EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE Rick Lunt, EAC's New Director of Fine Arts (See story on page 2) Also inside: Eastern Arizona College Four-Year Degrees 3 **Alumnus Octavio Pulido and Donors** 6-8 **Alumnotes** In Memoriam **Scholarships** 10 Wedding Bells Rang 11

RICK LUNT

EAC's New Director of Fine Arts

or Rick Lunt, '93, the spring semester of 1991 was pivotal. He had just enrolled for his first semester at Eastern Arizona College with goals and aspirations of one day becoming a chiropractor. But as the semester progressed, the desire to proceed with anatomy and biology classes was already waning. The passion just wasn't there.

As an escape from the stress and pressure associated with his chosen curriculum, Lunt had also enrolled in choir and band classes through EAC's Fine Arts Division. It was there that all the passion, which had seemed to evaporate from his scientific pursuits, was suddenly manifesting itself.

There was just one small problem. A pursuit of music wasn't part of the plan. At least, it wasn't until he recalled the encouragement he had received from his high school music teacher to pursue a career in music education. With the resurgence of that memory, and with additional encouragement from his parents, the road forward began to take shape.

Thirty years later, that road has come full circle as Rick Lunt returned to Thatcher this past July to accept the position of Director of Fine Arts at Eastern Arizona College.

The Path Home

During his time as a student at EAC, Rick met and eventually married Melissa Fenn, '93. Together, they finished their time at EAC and moved to Flagstaff where Rick attained his Bachelor of Music degree in music education.

Following his time at NAU, Rick and his family moved to Springerville where he taught at Round Valley High School for four years. However, a desire to further his education motivated Rick to accept the choral director position at Spanish Fork High School in Spanish Fork, Utah, where he would simultaneously be able to work on his Masters of Music degree from Brigham Young University.

After eight joyous years at Spanish Fork High, Rick made the difficult decision to accept the position of choral director at American Leadership Academy in Spanish Fork, From 2008 until this past spring, Rick skillfully led his ALA choral groups to many high-profile recognitions, including 2021 Grand Champions at the FAME Show Choir National competition.

But more than just the accolades and recognition, Rick created bonds with his students that made being a part of his choral groups an overwhelmingly positive experience that his students will carry with them for a lifetime. In short, being a part of Rick Lunt's choirs means being part of a family.

The Legacy of Family

Creating that atmosphere of "family" is something Rick learned from his time at Eastern Arizona College. As the son of Dr. David Lunt, EAC's director of choirs from 1980-2021, Rick saw firsthand how his father went out of his way to provide a safe

> space for his students. He also recognized that by creating that sense of belonging, the quality and the emotional impact of the music performed improved exponentially. While Rick set out to create his own performance style, he consistently worked to instill his father's values in the groups he directed as well.

Now that his responsibilities encompass all of the fine arts programs offered at EAC, Rick hopes to expand that sense of family to all performing groups at the college. It's his goal to work closely with all of the different department heads to create an atmosphere where all of the performing arts are intertwined and creating together. This will truly help to enhance the student experience for every student looking for a safe space in the fine arts programs.

Though a lot of his focus won't be specifically in the classroom, he is not leaving that aspect of his career behind.

Rick will be directing the show choir, previously known as Choraleers or Company, as they start a new chapter under the moniker of EVOlution. He will also be the primary director of the

smaller ensemble groups formerly known as Guyz and Fourte. The group known as Encore will be comprised of seven men, seven women, and a vocal percussionist. Check the Events Calendar at eac.edu and make plans to attend a fine arts performance. EAC's drama, orchestra, band, and choral offerings have consistently been recognized for their quality throughout the state and beyond. As this new chapter begins, come feel that sense of family in the productions in a way that reminds you why Eastern Arizona College will always feel like home.



Rick Lunt, '93

FOUR-YEAR DEGREES

Eastern Arizona College Can Now Offer Four-Year Degrees

n May 2021, Governor Doug Ducey signed into law the ability for Arizona's community colleges to offer four-year degrees. For Eastern Arizona College, this was momentous and represented decades of hard work and patience.

One of the key proponents for this development was Arizona State Representative Becky Nutt. Representing Graham, Greenlee, and Cochise counties, Rep. Nutt was instrumental in getting the legislation through the Arizona House and the Senate.

