



Keith, Jack Thomas, Britton, Carson and Hollianne Carver are proud to represent the University of Tennessee at Martin, this year's Grand Marshal. They are pictured in front of UTM's Hardy Graham Stadium.

## UT-Martin named 2017 grand marshal

Aside from the soybean itself, little can be said to be as "homegrown" as the University of Tennessee at Martin, now celebrating 117 years as part of the Martin community.

In response to a lack of higher education in the area, local Methodist citizens established McFerrin College in Martin in 1890. Not to be outdone, a group of prominent Baptist residents then founded Hall-Moody Institute in 1900 and named the establishment for local Baptist ministers Elder J. N. Hall and Dr. J. B. Moody. The school focused predominantly on educational training, and the first classes were held Sept. 2, 1901.

Hall-Moody Institute continued to grow in size until it was renamed Hall-Moody Normal School in 1917 and later became Hall-Moody Junior College in 1922. The original McFerrin College was eventually overtaken by the increasingly popular junior college and closed its doors in 1924.

However, after a period of financial difficulty and declining enrollment, the Baptist State Convention decided to consolidate Hall-Moody Junior College with Union University in Jackson, effective after the end of the 1927 academic year. Hall-Moody's last commencement ceremony was held May 19, 1927. Approximately 14,000 students

had attended the institution in the elementary, secondary and college divisions since that first day in 1901.

This might have been the end of Martin's hometown college except for the efforts of many prominent businessmen and politicians who maintained that the residents of Northwest Tennessee deserved to have an institution of higher education nearby.

Sen. Sam R. Bratton, a Union City resident representing Lake, Obion and Weakley counties in the state legislature, introduced Senate Bill 301, chapter nine of the "Public Acts" of 1927, to provide for the establishment of a junior college in Martin. This bill was signed by Gov. Austin

Peay on March 29, 1927.

George W. Rowlett, a lawyer from Martin, was also a staunch supporter of a local junior college. Formerly a member of the board of trustees for Hall-Moody Junior College, Rowlett later became a member of the board of trustees for the UT System, a position he ultimately held for more than 20 years. He used his influence in these circles to support the establishment of an institution in Martin under the control of the University of Tennessee. Later in 1927, UT Junior College was born, an institution that concentrated in agriculture, industrial arts and home eco-

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