christopher Shipley, who also presented two bodies of work. His first presentation, sponsored by Professor of English Dr. Sherry Truffin, entitled "The Prerequisites of Grace: A Theological Analysis of 'A Good Man is Hard to Find,'" took the stance that the author's (Flannery O'Connor) attempt to depict a moment of grace was unsuccessful whether viewed from a Protestant or Catholic perspective.

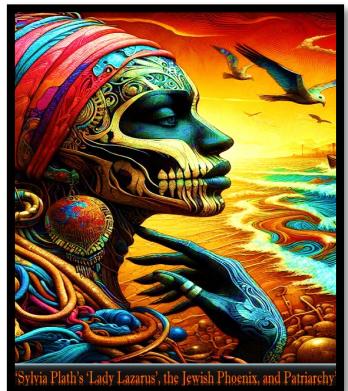
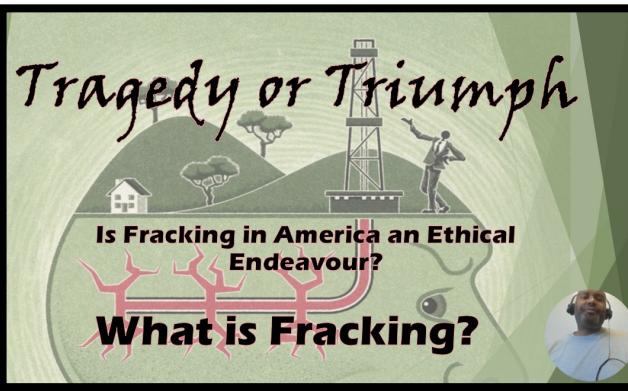
Shipley's second presentation, sponsored by Debating Ethics professor Dr. Kenneth Vandergriff, was titled, "Tragedy or Triumph: Is Fracking in America an Ethical Endeavor?" This work analyzed the fracking phenomenon from a utilitarian ethics perspective, and whether the advantages that it provides outweigh the dangers that it presents. This presentation was



awarded a "High Merit" honor.

Like Mr. White, Mr. Shipley is also extremely passionate about matters of inequality and social justice, and this influences much of his work.

Both of these accomplished students are members of Sigma Gamma Honor Society at Campbell University, and take tremendous pride in creating work that is thoughtful, insightful, meaningful, well researched, and that meets the extremely high standard that being a Campbell University student requires. These two scholars will continue to shoot for the stars through difficulty, and strive for excellence.



## T-Shirt Day for Cohort 4

Page 11

By Tony Johnson  
Staff Writer

The much-anticipated day for Cohort 4 finally arrived on September 11, 2025. Second Chance Initiative's Cohort 4 received their Campbell University NC Department of Adult Correction student T-shirts.

We were eager to receive our shirts because of what they signify. Cohort 4 member, Rodreguise Calhoun, said, "The shirt means a lot to me because it is my connection to Campbell University and the students on the main campus. It shows my family that I am making the most out of a bad situation."



Although we are incarcerated, we enrolled in the Second Chance Initiative program to not only change our future but also to atone for our past. The continued love of our families and friends is a major inspiration for our transformations. Some cohort members feel that without that support, we would not be in a position to handle the rigors of academic life. Although we can't change the past, we can move forward in a positive manner.

For other Cohort 4 members, the orange Campbell shirts connected them to the greater Campbell community. "It tells everyone I am a Campbell University student and shows the unity of Cohort 4," said

Mike Travalini. Being a part of Campbell University illustrates that our college experience transcends prison and incarceration.

The unity of Cohort 4 is evident. We began the process of creating a cohesive cohort community before our first day of orientation. As a result, we have now adopted the motto of "15 in 15 out" to remind us of the importance of staying focused through the

difficulties of prison life, so that all 15 members of Cohort 4 graduate in two years and again in four years. Our

**"As a cohort, we believe the brightness of our orange t-shirts is a sign that we are on the right path in life."**

shirts now stand as a symbol of our cohort's unity.

As a cohort, we believe the brightness of our orange t-shirts is a sign that we are on the right path in life. Kahlid Whitehead, a Cohort 4 member, shared, "Receiving my t-shirt shows that I am officially embarking on the journey to further my education and to one day help my community." Helping our community outside of prison is our ultimate goal. But we want to start with serving our community at Sampson first.

## A Brand New Journey: The Beginnings of Cohort 4

By Cory Solerno  
Staff Writer

As members of Cohort 4 sat down in their first class of the semester, the atmosphere was electric with energy. Sunlight shone through a window onto the Campbell University logo affixed to the wall inside the classroom. Books were stacked neatly in front of students; the smell of freshly brewed coffee permeated the air. Everyone smiled and engaged their fellow students in conversation about what was to come. Underneath the blanket of positivity lay a tension that was visible on some faces, others, not so much. When the professor entered the classroom, the door closed on

any second guessing, and reality sank in. Fifteen students from different diverse walks of life and generations each had a burning desire to further their education as they looked forward to the days ahead. Here is the beginning of Cohort 4 at Sampson Correctional Institution.

Being new students at Campbell University has aroused overwhelming feelings of joy and motivation within myself and my



fellow students. Chaztanious Blackburn, a Cohort 4 student stated, "I never dreamed I'd be able to participate in this type of environment. Being able to do so, will push me to grow and develop in my academic endeavors." I believe we all share this enthusiasm as we look forward to what this semester will hold for us. Being able to sit down in class and learn material directly from our professors is a gift we all cherish.

For some of us, being in a learning environment is a recent experience, while others are decades removed from a school setting. The intimidation of years spent away from the classroom is a challenge for some which seems to linger when assignments are dished out. But for others, it is a chance to help their

## A Brand New Journey: The Beginnings of Cohort 4

fellow students and have fun during this college journey. "All the writing assignments we had our first week seemed overwhelming at first, but as I started completing each assignment, it turned out to be really refreshing and fun," stated Robert Groenewold—a Cohort 4 student who is 20 years removed from a school setting.

Having each other to lean on and grow in unity, is one trait I see cohort 4 already exemplifying.

