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Rhodes Community,

I hope the second half of the semester is off to a terrific start! We have enjoyed a very busy semester already, and we are so grateful to everyone who joined us for Family Weekend and our annual Homecoming celebration. There are more festivities to come this week. We are hosting the Rhodes trustees on our campus this week, and we will continue celebrating our 175th anniversary, culminating with Saturday's inaugural activities and the Student Inaugural Ball.

We will kick off the [175th activities](#) this afternoon with guest lecturer [Emma Smith](#), professor at the University of Oxford and best-selling author of "This is Shakespeare" and "Portable Magic: A History of Books and Their Readers." She will address, "What is Shakespeare's First Folio – And Why Should I Care?" This year marks 400 years since the publication of the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays, now revered as the First Folio. I hope you'll plan to attend this fascinating discussion at 5 p.m. in Blount Auditorium.

We will return to Blount Auditorium in Buckman Hall from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Friday for the [Inaugural Talks](#), featuring short presentations from several of our esteemed faculty.

- **Lit Matters**
Marshall Boswell, Professor of English
- **Study Abroad: It's Not Just for Students**
Cara Djonko-Moore, Associate Professor of Educational Studies
- **Collaborating with Plants, AI, and Machines to Make Art**
Karl Erickson, Assistant Professor of Art
- **Breaking Barriers: A Journey into Novel Antibiotic Development**
Elaine Frawley, Associate Professor of Biology and Larryn Peterson, Associate Professor of Chemistry
- **Research, Action, and Rhodes: Liberal Arts on the Streets of Memphis**
Peter Hossler, Associate Professor of Urban Studies

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Kelly Pledger Weeks '92, P'27, Associate Professor of Business

The inauguration begins at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday at the Bryan Campus Life Center, with a brunch immediately following the conclusion of the ceremony. That night, we will host the Student Inaugural Ball from 7:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. in the McCallum Ballroom in the BCLC. The inauguration and brunch are open to the entire campus community, as well as parents, alumni, retirees, community partners, and friends. The inaugural ball is primarily for students, but we encourage faculty and staff to attend from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. At the request of the students, the ball will be cocktail attire, and be sure to wear your dancing shoes!

I am also excited that the Hernando de Soto Bridge, which crosses the Mississippi River from Memphis to Arkansas, will be lit up “Red for Rhodes” on Saturday night in recognition of our 175th anniversary. Be sure to drive by to see the lights if you are able.

The **search for our next Provost** is underway, and we expect to have final-round interviews in late November. Look for more information on this in the weeks to come. The search committee is meeting next week to review applications. You may recall that Kathy Bassard, our current Provost, is stepping down in December to return to the classroom full time. We are exceedingly grateful to Kathy for her dedicated leadership and thrilled that we will have the benefit of her outstanding teaching and scholarship.

I want to give warm congratulations to [Shana Stoddard](#) for receiving the Tyrone Mitchell Mentor-on-the-Map Award at the 50th annual meeting of the National Organization for the Professional Advancement of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers. This is her fifth national honor since joining the Rhodes faculty in 2017. She makes us all very proud.

Congratulations are also in order for the students and faculty working with the Mike [Curb Institute](#) for Music, which was recently recognized by *Billboard* magazine for the third time as a Top Music Business School in the nation. The Institute continues to be a bright light on our campus.

Congratulations to our football team on winning another Orgill Trophy and beating arch-rival Sewanee. We are, of course, delighted by their outstanding play. The team now has a 5-2 record with three games remaining, including Senior Day and Cajunfest on October 28.

In other athletic news, our field hockey team is tied for the conference lead and will host the SAA Postseason Tournament on November 3-5. Based on their regular season record, both men's and women's soccer teams will also host the first round of their SAA Postseason Tournament, which will take place October 28. Men's and women's swimming have won their five meets in dominating fashion and will host their last home meet and Senior Day on October 21. Men's and women's golf ended their fall seasons with a tournament win and two second-place finishes. Men's and women's cross country's fall season is complete, and the SAA Championship meet is October 28 in Louisville. Our volleyball team has nine remaining matches before the SAA Tournament on November 11. I hope you will come out to support these incredibly talented student-athletes as they finish their seasons.

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examine Rhodes' policies regarding universal access, to identify and address accessibility barriers, and advise senior leadership on ways to improve. The work of this important group will continue this year. Please contact any of the group members with suggestions or concerns.

I also encourage you to look at our new (and improved!) [Rhodes viewbook](#), which came off the press earlier this month. Thank you to our Marketing and Admissions teams for producing this publication that captures the essence of Rhodes so beautifully and incorporates our new brand story, A Place Like No Other.

I am honored to have been asked to serve on the transition team of Paul Young, newly elected mayor of Memphis, as he prepares to take office in January. I will co-chair the Public Safety working group. I am thankful Rhodes will have a strong voice at the table as he transitions into office, and I look forward to building even stronger relations with our city mayor and his staff.

I hope to see many of you at this week's 175th anniversary activities. Every day I am reminded of why I chose to join this incredible Rhodes family. I am thrilled to be working alongside each of you as we support the success of our students, faculty, and staff, and advance the Rhodes brand nationally.

For our alumni and parents, we know recent events in the Middle East may be weighing heavily on your hearts and minds, as they are on ours, and we want to assure you that we have been in regular contact with our students and are offering support in any way that we can.

Jennifer Collins

President, Rhodes College



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