"We are grateful to Governor Ducey for signing SB 1453 and to Representative Becky Nutt for originally introducing it," said Todd Haynie, EAC president. "This is landmark legislation for Arizona's higher education system and our workforce. It will increase access to higher education and career advancement opportunities for people in our area."

By allowing community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees, the cost and time of achieving a four-year degree will be lowered significantly. Community colleges like EAC intentionally keep their tuition low, so students have access to higher education opportunities without incurring large amounts of debt. Further, many students cannot leave their communities because of family and job commitments. By offering students opportunities at community colleges, they can stay in their communities and get the education employers are now demanding.

The legislation does not require Eastern Arizona or any of Arizona's community colleges to offer four-year degrees. The new law removes the prohibition from doing so. All community colleges across Arizona now have the opportunity to examine their programs of study and the needs of their communities and determine if offering four-year programs will be beneficial. Some colleges may choose to offer many four-year degrees, while others may elect to offer few or none at all.

Business communities serviced by community colleges also stand to benefit from this legislation. A logical outcome suggests that additional educational offerings will produce a wider pool of well-qualified employees, which provides businesses greater opportunities to expand and grow. If a community has a need for specialized trained workers, degrees can be developed to meet that need.

"While EAC will stick to its core mission of offering certificates and associate degrees, we will begin an evaluation process to determine which four-year programs make the best sense for our community," concluded President Haynie. "Our intent is to look at four-year programs that will help our community prosper, not to compete with similar academic programs offered at public universities."



EAC Special Assistant to the President, Keith Alexander, EAC President, Todd Haynie, Arizona State Rep. Becky Nutt, Arizona State Rep. Gail Griffin, and Arizona Speaker of the House Rusty Bowers inside the House of Representative Chambers at the Arizona State Capitol.

Fall 2021 3 gila gram

ALUMNUS OCTAVIO PULIDO/ DONORS

ALUMNUS on the BIG SCREEN

OCTAVIO PULIDO

n September of 2021,
Telemundo Arizona announced
the promotion of Octavio
Pulido, '06, as one of the lead
anchors for Noticiero Telemundo
Arizona at 10 PM.

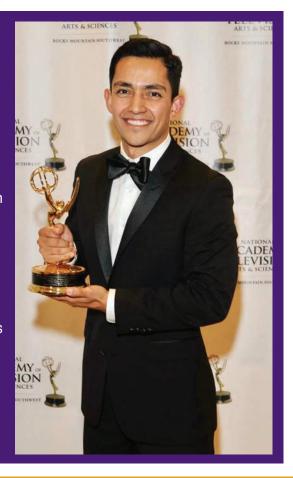
"We are proud to promote Octavio to lead anchor," said Miguel Gaytán, vice president of news for Telemundo Arizona. "He is an experienced and committed journalist. This is a well-deserved promotion."

Octavio started his career in 2011 as an associate news producer, video journalist, and fill-in anchor for KTVW. In 2016, he joined Telemundo Arizona as a weekend anchor and multimedia journalist. His journalistic work has earned him a local Emmy® award from the Rocky Mountain Southwest chapter in 2018 in the Newscast – Daytime or Evening – Larger Markets category and a Telly Award in 2020 in the News

or News Feature category for the story, El Chapo Trial of the Century.

"I am grateful and excited for the opportunity to get to work as lead anchor for Telemundo Arizona," said Octavio Pulido. "Our team is well-positioned to continue empowering Arizonans with fact-based information that matters, and continue building on our contributions to the Hispanic community in Arizona."

Octavio entered EAC in the fall of 2004 majoring in Dramatic Arts. He graduated with his associate degree in the spring of 2006. He then went on to earn a bachelor's degree in communications from the University of Texas at El Paso and is a member of the Arizona Latino Media Association and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists.



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ALUMNOTES

MONSTER

Barney Nelson, '67, came to EAC as Barbara "Barney" DeGear in the fall of 1965. After a short stint in Arizona, she left the state and eventually went on to become a successful writer and college

professor, retiring in 2013 from Sul Ross State University in Alpine, Texas.

Barney recently released her latest book, "Making Circles: Memoir of a Cowboy Journalist." She says, "Sometimes EAC students just disappear and never come back, so nobody knows what happened to them. This book explains what happened to me. I was not only at-risk

financially and the first in my family to graduate college, I was probably only the third to ever graduate high school. My ancestors were farmers on one side and hunter/fishermen on the other. I think my dad's mother was the first on his side who was even literate. My year as editor of the EAC student newspaper gave me the courage to pursue journalism all the way through a Ph.D. and eight published books."