For this semester, the goals I set for myself will directly translate to my academic success. A few goals that I share with fellow students are building effective study habits, learning proper time management skills, and properly mastering the material presented to us. Seeing our names on the President's List, looking towards a 4.0 GPA, and seeing us complete our first semester will become hallmarks on our educational journey. "Seeing how this education will affect us over the course of these next four years will be a reward in and of itself, and I look forward to earning that sense of belonging in our group," said Isa Jihad as our cohort came

together during study hall meeting one day. I believe the relationships we build with each other, and with our professors, will ultimately define our success.

We begin this journey together, even though each of us will get a vastly different perspective out of it. As we take these next steps, our future looks bright and full of rewards we have yet to imagine. We chase the education and the opportunities it represents on the horizon. I pray that each of us can take the value of what we

are being offered and apply it ten-fold so that we may each prosper in our respective futures. I will leave you with a quote that Alejandro Chavez Gomez shared with me, that best represents our cohorts' feelings about this journey, *Veni, vidi, vici* (I came, I saw, I conquered")

—Julius Caesar.



## To the Stars

By Tony Johnson  
Staff Writer

**M**y case manager held my future. "What if I don't want to sign it?" he asked, while holding my Campbell University Second Chance application.

His words crashed into me with the impact of a doomsday planet-killing asteroid. My dream of a brighter future faded away into oblivion.

My desire to become a Campbell University student began in October 2024 when my brother, Timothy Johnson, passed me several issues of the Second Chance Initiative student newsletter, *Trailblazers*. Before reading *Trailblazers*, I was only familiar with the program by name, but I was excited to learn more. As I devoured each article, my interest grew into excitement. Dylan Hulin's

poem, *Balance Sonnet*, resonated with me because I'd also found peace and balance from living rightly in prison. Michael McCoy's essay about

"Goosebumps tingled up and down my arms as I got lost in the uniqueness of the Second Chance Initiative. The building sense of anticipation revealed, "This is the place for you." I began working to make my journey to the stars a reality."

receiving inspiration from witnessing Cohort 1 and 2's commencement ceremony encouraged me to also think, "One day that could be me too." Students attended a poetry workshop.

I write poetry and would cherish the opportunity to formally learn about it. Reading about Cohort 2's brotherly bonds prompted me to think about how I could contribute to building a strong cohort community.

Goosebumps tingled up and down my arms as I got lost in the uniqueness of the Second Chance Initiative. The building sense of anticipation revealed, "This is the place for you." I began working to make my journey to the stars a reality.

I initiated a plan to create a three-part packet to send to Kelly Morin, Campbell University Assistant Dean of Prison Programs and Sampson Correctional Warden Robert Van Gorder.

First, I worked on crafting a letter to express my deep interest in the program. Next, I asked a friend to contact the person over the dog program I had worked in for ten years

## To the Stars

Page 13

to relay my request for a recommendation letter. Lastly, I included an article I'd written for The Nash News about an incarcerated father's dream of seeing his son play in the NFL as a writing sample. The packet was coming together.

On November 15, I returned from working in the warehouse canteen to find a facility message on my tablet. Most facility messages are the incarcerated person's version of spam or junk emails. However, this facility message was different. It was life-changing. It instructed anyone interested in the Second Chance Initiative to contact their case manager for an application.

Quick as a shooting star, I shot to my case manager's office to pick up an application. But he was busy meeting with someone. Luckily, the case manager next door was available.

"Ma'am, I'm sorry to bother you, but I'm trying to get a Second Chance Initiative application," I asked, so that I could reach the stars.

She must have agreed that the stars were a worthy destination, because she printed an application for me.

That night, I sat down at the teeny tiny 12" by 15" stainless-steel desk in my cell and began working on my application essay. Thoughts of thousands of incarcerated men in North Carolina working on their essays filled my head with doubt. How could I possibly become one of Cohort 4's fifteen students.

After many stringent rounds of editing, I had a letter of interest that fully expressed my prodigious interest in the Second Chance Initiative. With the addition of a cover letter, the packet was ready to be mailed. But I decided to wait until after the holiday season. When I made that decision, I didn't realize that the stars were aligning to help me navigate through difficulties.

I turned in my application on December 4, 2024. That's when my case manager asked me, "What if I don't want to sign it?"

My case manager's words confused me. At first, I thought, or maybe just hoped, that he didn't understand the application process, so I explained my

request. Second Chance Initiative applications have a section that has to be filled out by the applicant's case manager, including release date and infraction history. Then they must sign and mail the form to Campbell University. Incarcerated applicants are not allowed to mail their own applications. Essentially, putting his or her future in their case manager's hands.

I left my case manager's office



feeling like I was being pulled into life's black hole. Would my application fly through space while dodging difficulties the size of meteorites to land safely at Buies Creek?

Although mailing out my application was outside of my control, there had to be something I could do to take back control over my future. I decided to add the date I'd turned in my application to the cover letter that I included in the packet which I was mailing to Asst. Dean Morin and Warden Van Gorder. On the surface, it was just a date, but it would prove to be the difference maker.

On February 12, nearly two weeks after the January 31 deadline for applications, a different case manager informed me that Morin had emailed asking why she didn't receive my application. However, Morin did receive my packet, including the date I had turned in my application. Oh, my lucky stars!

By including the date I'd turned in my application on the cover letter, Morin knew I was interested in the program. She emailed an application to the case manager for me to

complete, if I was still interested. The despair that I felt over my first application not arriving quickly turned to elation. I still had a chance to be accepted. What if I hadn't included the date?

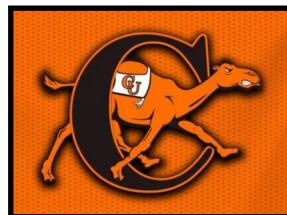
Morin and Second Chance Initiative Site Coordinator, Anthony Faison, visited Nash on March 3 to conduct a group interview with me and two other applicants — Rodreguise Calhoun and Scott Spencer. A group interview is a complex concept. On some level, I was competing against Calhoun and Spencer to become Campbell University students, but their answers impressed me, and I nodded along as they described how they handled constructive criticism and overcame struggles. Not only did I agree with their succinct points, I began pulling for their acceptance into Cohort 4.

When the interview was over, the waiting began. And the waiting was everywhere: it was in my room, on my shoulders, and, somehow, even made its way into my head. How could you be one of fifteen?

Finally, on May 19, the waiting ended. A letter with a Campbell University logo rescued me from the waiting and delivered my future. My face stretched wider than a galaxy as I read, "It is our sincere pleasure to congratulate you on your acceptance into the Campbell University Second Chance Initiative." I floated through space and time, knowing I had overcome many difficulties to be accepted.

