

## Going the Distance

Online education is transforming the learning and teaching process. With increased mobilization in a digital age, many students opt to pursue their education online. According to the 2015 Survey of Online Learning conducted by the Babson Survey Research Group, enrollment in online education experienced a “13th consecutive year of growth” with more than one in four students taking at least one online course. Responsive to the shifts in the higher education landscape, UNA continues to bring its students quality and flexible online programs. Online-only students at UNA have steadily increased for the past four years, with a four percent increase from fall 2012 to fall 2015. In fall 2015, online-only students represented fifteen percent of the student population. Committed to faculty development in all aspects of teaching and learning, several initiatives on campus support online education. The upcoming conference on best practices of “Teaching and Learning with Technology,” sponsored by the Online Advisory Committee, will be held on March 2, 2016. Other initiatives include workshops on “Quality Matters,” as well as regular walk-in help sessions on Canvas, offered by Educational Technology Services. All these initiatives provide frameworks to enhance the quality of online and blended teaching through technical support, pedagogy and opportunities for collaboration.

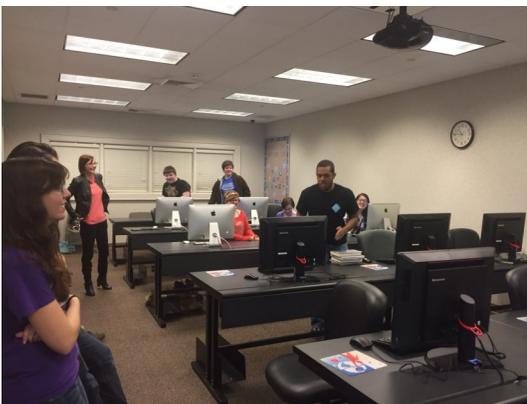
Dr. John Thornell,  
Vice President for  
Academic Affairs & Provost  
[jthornell@una.edu](mailto:jthornell@una.edu)

Dr. Joy Borah  
Associate Vice President  
for Academic Affairs  
[jsborah@una.edu](mailto:jsborah@una.edu)

Ms. Renee' P. Vandiver,  
Assistant to the Vice President  
[rpvandiver@una.edu](mailto:rpvandiver@una.edu)



## Fostering STEM



The University of North Alabama Association for Computing Machinery (UNA ACM) will partner with the Florence-Lauderdale Public Library (FLPL) to encourage middle school students to explore their interest in the STEM field, particularly in computer programming. UNA ACM will host two, six-part courses on introductory programming. Participants will learn how to build simple circuits and write programs to interact with those circuits. Each session offers hands-on, experiential activities, fostering interest in STEM, while maintaining a simple programming environment. The workshops will be held by a team of UNA computer science students, with computer science major Hannah Hopkins taking the lead of this mentoring program. “We want

to share our enthusiasm for computer science and encourage these students, especially girls, to study computer science,” Hopkins said. Dr. James Jerkins, Assistant Professor of Computer Science, is the faculty sponsor for UNA.

## Congratulations!



The City of Florence recognizes Dr. Tom Coates, department chair and professor, as well as Dr. Mike Hall, also a professor in HPER, as City Ambassadors. They completed the orientation sessions and are hereby designated ambassadors, to carry out the mission of promoting community relations at home and in their travels. They were entrusted to foster enthusiasm and positive community spirit and to market our City's many attributes and points of interest. Congratulations to Dr. Coates and Dr. Hall.



## New Faculty

Hilary Hinton, RN, MSN, joined the faculty of the University of North Alabama College of Nursing in the fall of 2015 as an instructor. She currently teaches Introduction to Professional Nursing and Mental Health Nursing Clinicals. Ms. Hinton received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2004, and her Master of Science in Nursing Education in 2008 from Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Hinton began her teaching career at Belmont University, where she taught Nutrition, Adult Health and Maternal Infant Nursing. Her experience includes the design and introduction of simulations in the classroom. Ms. Hinton co-authored the article “It's Not Just Skills Anymore!” She has taught with Medium Fidelity Technology and presented at local and national conferences. Ms. Hinton is also passionate about nursing care. Prior to beginning her teaching career, she worked in such departments as Neonatal ICU, Newborn Nursery and Oncology. She also volunteered at Siloam Clinic in Nashville, Tennessee.