In "Making Circles," Nelson's story is both personal and expansive. Guiding the reader in circles around the modern West, from Montana to Mexico, Arizona to Texas. Along the way, she celebrates the many characters she has encountered and considers role models.

Nelson has published hundreds of articles in horse and cattle magazines and is the author of seven books, including Voices and Visions of the American West and The Wild and the Domestic: Animal Representation, Ecocriticism, and Western American Literature.

Douglas C. Gardner, '97, a native of Northern Arizona, and **Karleen Payne Gardner, '97,** a native of Gilbert, Arizona, met and were married while attending Eastern Arizona College. After graduating from EAC, Douglas and Karleen moved to Las Vegas, where Douglas attended UNLV and Karleen got into real estate,

managing apartment complexes as large as 464 units.

After graduating at the top of his class with a finance and business degree from UNLV, Douglas joined Bechtel Corporation in their Phoenix office accounting division. At Bechtel, Douglas supervised an 18-person accounting division. He also started an MBA (evening program) at ASU. However, he

had always wanted to attend law school, so halfway through his MBA program,

Douglas left Bechtel to pursue a law degree at ASU. For a year, he would attend law classes during the day while finishing his MBA in the evening. During that year, Douglas completed 66 graduate level credits between law school and his MBA program. It was during this time that the couple welcomed their first three children.

Barnev Nelson, '67

After law school, Douglas took a job in Flagstaff working as a divorce lawyer. With the extra time afforded her by not having a husband in law school, Karleen took the opportunity to

return to school and graduated at the top of her class with a BS in geology from NAU.

Beginning in Flagstaff, and continuing

in the Phoenix area, Douglas has been instrumental in building one of Arizona's largest law firms. The law firm now has approximately 70 attorneys in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Douglas's family law division has been ranked as the top family law department in the State of Arizona, and the firm was recently ranked in Arizona's top 3 law firms by Ranking Arizona. Douglas has also published several books, including books on divorce and prenuptial agreements. However, his book Amazing Intentions, detailing a divorce attorney's perspective on how to save a marriage, is the one he hopes will be his great success.

Once their older three children were in school, Karleen opened and operated several franchise restaurants. However, an unexpected fourth child helped the couple decide to sell the restaurants so that Karleen could be a fulltime stay at home mother. Deciding against early retirement, the couple recently added a fifth child to round out the family photos.

Douglas and Karleen currently live in the Gilbert/Mesa area and are active in their church, enjoy traveling, hiking, gardening, and raising the two younger children who have not yet left home.

Marana Schools recently celebrated the many contributions of **Deb Larned, '76,** and her 40-year career as a teacher in their district. Her accolades included being named the 2021 Best Teacher of the Year by Tucson Local Media. In a press release issued by the Marana School District, Dan Johnson, principal

at Coyote Trail Elementary stated, "Deb is a true ambassador for our school and the District. She has continuously grown alongside the countless number of students she has served. Her leadership



Douglas C. Gardner, '97, and **Karleen Payne Gardner, '97**

ALUMNOTES

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has helped us become the 'Marana' we are today!"

A longtime avid supporter of public education, Miss Larned is a graduate of Willcox High School in Southeastern Arizona. Following high school, she attended Eastern Arizona College, graduating with her AA degree in 1976. After her time at EAC, she transferred to the University of Arizona where she continued her education.

Her career with the Marana Unified School District (MUSD) began in 1980 when she started substitute teaching at the former Thornydale Elementary School. She was hired full-time in 1982 as a first-grade teacher. During the course of her career, she helped MUSD open Roadrunner Elementary, Ironwood Elementary, and Twin Peaks K-8 School. She taught first, fourth, and fifth grade, but has spent over



Deb Larned, '76

36 of her 40 years teaching second grade. Coyote Trail Elementary noted in the MUSD press release that Miss Larned "is the epitome of service," before highlighting her service on the Marana Education Association, the Arizona Education Association, and the National Education Association.

Following her recognition of longevity with the MUSD, Miss Larned decided to retire at the end of the 2021 school year. Of her time at EAC, Deb stated, "As a proud graduate of EAC...the two years I spent [there] were filled with friends, fellowship, and fun. Yes, I did learn a lot at EAC, not only academic learning but life lessons as well."