Over the next four years, I will not give up when faced with difficulty, because I know my destination — the stars. As Campbell's motto proclaims, *Ad astra per aspera* — To the stars through difficulties.

Calhoun and Spencer are also members of the Second Chance Initiative's Cohort 4. I look forward to creating a strong cohort community of brotherly bonds with Calhoun and Spencer.





## ‘Professors of the Semester’

2025 Spring and Summer Semesters

Special Recognition, by the students of Cohort 3, to professors Dr. Edward Hunt and Dr. Sherry Truffin for providing curriculums that were engaging and insightful, and displaying dedication to the success of their students which extended well beyond what would be expected or required.

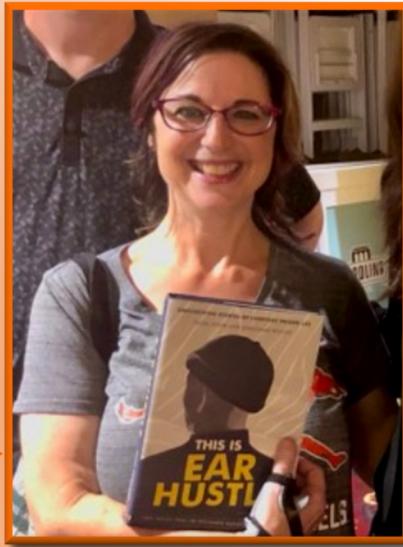


“Each day, Dr. Hunt made us contemplate the question, ‘What is your Legacy?’ He used the course, not only to teach us about environmental science, but also to pass on some critical life skills. His goal seemed to educate, and also prepare us for the outside.”

—Andy Locklear

“Dr. Truffin has instilled in me a literary curiosity that will allow me to explore beyond the limits of the world that I am familiar with, and discover a vast diversity of life that extends well beyond the borders of my imagination; accompanied with the rhetorical dexterity to take others with me.”

—Christopher Shipley



### Dr. Edward Hunt

ENV-112: Intro to Environmental Science

### Dr. Sherry Truffin

ENGL-219: Special Topics in Literature

#### Most Outstanding Professor

The Students of Cohort 3 Select

*Dr. Edward Hunt*

as the Most Outstanding Professor of The Spring 2025 Semester.  
For Unparalleled Preparation, Thoughtful Insight, and Exceptional Engagement.



#### Most Outstanding Professor

The Students of Cohort 3 Select

*Dr. Sherry Truffin*

as the Most Outstanding Professor of The Summer 2025 Semester.  
For Unparalleled Preparation, Thoughtful Insight, and Exceptional Engagement.



## One Amazing Professor: Dr. Sherry Truffin

Page 15

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

**T**here are certain professors that every student who attends Campbell Second Chance Initiative at Sampson

Correctional will have the pleasure of encountering, and for these students, it is an honor to be in the presence of each and every one. Yet, there is one professor who stands out to all of her past students as the face of the professorial team, both for her dedication to preparation—hers and her students—and for her passion for the subject that she teaches. That professor is Dr. Sherry Truffin, who teaches English 101, English 102, and English 219. Each student here has the truly genuine pleasure of experiencing three semesters learning so many different aspects of the English language from Dr. Truffin, which some really love, and others might truly dread. This is the case because, while her courses are filled with some truly memorable experiences, they are also extremely demanding.

At the beginning of each semester when she first hands her students the syllabus, there comes an overwhelming sense of foreboding, considering the amount of work that she has set forth. But, somewhere between the many readings that she

demands and the lectures and lessons that she has so meticulously planned, something amazing happens. Her students begin to feel an aptitude for what she has been teaching; true learning has taken effect. Her students get the sense that what she is asking them to do is not as demanding as they once thought because they are now equipped with knowledge that she has instilled in them which will enable them to approach the course and curriculum with confidence.

Also, there is the passion with which she presents the information to her students that is so infectious. When her students see how strongly she feels about what she is teaching, and who she is teaching it to, there is a curiosity that is piqued which quickly morphs into a similar passion in the student.

To the students of the Second Chance Initiative at Sampson

Correctional, Dr. Truffin is a beacon of excellence, demonstrated both through her professionalism, and her unflinching commitment to each individual who takes a seat in her classroom.



## One Amazing Professor: Dr. Edward Hunt

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

**F**or the students of Cohort 3, balancing our course load can become an exercise in maintaining focus. Yet, every once in a while, a professor comes along who not only makes the curriculum extremely interesting and relatable, but displays a level of empathy towards the well-being and outcomes of their students which far exceeds the norm. This was exactly the sentiment of Cohort 3 while taking Environmental Science-112 in the 2025 Spring semester, with

Dr. Edward Hunt.

We became enthralled by so many different elements that effect the environment of the world in which we live. We discussed the hydrologic cycle, dissecting the pollution and scarcity of our fresh water supply, and the many ways that we can help to ensure that there is enough to carry us into the future. We also examined the causes and effects of air pollution, covering the Clean Air Act (CAA) and many other critical elements that affect the quality of the air that we breathe.

Yet, his most important lesson was that we have a future that we can

shape into something to be proud of, and the manner in which we work toward it will ultimately define us as men. This was an emphasis of Dr. Hunt, who looked beyond our circumstances to see the character of the men that we have become and deem us worthy of a better future. He was adamant about each of us cultivating a legacy that will define our lives, and we are all better men for having encountered his optimism. What a breath of fresh air.



## Multicultural Reading in ENGL-219

By Christopher Shipley  
Editor-in Chief

The 2025 Summer Semester English-219 course for Cohort 3, that was prepared by Dr. Sherry Truffin, centered around postmodernist literature with a specific focus on multi-cultural literature. As part of this curriculum, the students were assigned several readings that were written by authors from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds.

The first book that was explored was *Jazz*, written by Toni Morrison (1931-2019) a Black, American novelist, essayist, and Nobel Prize winner who was known for her richly detailed and emotionally powerful portrayals of Black life in America. Her acclaimed works include *Beloved*, *Song of Solomon*, and, of course, *Jazz*. Set in 1920s Harlem, *Jazz* follows the story of Joe Trace, a door-to-door salesman who murders his young lover, Dorcas, and the aftermath of this act on his wife, Violet, and their community.

