



THE PATH TO *Success*

UA ALUMNI
HEAD MAJOR,
MULTINATIONAL
CORPORATIONS

BY CAROLINE GAZZARA

*T*here's a common saying at **The University of Alabama** that no matter where you are, there's always another Alabama graduate in a crowd—someone to make you feel at home.

The University has built a name for itself for nearly two centuries in terms of research and excellence; UA expands the minds of students, and by doing so, sets them up for success. When a student sets foot on campus, their future is largely unknown. But by the time they graduate from the University, they are on the path to achievement.

You can see it across the country, as UA alumni are in various leadership positions in almost every profession, improving their communities and the world around them.

And some alumni are leading some of the world's top corporations, having a profound impact on thousands of people. Spanning from the arts to science, from aerospace to the oil and gas industry, UA graduates have risen through the ranks and are at the helm of major multinational corporations. They are leaders; they are negotiators; they are some of the world's most powerful strategists.

They are University of Alabama alumni.

In 2015, Hewson was named the 20th most powerful woman in the world by Forbes.



Marillyn Hewson credits her time at the University for her work ethic. During Hewson's undergraduate career, she was a full time student and worked nights managing the switchboard and emergency control center.



Marillyn Hewson

For Lockheed Martin president and CEO Marillyn Hewson, a strong work ethic and desire to serve came naturally—it was in her blood. Hewson, a Junction City, Kansas, native, grew up with a father who was a civilian Army employee and a mother who was a nurse for the Women's Army Corps. Hewson started working at age 16 to help pay for school.

When the time came to go to college, she said she chose Alabama because it was close to her family, who lived in Alabama by then. The University was also a natural fit for where she hoped her future would lead.

During her undergraduate collegiate career, Hewson worked at night to pay for her classes. "I strongly believe that human beings learn and grow by taking on new challenges and adding to their breadth of experience," Hewson said. "The University of Alabama provided me with opportunities to do that—both inside and outside the classroom. It wasn't easy. As an undergraduate, I had a full course load, and I was working nights to pay my way by managing the switchboard and emergency control center at Partlow State School. So between classes and work, I learned to prioritize and use my time wisely. Later, I taught economics as a graduate assistant at the University."

She graduated in 1977 with a bachelor's degree in economics, and then enrolled in graduate school at UA, where she got her master's in economics in 1979.

UA taught Hewson tenacity, a skill she uses daily as the president and CEO of Lockheed Martin, the world's largest defense contractor. The company develops and provides defense technologies, aerospace innovations, security and advanced technologies across the globe. In 2015, Hewson was named the 20th most powerful woman in the world by Forbes.

Since graduating from Alabama, she has worked for Lockheed Martin for more than 30 years, and also worked at the Bureau of Labor Statistics as an economist in Washington, D.C. before that.

When Hewson joined Lockheed Martin in 1983, becoming CEO wasn't on her radar. Her first posi-



tion at the company was an industrial engineer working on C-5 and C-130 carrier planes in Georgia. Hewson wanted to do her best wherever the opportunity arose, which meant doing the job well and going above and beyond when she could. "I've had many opportunities for growth and advancement over my 30-plus years with Lockheed Martin," Hewson said. "One thing I learned early on is the value of focusing on the daily task at hand and doing a complete job. This means not just hard work, but anticipating the needs of everyone you serve—customers, supervisors and colleagues."

Delivering strong, consistent performance led to special assignments, professional growth and promotions, she added. "I look back, and I am deeply thankful for the mentors and leaders who appreciated my contributions and saw my potential to do more. When they put me forward for new opportunities to grow and excel in the workplace, I worked to do my best with the new responsibilities."

Today, Hewson is responsible for more than 97,000 employees at Lockheed Martin. She travels the world to meet with different facets of her company and works with the U.S. government to provide state-of-the-art technologies to better serve the country.

Hewson also continues to give back to The University of Alabama. In September, Hewson donated \$5 million to the Culverhouse College of Commerce and Business Administration, providing future students the resources they will need to succeed in the ever-changing business world.

Hollub's tenacity at Occidental helped her become the first female CEO of an American oil company.



Vicki Hollub and her mother used to go on an annual crimson dress shopping hunt before football season kicked off. Hollub and her family would also watch the Bear Bryant Show every week.



Vicki Hollub

Occidental Petroleum CEO Vicki Hollub grew up an Alabama football fan. As a young girl, the Bessemer, Alabama, native knew that if she went to college, she would go to The University of Alabama—there was no question. And so, her parents scraped together every penny they could for her to go to school.

Humbled and grateful for their sacrifices, Hollub was determined to do whatever it took to make the most of the opportunity. While at the Capstone, Hollub was a member of the Million Dollar marching and concert bands. During her junior and senior years at Alabama, she joined Tau Beta Pi and Sigma Gamma Epsilon honor societies, and the Society of Petroleum Engineers.

It was Dr. Thomas Simpson of the then-Mineral Engineering department who helped Hollub gain an academic scholarship for mineral engineering. “Professor Simpson was just one great example of the types of professors Alabama had, and I believe still has,” Hollub said. “The fact that he noticed and cared enough to let me know made a lasting impression on me and helped me make it the rest of the way through school.”