When **Jess Skinner**, '97, first arrived at the EAC campus as a student in the fall of 1994 to begin her college career, she had no way of knowing that she was starting a life path in academia that would continue for years to come.

Jess, who served as the publicity coordinator for the Associated Students of Eastern Arizona College during the 1995-96 academic year, moved to Provo, Utah, following a church mission. While in Provo, she completed a Bachelor of Science degree in behavioral science from Utah Valley State College in the fall of 2001.

After a brief stint working for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, she continued her educational pursuits in Lawrence, Kansas. She completed a Master of Science degree in journalism from the University of Kansas in 2008. Kansas University and the community of Lawrence proved to be such a welcoming environment that Jess decided to stav. Following the completion of her master's degree, she accepted a position with KU Endowment, the fundraising arm of the university. She has remained with the organization for over 11 years and, in 2017, was named the Senior Director of Special Events. It was during her time as

a graduate student in Lawrence that Jess met her partner Michael Harry. They have made their home together for the last thirteen years and enjoy traveling to new



Jess Skinner, '97

and exciting places, visiting family, or just spending downtime together with their three kitties.

Jess recently had a chance to return to the EAC campus for the first time in over twenty years. More than anything, she enjoyed the opportunity to look back on a treasure trove of memories from what she described as one of the best times of her life.

While a worldwide pandemic put many lives on hold for a year or longer, such was not the case for **Presley Motes, '17.** In the spring of 2020, Presley completed his bachelor's degree in business administration, specializing in finance

Alumnii TELL US WHAT'S NEW

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from Bowling Green State University (BGSU). Later that fall, he competed in his final season of Division I college football at Bowling Green where he was recognized as Academic All-Mid American

Conference for the second year in a row. Weeks later, he and his wife. Danica. welcomed their first child, a boy, in January 2021. And as if that weren't enough, he completed his MBA in May of this year from Bowling Green and began working as the business manager for Thayer Ford Nissan. For Pressley Motes, the year of the worldwide pandemic has been a busy one.

Pressley and Danica married in the summer of 2017, right before Presley's final

season with Eastern Arizona College. Following his graduation in December, he signed with Bowling Green's football program. Bowling Green's first game of the 2018 season was against the national powerhouse Oregon University.

Immediately, Presley was struck by how different the experience would be playing football at the Division 1 level. especially in venues the size of Autzen Stadium in Eugene, Oregon. "It was a very different environment than what I had become used to at EAC. The energy was incredible," Presley said.

I GREN

Preslev Motes. '17. his wife Danica

and their son

Presley Motes, '17

For a time, it appeared as if the 2020 Bowling Green season was going to be canceled. But in the end, the season was reinstated and the Falcons were able to complete a schedule of five games. During those five games, Presley felt he played the best football of his entire career. Some measure of that success could be attributed to a tradition that began when the Motes family first arrived

in Bowling Green. Many evenings, Danica and Presley would go to the stadium and Danica would throw to Presley so he could work on his hands. Before long, Danica Motes was known by the entire

> football staff for her strong arm and tight spiral.

Now that his college football career is over. Preslev looks back with true gratitude for football and for the opportunities afforded him due to his time at Eastern Arizona College. He states, "I wouldn't be where I am today without EAC's football program allowing me to improve as a player, graduate. and be noticed by Bowling Green State University. I was able to live out a lifelong dream of

playing Division I football. Now that I have graduated I am grateful for the lessons playing football has taught me."

Pressley and Danica currently reside with their son in Bowling Green, Ohio.

Joyce Randall Barney '55 and W. Durell Barnev '55. were married in July 1955, after their graduation at **Eastern Arizona** Junior College. Following their marriage, they moved to Provo. Utah. where Jovce attended Brigham Young

University with a music scholarship. She completed a bachelor's degree and taught special education for many years.

Joyce later successfully auditioned for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and sang with them for 15 years. The Barneys enjoyed traveling across America and the globe as part of the choir tours.

Durell joined the fire department and worked there for twenty-three years. He was certified as the first paramedic in Utah. He worked in EMS and fire suppression for three sites. He later became the deputy chief of the Provo Fire Department. They both retired in 1997, and enjoy their time with family and the opportunity to continue their travels.