**"Enough cannot be said to elucidate how impactful our understanding of one another's lives can be, and how forcefully it can propel us towards a tolerant and empathetic future together."**

identity, and the enduring impact of the past.

Next, came the contemporary reimagining to Edgar Allan Poe's only novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket*, simply titled *PYM*. Pym was written by Mat Johnson, an American writer who is known for his sharp, genre bending novels that explore race, identity, and culture with humor and insight. He blends satire with social commentary to challenge stereotypes

and provoke insight. The story in *PYM* follows Chris Jaynes, an African American scholar obsessed with Poe's tale, who embarks on an expedition to Antarctica in search of a mysterious, undiscovered island inhabited by a population of Black people whose culture remains untouched by "Whiteness." The novel uses this adventure to explore themes of race, history, and the limits of storytelling.

The next novel, which delves into contemporary Indigenous culture, was written by the critically acclaimed native American writer Tommy Orange. Orange is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma. He is known for his powerful storytelling that centers on urban Native American experiences. The book is titled *There There*, and is a gripping novel that follows twelve interconnected Native characters living in Oakland, California, as they prepare for a large powwow. The book explores themes of identity, heritage, and the contemporary Native American experience, weaving together multiple perspectives to reveal a complex



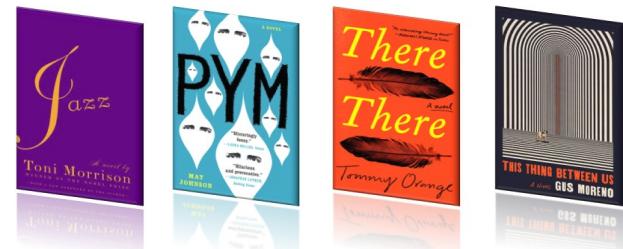
From Left: Dr. Alfred Bryant, Alvin Jackson, Jeffrey White, Christopher Shipley, Andy Locklear, Raffaelle Hanaeaur, Dr. Sherry Truffin, David Connard, and Michael McCoy

tapestry of struggle, resilience, and hope.

This book review session was attended by special guest, Dr. Alfred Bryant, Dean of the School of Education & Human Sciences. As a member of the Native American Lumbee tribe, Dr. Bryant's perspective on this novel, and the lives of the characters within was invaluable. His perspective, coupled with the members of the cohort that are of Native American descent (Jeffrey White, Andy Locklear) really helped the group to empathize with the characters of the story.

This is just one of several occasions which Dr. Bryant took time out of his busy schedule to share his time with the second chance students, and his efforts are supremely appreciated.

The final book that the class reviewed was titled, *This Thing Between Us*, by Gus Moreno, a Chicago based, Mexican American author whose works explore grief, horror, and identity, and often blend



## Multicultural Reading in ENGL-219

Page 17

literary fiction with supernatural elements. *This Thing Between Us* is his debut novel which follows Thiago Alvarez, a grieving widower whose wife Vera died in a freak accident. After her death, Thiago is haunted—both figuratively and literally—by a strange presence linked to a nefarious smart speaker named Itza. As supernatural disturbances intensify, Thiago retreats to a remote cabin to

escape them, only to find that the malevolent force may be more than just in his head. The book is a chilling exploration of grief, trauma, and the intrusion of technology into our most intimate spaces.

All of these multi-cultural readings by Black American, Native American, and Mexican American authors, and the discourse that they inspired among the class, were extremely eye

opening, beneficial, and necessary considering the political climate that exists today. Enough cannot be said to elucidate how impactful our understanding of one another's lives can be, and how forcefully it can propel us towards a tolerant and empathetic future together.



## Exploring Latin-American Cultures

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

¡Pura Vida!

This is national motto of Costa Rica, meaning “pure life,” and is used by the people of Costa Rica as a greeting which expresses their “appreciation for things,” and to define the lives that they aspire to live. Famous for its natural environment, people travel to Costa Rica to enjoy the many breathtaking beaches, mountainous regions, majestic volcanos, and tropical rain forests, as well as the exotic wildlife like, monkeys, toucans, and turtles. Another aspect of Costa Rica that makes it such an attractive destination is its inviting and friendly people, who live their lives in accordance with their motto.

As part of the curriculum of the Spanish courses that Cohort 3 have experienced over the last three semesters, taught by Profesora Maggie Payne, there were a multitude of cultures explored. She took the students on a guided tour of countries like Colombia, Guatemala, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, Chile, and many others. As a part of this exploration, the students of Cohort 3 have come to truly appreciate the traditions and beautiful aspects of these peoples’ ways of life; the cuisines, religions, agricultures, fashions, and such were so beautiful to behold once we began to really take the time to truly see them.

Profesora Payne introduced the class to a few of the wonderful artforms that represent the cultures of various Latin American countries. We viewed artwork from renowned Latin American artists



such as Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, who is famous for works like *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird* (c. 1940), and *The Frame* (c. 1938), which is featured in the Louvre.

We also explored some of the profound impacts that various Latin American authors have had in the literary world. One such personality was Colombian writer and journalist Gabriel García Márquez. Affectionately known throughout Latin America as “Gabo” or “Gabito,” Márquez stands as one of the most influential literary figures of the 20th century. His rich storytelling, characterized by magical

realism and profound social insight, not only won him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982 but also elevated Latin American literature onto the world stage. Through his evocative narratives, García Márquez has profoundly contributed to the cultural identity of Latin America and reshaped global perceptions of the region.

For this group, it was wonderful to be enlightened as to all of the wonderful and beautiful aspects of these cultures, yet there are also many hardships that the people in these regions have been forced to endure that were also highlighted, as this aspect of life cannot, must not, be ignored.

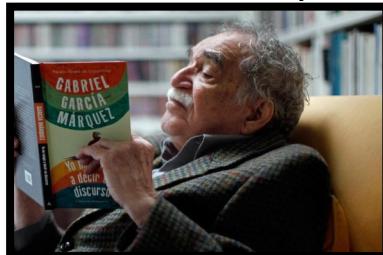
A number of topics were covered like, the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo, who seized power in the Dominican Republic in 1930, and starved the people of their civil and political rights until his assassination on May 30, 1961.

There were many stories like this one that detailed oppression, and the resilience of the people who endured.