Hollub graduated from UA in 1981, majoring in mineral engineering with a petroleum focus. When she graduated from the Capstone, her goal was to be the best engineer she could, thanks to her training at the University.

“The academic education and the social benefits of attending the University prepared me well for my career and helped to mold me into who I am today,” Hollub said. “But I believe the enduring success and excitement of the football program also instilled in me the passion and drive to ensure I do all I can to make my team successful. I think most Alabama alumni and fans develop that drive.”

For more than 30 years, Hollub has worked for Occidental Petroleum, a multinational oil and gas exploration and production company with operations in the U.S., Middle East and Latin America. The Texas-based company is one of the biggest producers of American oil in the region, with more than half of its resources coming from the United States. When Hollub became CEO in 2016, she was the first female CEO of an American oil company.

But it was a slow process to get where she is now. For 14 years, Hollub worked within Oxy as an engineer before she was given her first leadership position, which opened doors, and in 2011 she was promoted to president and general manager of Oxy’s largest business unit. From there she was promoted to a vice president position, managing multiple business opportunities.

“Throughout my career, I tried to take advantage of all the opportunities offered to me,” Hollub said. “I never turned a new job down no matter how much I liked the job I was in.”

But, even as CEO, Hollub is still developing and learning every day, she said. “The breadth of experience and the diversity of the people with whom I worked helped me develop ways to maneuver through the challenges I’ve faced. I’m still learning as much as I can, mostly in areas that I hadn’t worked prior to becoming a CEO candidate, such as capital markets and investor relations. Thanks to the incredible employees of Occidental and the strong leadership team that we have, I’ve enjoyed being a CEO.”



Bruce Culpepper initially dreamed of becoming a CPA but found his calling in the human resources field while studying at UA.



Bruce Culpepper

Growing up in Fyffe, Alabama, Shell Oil's U.S. Country Chair and President Bruce Culpepper was always curious about businesses and organizations, and how they worked. When it came time to go to college, The University of Alabama's College of Commerce and Business Administration was a natural fit.

Culpepper had set his sights set on becoming a certified public accountant because of UA's award-winning program. At the time, Accounting at UA was one of the first of 13 programs in the nation to achieve separate accreditation in accounting. But just more than two years into his degree, he realized being a CPA wasn't his calling and instead turned to human resources.

Then-chair of the human resources department, Dr. Lena Pruitt, convinced him that going into the HR field would open many doors in the future. It was then that Culpepper said he found himself.

"I admit that when I first arrived at Alabama, I was not prepared to be at a major academic institution," Culpepper said. "Like a lot of incoming students, I was overwhelmed by the enormity and seemingly anonymous nature of it all. I was uneasy and thought the best way to counter that was to dive in and really apply myself. And so I did—surprising even myself at the intensity in which I began pursuing academics."

Culpepper quickly realized that he had the capacity to learn. "I liked learning and being exposed to new things. I could have gotten lost but that didn't happen, because of the supportive environment I found at Alabama. Over time, I grew increasingly comfortable in a university setting that offered challenging academics and a dynamic social environment. It all added up to a successful college career—one that I'm grateful for and reflect on fondly."

Culpepper graduated from the University in 1981. Despite the change in plans, he thrived in his new field and landed a job at Shell Oil, where he has been for more than 35 years. In 2016 he was promoted to U.S. country chair and president of the company, which is among the largest oil companies in the world, with 22,000 employees in the U.S.

"I credit the University for making it possible to interview with a number of organizations just before I graduated," Culpepper said.


"Shell was the last company I talked to after a series of interviews and something clicked right away. From the time they picked me up in New Orleans, talked with me through dinner and the actual interview, I knew the quality of the organization, the people I met and the challenges they offered were for me. I made up my mind to work for Shell if they offered me a job and fortunately, they did. Shell was a class organization then and remains so today."

As president, Culpepper remains tied to all aspects of Shell's in-country businesses while keeping an eye on ways the company can supply cleaner, sustainable energy in the future, along with a larger spectrum of energy products.

Humbled by his rise within the company, he never expected to reach the position he has now, but strives to improve Shell's future for the next generation. "I feel privileged to play a small part in providing energy, jobs and opportunities for people and businesses in the U.S. and beyond," Culpepper said. "I enjoy making connections with people, and I'm fortunate to be in an industry that's being counted on to solve some of

societies' most pressing challenges when it comes to energy and the environment. Most of all, I enjoy the chance to serve our employees who are on the front lines of stimulating economic growth and providing reliable energy to a world that needs more of it."

It was The University of Alabama that helped steer him to where he is today, Culpepper said. It's a path that differs for every UA alum, but for people like Culpepper, Hewson and Hollub, it's a path that has led to corporate success.

"I wanted to get a good job with a good company and make a better life for myself," Culpepper said. "The University of Alabama helped put me on that path. Again, there's not a formula for success, but that path worked for me." 

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