Raymon Christensen, '69, recently retired from the State of Arizona Department of Agriculture after more than 40 years of service. After leaving Eastern Arizona College, Raymon went to work as a ranch manager east of Douglas that straddled the state lines of Arizona and New Mexico, From there, Raymon worked for the State of Arizona while attending the Arizona Police Academy in Phoenix. Upon graduation from the academy, Raymon was then transferred to the area north of the Colorado River to what is known as the Arizona Strip. During his career with the state, Raymon achieved the rank of sergeant. He also served on his local school board for 19-plus years and as the chairman of the water board for fifteen years. He enjoyed serving in many capacities within his church and continues serving today. Now that he's retired. Raymon maintains his love of ranching where he runs a few cows and still rides the young horses. Raymon and his wife Shelley are the proud parents of seven children and currently reside in Moccasin, Arizona.



Raymon Christensen, '69

In Memoriam

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Annabell Weech Rufener ScholarshipCourtney Taylor	George R. Bingham Memorial Drama ScholarshipKelbie Flake
Ashley Marie Beals ScholarshipAmanda Barlow	GFWC Woman's Club of Safford ScholarshipKenna Hansen
Aviant Healthcare ScholarshipJennifer Blanchard &	Graham County High Schools
Kristi Murphy	Concurrent Enrollment ScholarshipEmma Lamoreaux,
Bayacan Scholarship	Elizabeth Davis, & Corey Farr
Bernstein Brothers Memorial ScholarshipNatalye Hanna	H. Greg Brockmeier ScholarshipElias Gardner & Maya Romero
Brianna Varnam Memorial ScholarshipE. Andrew Flores, Jr	Harvey J. & Loretta Olsen Memorial ScholarshipKason Crosby
Bruce & Roberta Bishop ScholarshipSavannah Gambell	Helen Johnson Bone ScholarshipMelissa Veres
Carl Kyser AwardMichael Patnaude	Jared Brown, Alice Hamblin & Polly Elizabeth Matthews Kroger
Charles Raymond Rhodes	Scholarship
Memorial Geology ScholarshipNikea Tianna Lambson	Jeffrey R. Vaughn Memorial ScholarshipMary Farnsworth
Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center	Jerry & Verlene Anderson ScholarshipDamian Rodriguez
ScholarshipMadison Vose	Jesse & Betty DeVaney ScholarshipMatthew Vasquez
D. Myrtice Wyland Memorial Scholarship Katherine Amoureux	John Mickelson Endowed ScholarshipBethany Clonts
Dennis Braithwaite Memorial Music ScholarshipSamuel Meeks	Kathryn Murphy-Spencer L. Kimball ScholarshipKate Johnston
Don & Verlon Preston Family	& Ashley Clement
Memorial ScholarshipMatthew Hensley	Keith & Kathleen McBride Crockett
Donald J. Caldwell ScholarshipElizabeth N. Hollar,	Family Alumni ScholarshipIsaac Miller
Macy Daley & Celeste Hawkins	Kristie and Patrick Putnam ScholarshipSierra Thatcher
Douglas Michael Loeb	Mac Donald Scholarship EndowmentSavannah Sherwood
Memorial ScholarshipAldo Molinar & Kayden Bigler	Mark J. Green Excellence in
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Dr. Dorine Chancellor Athletic ScholarshipsCorey Boston	Mary Kim Titla ScholarshipAaliyah Haozous
& Gabriella Romero	Max and Clara Curtis Bennett ScholarshipMegan Bingham
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Dr. Pam Rule ScholarshipTrinette Begay	Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center
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E. James Lee & Jacqueline	NatureSweet ScholarshipRyan Bryce
McFadden Lee Scholarship	Newman Sustaining Board ScholarshipAndrew Flores, Jr.
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EAC Foundation Automotive ScholarshipTegan Strowd,	Pay It Forward ScholarshipBrenna Sexton, Amanda
Sabrina Smith, Andrew Cluff, & Nash Mattice	Miramontes, Lindzy Hurtado & Bailee Castaneda
EAC Foundation Drama ScholarshipLindzy Hurtado & Lorina Higginbottham	Phyllis Martin Lord Scholarship
EAC Foundation Nursing ScholarshipMikhaila Krofchik,	Pizza Edge ScholarshipLionesha Francis & Richard Campbell
Lachelle Skinner, Ty Mangum,	Safford Lions Club ScholarshipPaityn Mattice & Celesia Acosta
Alejandra Zepeda-Barraza, & Tathra Ward	Safford Rotary Club ScholarshipBrookie Bryce Sarah Lamoreaux Memorial ScholarshipEmily Peery
Eastern Arizona Hispanic Family	Stephanie Ann Udall
Heritage ScholarshipLogan Conlon, Kestin	Memorial Music ScholarshipKaylynn Simmons
Finch, Mercedes Butler, & Philip Provencio	Students in Service ScholarshipJose Trujillo & Kallie Boring
Eldon & Lucille Palmer ScholarshipMelanie Bolen	ocacento in ocrvice ocnomionip
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United Food & Commercial
Worker's Union Scholarship......Jered Garcia
United Way of Graham & Greenlee
Counties Scholarship......Rylan Taylor,
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Melissa Claridge, Thaddeus Gray, Zack Walker,
Austin Hogle, Eilzabeth Warn, Natalye Hanna,