Over the course of these studies, a great appreciation for the rich history of these beautiful cultures has been fostered, and this group has been given a deeper understanding, feeling of kinship, and respect for these cultures.

Historically, Latin American immigrants have come to the United States and their contributions have helped to shape this country into the wonderous melting pot that it is today. The efforts of immigrants helped to build, and shape the U.S. into the global power that it is. According to *Pew Research Center*, over half of all immigrants in the United States (52% or 26.7 million) originate from Latin American countries (2025).

Unfortunately, the current administration has made it one its main initiatives to seek out and deport as many of these immigrants as is possible, regardless of the advantages that they present to the neighborhoods, cities, and states where they live, as well as the country as a whole.



It is a shame that more people will not just take the time to really explore the wonder that exists within these cultures, and what an incredible influence that they had on this nation. If this were so, then the world that we inhabit would be a much better, more understanding and accepting place for it.

¡Pura Vida!

Upper Left: *Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird*, Frida Kahlo, 1940. Image courtesy of Britannica Encyclopaedia.

Lower Right: Gabriel García Márquez. Image courtesy of Microsoft Edge Images.

## Fantasy Football

Junior and Freshman Classes of the Second Chance Initiative Unify, Forming Bonds that promote Team Work and Unity, Through the Unlikeliest of Sources...Fantasy Football!

By Christopher Shipley

*Lead Editor, Staff Writer*

With so many new faces and personalities beginning their journeys as Campbell Camels, in the Second Chance Initiative program, we collectively decided to institute a method of becoming more acquainted with one another, while also fostering cohesiveness within these two cohorts. The solution was to revive the Campbell University Fantasy Football Leagues.

Fantasy football is a fantastic tool for promoting synergy within a group. It enhances team building skills through the draft and team management processes, while forming cohesiveness through the necessary communication involved over a seasons worth of football. Also, there exists a competitiveness within the cohorts that it would be unhealthy to entertain in the academic setting, and fantasy football provides a wonderful outlet to earn bragging rights over our fellow students.

The idea of creating a fantasy football league within the cohorts was first the brainchild of Cohort 2 graduate Michael Goff. He was the founding father, and commissioner of last year's leagues. Since then, the title of commissioner has been passed down to Andy Locklear.

Since becoming commissioner, Locklear has made tweaks to the league constitution and rules, building on the groundwork of his predecessor.

This season, the league was reduced from twelve teams to ten, and the amount of running backs was reduced from four to three. This was done to provide a more concentrated field of prospective players for each team owner to choose from, resulting in more talented rosters, and a more competitive league.

There was a lottery held for each league to determine draft order. The draft will be conducted in the snake format, similar to last season. But, new

to this season, is the third round reversal. It seems that in fantasy football drafts, several of the teams that hold the first few picks get elite players in the first round, really good players towards the end of the second round, and the best at the start of the third round. With the reversal, the third round starts with the team that picks at the end of the order, identical to the second round, so that those teams—that would typically get the depleted talent that remains at the end of the third round—now get the best of that round, making for a more even distribution of talent, and ultimately, a more competitive league.

The draft took place over two days, Saturday and Sunday, August 23 & 24.

For the students of cohorts 3 & 4, it was a heavily anticipated event, that was extremely enjoyable, and helped to open up new lines of communication between the two newly acquainted groups of students.

This is something that will hopefully become a tradition within the cohorts of the future, as it is an absolutely fantastic method of fostering group cohesiveness, and team building, as was the ultimate goal of Michael Goff, the Campbell University Second Chance Initiative Fantasy Football League founding father.

So, good luck to each member of these two fantasy football leagues, and may the best team reign supreme.

## Second Chance Initiative



2025 Fantasy Football League



## BIG LEAGUE ROSTERS

	Elijah	Cory	Ant	Dave	Andy	Chaz	Alejandro	Tony	Chris	Jay
QB	Bo Nix	Jared Goff	Baker Mayfield	Jayden Daniels	Joe Burrow	Lamar Jackson	Patrick Mahomes	Dak Prescott	Josh Allen	Caleb Williams
QB	Matthew Stafford	Aaron Rodgers	Jordan Love	Justin Fields	C.J. Stroud	Tua Tagovailoa	Jalen Hurts	Kyler Murray	Drake Maye	Brock Purdy
RB	Chase Brown	Bijan Robinson	Jahmyr Gibbs	Jonathan Taylor	Bucky Irving	K.Walker III	Saquon Barkley	C. McCaffrey	Ashton Jeanty	Derrick Henry
RB	Chuba Hubbard	James Cook	De'Von Achane	James Conner	O. Hampton	Breece Hall	Joe Mixon	Kyren Williams	Alvin Kamara	Josh Jacobs
RB	DeAndre Swift	David Montgomery	J. Merrit	T. Henderson	Tyrone Tracy Jr.	Aaron Jones	Isaiah Pacheco	Kaleb Johnson	Q.Judkins	Tony Pollard
WR	JaMarr Chase	Tee Higgins	Drake London	Justin Jefferson	Amon-Ra St.	Ceedee Lamb	A.J. Brown	Puka Nacua	Malik Nabers	Nico Collins
WR	Brian Thomas Jr.	Jameson Williams	Ladd McConkey	Tyreek Hill	D.J. Moore	Mike Evans	Xavier Worthy	J. Smith-Njigba	Terry McLaurin	Deebo Samuel
WR	Davante Adams	Garret Wilson	Emeka Egbuka	Cooper Kupp	Calvin Ridley	Josh Downs	Marvin Harrison	Rashee Rice	D.K. Metcalf	Travis Hunter
WR	Courtland Sutton	Khalil Shakir	George Pickens	Chris Godwin	DeVonta Smith	Jayden Reed	Keenan Allen	Zay Flowers	Mathew Golden	Stefon Diggs
TE	T.J. Hockenson	Zach Ertz	Dalton Kincaid	Sam LaPorta	David Njoku	Trey McBride	Tyler Warren	Brock Bowers	Mark Andrews	George Kittle
TE	Evan Engram	Tucker Kraft	Jonnui Smith	Kyle Pitts	Jake Ferguson	Travis Kelce	Isaiah Likely	Colston	Dallas Goedert	Will Dissly
K	C. McLaughlin	Jake Elloit	Cameron Dicker	Joshua Karty	Jason Sanders	Brandon Aubrey	Evan McPherson	Will Lutz	Jake Bates	Younghoe Koo
K	Jake Moody	Ka'mi Fairbairn	Tyler Loop	Brandon	Chris Boswell	Tyler Bass	Harrison Butker	Will Reichard	A. Borregales	Matt Gay
D/ST	Vikings	Bills	Browns	Chargers	Broncos	Packers	Lions	Eagles	Steelers	Ravens
D/ST	Chiefs	Jets	Texans	Giants	Patriots	Cowboys	Rams	Seahawks	49ers	Buccaneers

