Austin Lewis’ bright future

by Sherry Meeks

Austin Lewis, a local from Eleanor, is a senior at the School of Business & Leadership majoring in business administration and finance. Lewis came to the University of Charleston to play basketball, but after two years decided to focus more on his studies. Austin has made the most of his time at the University, and in combination with the school has created a wonderful future for himself.

Lewis is the type of student that explores his options and makes the most of them. “I came in as a walk-on for the basketball team because I had played basketball in high school. I enjoyed playing with my fellow teammates, and we also have a great coach.” But after two years, he wanted to discover what else the School of Business & Leadership had to offer. Professor Hannah Johnson and Instructor Annie Brackley encouraged him to participate in an internship through the school and BrickStreet Mutual Insurance. When describing Lewis, they both use strong words such as “remarkable, driven” and “intelligent.” Lewis states, “The combination of UC and BrickStreet Insurance is a good partnership.” He also says that working 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for the company over this past summer opened his eyes to the ways of the working world preparing him for his life after college.

Mary V. Richter, Project Manager with BrickStreet Mutual Insurance Company and Lewis’ mentor says, “Austin is an inspiration to young professionals entering today’s workplace.” Lewis is also a Welch Colleague, a title that, according to him, motivates him to be a “change agent” at UC and in the local community. In the past, Lewis states that Welch Colleagues have worked together to help local elementary schools and have also participated in Sustainable Agricultural Entrepreneurs (SAGE) – a non-profit that centers its efforts around agriculture in local low-income areas to educate residents in how to grow their own food.
Preparing for UC’s future with Dr. Calandra Lockhart

by Jessica Tyner

Chair of the University of Charleston Education Department, Associate Professor and Certification Officer make up the trifecta of Dr. Calandra Lockhart’s titles at UC. Coming from such prestigious institutions as Valdosta State and Alverno College, Dr. Lockhart’s experience well prepared her for her inaugural year on campus.

“I have been able to apply my experience with regional institutions and adult learning,” she says. In the past year, the Education program blossomed into a Department with Dr. Lockhart at the helm, and she sees nothing but more growth moving into 2014, with a generous peppering of community-based learning.

“I have applied my passion for community involvement. While completing my doctorate at Auburn, I was an instructor of a class which required the students to complete fieldwork in an after-school program at a local school.” She knows first-hand that learning doesn’t only take place in the classroom.

“At UC, I have developed a partnership with the Charleston Community Family Development Corporation, which is led by Ralph Miller and stationed at Mary C. Snow Elementary School. Our partnerships with Ruffner Elementary School and the Mountaineer Montessori School. I plan to develop and build more community partnerships in the future.”

With such a full plate, how can she squeeze everything in? “I wish I had more time in the day,” says Dr. Lockhart. “I have a full slate of activities, including engaging in partnerships and setting goals for the future. I have a strong desire to make a difference in the lives of those I work with.”

What a difference a year makes: for the next five years, like doubling our student enrollment; a plethora of exciting ventures around the corner. Just like the community at large. “Given all that she’s achieved thus far, it’s no wonder she carries my name. It is an honor for me to be able to call and encourage each selected student to accept the scholarship, attend the University, and benefit from the Welch Colleague Program.”

In his spare time, Lewis enjoys playing guitar and writing songs. While he was completing his final year on the basketball team, his roommate taught him the guitar, and Lewis hasn’t stopped playing since. Lewis states he now has a greater appreciation for music. He prefers classic rock bands including Lynyrd Skynyrd, the Beatles, and the Allman Brothers. Lewis’ father plays drums, and they sometimes “jam” in their basement.

When speaking about his time at UC so far, Lewis states that all the “faculties and professors are always so willing to help in any capacity.” He goes on to say that there is a “caring attitude and team-like spirit,” at UC.

Assistant Professor Brianna Cicero-Johns recently asked him what his plans for the future were, suggesting he consider a Ph.D. in economics. Lewis intends to earn his doctorate, but in a different area. He will be taking the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) in October and will pursue his juris doctorate. Lewis has definitely made the most of his time at the University of Charleston and his future looks very bright indeed.

A note from President Welch

Dear Alumni & Friends,

I am happy to report that the 2013-2014 academic year has gotten off to a busy, but exciting start. We are already halfway through the fall semester and the holidays will be here soon. I’m sure you remember Homecoming, midterms, and Fall Break – all of the same events our current students are experiencing.

In this newsletter, we introduce you to one of those students, Austin Lewis, a Business Administration and Finance major currently studying for the LSAT. You also meet Dr. Calandra Lockhart, Chair of the Education Department, and hear about her plans for our Education program. Our students and faculty are extraordinary, and I am proud to share their stories with you.

I’m also happy to tell you about a new effort in the Office of Advancement this year. By now, I hope you have seen the “myUC” logo on information you received from the University. myUC is all about bringing together the UC family, past and present, and we are celebrating that through fundraising as well. Rather than emphasizing the Annual Fund this year, the Office of Advancement is focusing on building support for our core programs.

We want you, our alumni and donors, to see exactly where your support goes and the effect it has on the University. You have the opportunity to give directly to students, faculty, and projects. Not only are they students like Austin and faculty like Dr. Lockhart, they are students like you once were and faculty like those you had at the University of Charleston.

I hope you’ll take the time to read through this newsletter and get to know these members of the UC family. I also encourage you to read through the letters you will be receiving from the Office of Advancement and visit www.ucwv.edu/myUC to find out more about the myUC effort and how you can support the University. At UC, we’re Golden Eagles for life!

That’s myUC, what’s yours?

Dr. Edwin H. Welch
President

The president of the University of Charleston, Dr. Edwin Welch, phones all Welch Colleagues to inform them that they have been awarded the scholarship. Lewis received the call and was happy to have been chosen for the honor.

Welch states, “In addition to respecting the values of the Colleague Program, I have a special interest in its success. Thanks to the insistence of a generous donor, the program carries my name. It is an honor for me to be able to call and encourage each selected student to accept the scholarship, attend the University, and benefit from the Welch Colleague Program.”

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Join us as we host Chick-fil-A® Leadercast® for the second year in a row!

Interested in sponsoring this event?
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