Brittni Montano, Alia Camacho, Shari Burnett,

Brittany Ewing, McKayla Wilson, Kristiana Alva,

Venicia Montez, Megan Vansickle, Naomi Park,
Taralyn Neilson, Ethan Bryce, Rhett Hawkins,
Tathra Ward, Destiny Driver, Chantel Barber,
Brooklyn Kempton, & Adamaris Hernandez
Virginia Rae Barr Memorial Scholarship......Shannyn Biggs
Walter & Julia Rogers Scholarship......Noah Bevens
Warren & Anna Campbell Nursing Scholarship.....Jessica Johnston
Wilford Stailey Memorial Scholarship.....Hayden Ashby
William D. Smith Scholarship.....Emmitt Younger
William J. Bone Scholarship.....Kacie Wolslagel

Wedding Bells Rang

January 2, 2021 for Holly Ellsworth & Michael Pearce, '20
January 2, 2021 for Kaitlin Clark & Mitchel McHugh, '18
January 30, 2021 for Aleesha Clonts, '17 & Hadley Schmidt, '21
February 12, 2021 for Briley Miner, '20 & Kimball McKinnon
March 4, 2021 for Charline Wood, '12 & Taylor Thygerson, '10
March 13, 2021 for Julia Bushman, '21 & Manuel Aparicio, '21
March 27, 2021 for Sadie Barron, '18 & Brandon Goodman, '18
April 24, 2021 for Kiora Wood, '21 & Riley Efros, '22
April 24, 2021 for Nia Carpenter, '15 & William Ungerman

May 13, 2021 for Megan Anway, '19 & Seth Dodge
May 15, 2021 for Emily Bushman, '17 & Kole Taylor
May 28, 2021 for Rebekah John, '22 & Garret Hunt, '20
June 5, 2021 for Anali Eaton & Jason Crandall, '21
June 11, 2021 for Kassie Ludlow & Aric Petersen, '21
June 12, 2021 for Alissa Carter, '20 & Riley Morris
June 25, 2021 for Kemilee Palmer, '20 & Connor Cook, '18
June 26, 2021 for Cammie Wallace, '22 & Brigden Hughes, '20



Barron & Goodman



Bushman & Aparicio



Carter & Morris



John & Hunt



Palmer & Cook



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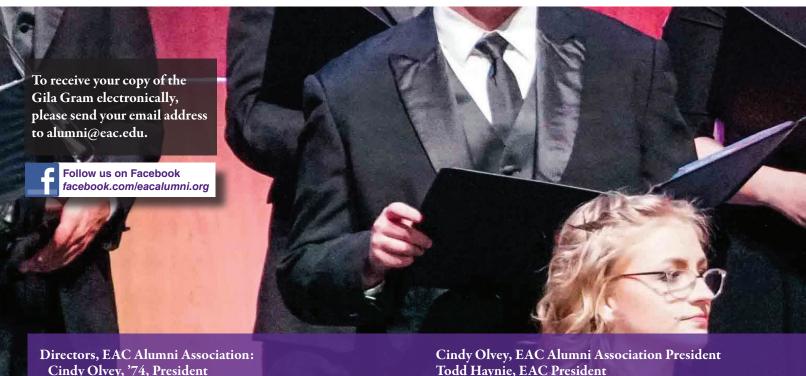
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