## SMALL LEAGUE ROSTERS

	Cory	Jay	Ant	Alejandro	Elijah	Andy	Kush	Tony	Chris	Dave
QB	Jared Goff	Joe Burrow	Lamar Jackson	Josh Allen	Bo Nix	Bak. Mayfield	Jalen Hurts	Dak Prescott	Patrick	Jayden Daniels
QB	Sam Darnold	Brock Purdy	Cam Ward	T. Tagovailoa	J.J. McCarthy	C.J. Stroud	Mat. Stafford	Kyler Murray	C. Williams	Justin Herbert
RB	Bijan Robinson	Kyren Williams	Jahmyr Gibbs	Saquon Barkley	Bucky Irving	De'V. Achane	Jon.Taylor	Ashton Jeanty	Derrick	C. McCaffery
RB	Breece Hall	Alvin Kamara	Chase Brown	James Cook	C. Hubbard	Josh Jacobs	Joe Mixon	O. Hampton	Q.Judkins	James Conner
RB	Isaiah Pacheco	Najee Harris	T. Henderson	Aaron Jones	DeAndre Swift	R.J. Harvey	Jam. Williams	Kenneth	R. Stevenson	D. Montgomery
WR	Mike Evans	JaMarr Chase	Ladd McConkey	Tyreek Hill	Justin Jefferson	Ceedee Lamb	A.J. Brown	Nico Collins	A. St. Brown	Malik Nabers
WR	Tee Higgins	Emeka Egbuka	Zay Flowers	Garret Wilson	Brian Thomas	Puka Nacua	Dav. Adams	Dra. London	T. McLaurin	J. Smith-Njigba
WR	DeVonta Smith	Jauan Jennings	George Pickens	Deebo Samuel Sr.	Xavier Worthy	J.Williams	D.K. Metcalf	Mar. Harrison	D.J. Moore	C. Sutton
WR	Cooper Kupp	Marvin Mims Jr.	Ricky Pearsall	Michael Pittman	Chris Olave	Mathew	Stefon Diggs	Rashee Rice	Calvin Ridley	Jaylen Waddle
TE	Sam LaPorta	C. Loveland	Jonnui Smith	T.J. Hockenson	Trey McBride	Tyler Warren	Mark Andrews	Travis Kelce	Brock Bowers	George Kittle
TE	Zach Ertz	Dalton Kincaid	Mike Gesicki	Dallas Goedert	Evan Engram	Hunter Henry	Darren Waller	Tucker Kraft	David Njoku	Kyle Pitts
K	K. Fairbairn	Will Reichard	Cameron Dicker	Harrison Butker	E. McPherson	Chris Boswell	Tyler Loop	Jake Bates	A. Borregales	Cairo Santos
K	Greg Zuerlein	Daniel Carlson	Younghoe Koo	Jake Elliot	C. McLaughlin	Jason Myers	Bran. Aubrey	Jason Sanders	Tyler Bass	Will Lutz
D/ST	Bills	Vikings	Broncos	Chargers	Steelers	Texans	Cowboys	Ravens	Eagles	Giants
D/ST	Lions	Cardinals	Jets	Bears	Browns	Packers	Chiefs	Seahawks	Patriots	Rams

## Second Chance Initiative Artwork Spotlight

## Rodrequisite Calhoun, Featured Artist

Cohort 4 Student

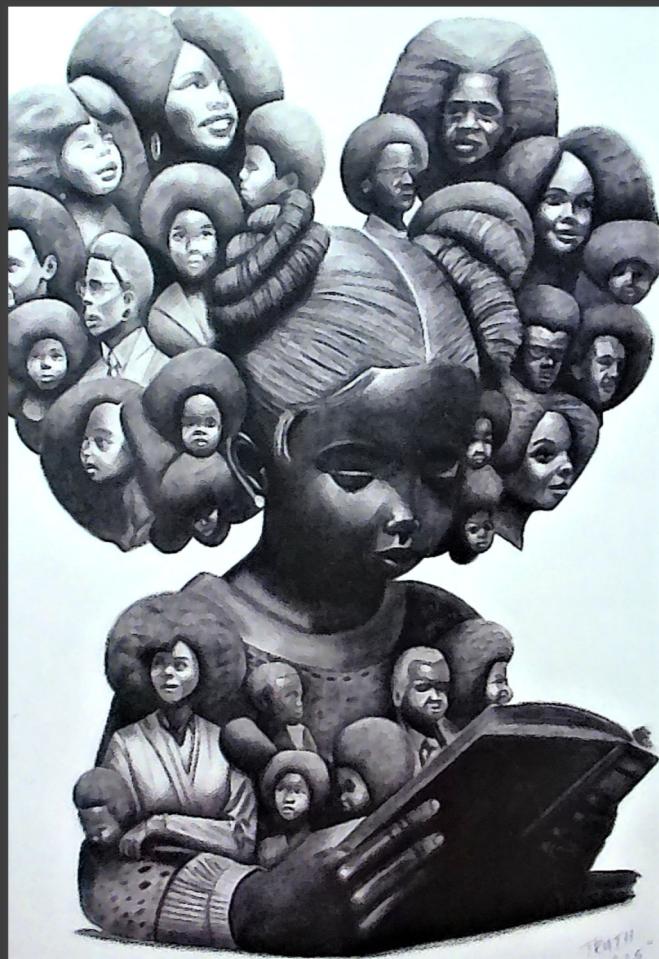
Interview by Christopher Shipley

**Question:** When did you begin doing art, and when did you develop a love for it?

**Answer:** I started young. It was just a hobby that came to me naturally. I found myself drawing before I could even write. Remember the kindergarten paper with the wide lines? Well, I would just scribble on sheet after sheet until I grew confident enough to try different things. People's compliments always gassed me up also. LOL.

**Question:** Your pieces are so culturally rich. What or who are some of your inspirations?

**Answer:** Thanks for the compliment by the way. But, what or who inspired me was Pablo Picasso who once said, "We artists are undestructable; even in a prison, or in a concentration camp, I would be almighty in my world of art, even if I had to paint my pictures with my wet tongue on the dusty floor of my cell."



**Question:** You use different mediums. If you have a preference, what is it?

**Answer:** I really don't have a preference because, like Picasso, I will use whatever is available.

**Question:** What piece of your art speaks to you the most, and why?

**Answer:** Of these pieces pictured, the piece that speaks to me the most is the black and white portrait that I did in carbon pencil of the little girl. I've always found black and white photos to be timeless.

**Question:** Are there any pieces that you are working on?

**Answer:** Right now, no. As a first semester freshman, I feel that I need to acclimate myself first. But, now that the semester is winding down, I am looking forward to getting to work so that I can share more art with others in future Trailblazers.

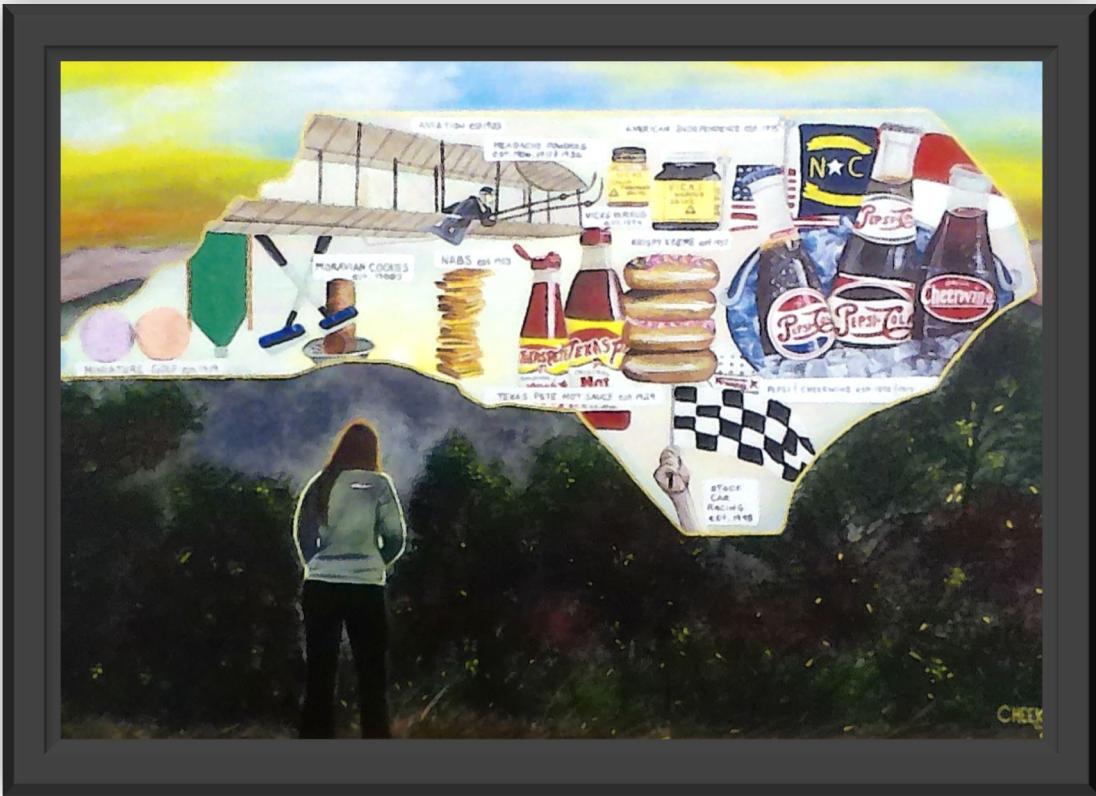
Thank you Rodrequisite for sharing your fantastic artwork. Continue to fill this world with the beauty and creativity of your art.



## Second Chance Initiative Artwork Spotlight

Page 21

Rodreuisse Calhoun, Featured Artist  
Cohort 4 Student



## Second Chance Initiative Artwork Spotlight

## Featured Artist

**Christopher Shipley***Cohort 3 Student*

Interview by Michael McCoy

**Question:** When did you first realize that you were artistically talented?**Answer:** As a first grader I created a picture of some birds in a birdhouse. Through some selective process my picture was chosen to be sent to Japan to be displayed. I didn't really know how big of a deal it was until I received a package from the people of Japan with gifts like a kimono and other great stuff, and letters from a few of the people praising my work and telling me to never stop creating. I knew then that I was an artist.**Question:** Are there any pieces that you have done that have a significant meaning to you?**Answer:** Yes. A couple of years back, I did a recreation of "The Church Mouse," a depiction of a scene from the movie *The Color Purple*. I did this picture for my mother as a birthday gift, and I am so proud of how much she loved it.**Question:** What motivates you to create your artwork?**Answer:** For me, doing artwork is about joy. The joy that I feel when I am creating it, and the joy that it brings when it's viewed. I've started so many pieces and never completed them because they ceased to bring me joy during the creative process.**Question:** Do you notice any differences over time in how your artwork has evolved?**Answer:** Yes. As I have matured, my idea of what art is has also matured. I am more into realism now, and portraying the beauty of life. The pictures *Lilium Umbellatum*, and *Ferreri in Italy* are two examples of things that I saw beauty in and greatly enjoyed recreating.**Question:** You work with different mediums, what is your preference?**Answer:** My favorite medium is colored pencils, in particular Prisma-Color color pencils. They lay down colors that are bold, solid, and blend seamlessly. The artwork that I can create is vibrant and lifelike, and the finished results always impress, even me.**Question:** What are your future plans concerning your art?**Answer:** I plan to create art that promotes positivity, and that can be seen by many. I really want to do murals that will bring joy to that particular setting. I want people to see my art and instantly feel just a little better for having viewed it.

## Second Chance Initiative Artwork Spotlight

Page 23

Featured Artist  
Christopher Shipley  
Cohort 3 Student



## Second Chance Initiative Artwork Spotlight

## Featured Artist

**Robert Groenwold**

*Cohort 4 Student*

Interview by Christopher Shipley

**Question:** When did you first begin to create artwork?

**Answer:** I began doing various artistic things at around the age of five or six. The first pieces of art I learned to create were dreamcatchers, and corn-bead necklaces. We had a large family, so we had to pitch in wherever we could, and selling artwork was a way we could all help. I began to draw pictures when I was around eight or nine. At first it was easy stuff like airplanes or cartoon characters. Then in middle school I transitioned to more still life and realism. Right now I'm experimenting a little with impressionism.



**Question:** You are an exceptional artist. When did you realize that your work was above average?

**Answer:** Well, when I was in high school, my art teacher kept praising my work. With that praise came expectations of better work. I soon realized that the expectations were different than what was set for the other students, so I had to adjust a little bit. At times I had to draw in ink, or do wood or linoleum cuttings. It got so that I wouldn't even allow myself to use an eraser. I had to be so precise that any little mistake had to be so minute that it could be covered up. Recently I've come to allow myself to use erasers and tortillons. It seems to take less time when you can make mistakes and fix them. Also, I'm no longer quite as precise so as to cover up the strokes that I used to get specific results. The strokes give the art a sense of character.

**Question:** Your featured piece has an indigenous theme. What was the inspiration behind this piece?

**Answer:** Actually, the subject is my nephew. I've always loved drawing things from my life. When I draw things like lighthouses, or beaches, they lack the joy of creation sometimes. Whenever I draw things from my culture, they remind me of home. There's always inspiration when I get to draw from home. If you've ever been to a pow-wow, you can hear the drum beat whenever you see a dancer in full regalia. It always takes you back and quickens your heartbeat.

**Question:** Are there any works that you have done that hold a special meaning to you?

**Answer:** Yeah, the work that I had the most fun producing was an exercise in breaking the rules of artwork. It was also the first one in which I tried to evoke specific feelings in the viewer with my techniques, color usage, and content. It is a garden with different flowers, bushes, and trees. I named it "An organization of chaotic tranquility." That work puts a smile on my face, and from what I've been told, other peoples' days have been brightened by it as well. That has to be my favorite work because it achieved the purpose that I set out to accomplish; bringing happiness to people regardless of the rules of producing fine art.

**Question:** What medium did you use to create this piece, and is it your preference?

**Answer:** For this piece I chose to use pastel pencils on pastelmat. Pastels are actually my preferred media. I find them to be very forgiving, and they allow for various types of expression at the same time. You can show the strokes of your work like you can while using paint, even though you don't get the volume present with painting. Also, the vibrance of color lends an exuberance to the rendering that draws you inside, leaving you with the feeling of being changed by the art instead of just seeing it.



## Ad Astra Per Aspera: To The Stars Through Difficulty

Page 25

As the Lead Editor of the Trailblazers Newsletter, it is my goal to continue the tradition of producing an informative and impactful publication, that represents the thoughts and ideas of the Second Chance Initiative student body, while adhering to the standards relevant to any form of work that is related to Campbell University. It has been an honor and a privilege to have had the opportunity to assist each and every Campbell University student here at Sampson Correctional in creating this outlet that provides such a wonderful platform for us to share ourselves with the rest of the Campbell University community, and whomever beyond those borders may happen to peruse these pages. Thank you readers for allowing each of us to open ourselves up to you. GO CAMELS!!



Christopher Shipley  
Class of 2027



## Coming Soon to the Trailblazers

By Christopher Shipley  
Lead Editor, Staff Writer

To date, this publication has given a glimpse into the lives, the hopes, and the dreams of Campbell University's Second Chance Initiative students at Sampson Correctional Institution. Yet, there is also an entire body of Second Chance Initiative students that are housed at Anson Correctional, who also have stories to tell, and hopes and dreams that they wish to share with the Campbell University community.

It is the goal of this publication, and everyone involved, to bridge the gap between these two facilities, enabling the voices of all of our fellow students to be heard.

The logistics of this endeavor are being worked out, and hopefully by the next issue of Trailblazers there will be content that represents all of the individuals that comprise the Second Chance Initiative, to whom Campbell University means so much.

So, until then, all of these scholars who are separated from the Campbell University campus by physical barriers

and our circumstances, but are still joined to it through our minds and hearts, will remain vigilant in our pursuit of excellence, and continue to strive to exemplify just what it means to be a Campbell Camel. We will keep our head in the books, our minds on goals, and our eyes to the stars.

### Superintendent

Mr. Robert Van Gorder

### Assistant Superintendent

Ms. Janet Dexter

### Campbell University Staff

Ms. Kelly Morin

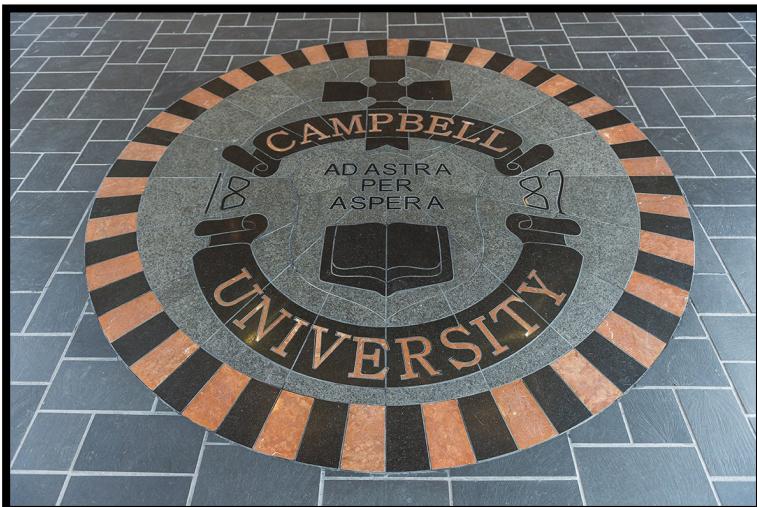
Ms. Julianna Mehrer

Mr. Anthony Faison

Ms. Makeba Johnson

### The Trailblazers Newsletter Mission Statement:

Provide timely and useful information regarding Campbell University's Second Chance Initiative that assists in promoting positive culture change, academic excellence, and social consciousness, constructively changing the lives of the students and communities that it touches.



**TRAILBLAZERS**

*Campbell University Second Chance Initiative at Sampson Correctional*



**CAMPBELL**  
**UNIVERSITY**