

2025

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SYSTEM

ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 FROM THE PRESIDENT
2 TWO LEADERS, ONE GOAL: EXPANDING UT'S IMPACT
5 RECORD-BREAKING ENROLLMENT
6 EDUCATION PROMISES KEPT
8 SHAPING COMMUNITY HEALTH
10 JAW IN A DAY
11 ADVANCING HEALTH CARE INFLUENCE
12 EXPANDING THE RURAL NURSING WORKFORCE
14 SOMETHING TO SMILE ABOUT
16 UT-ORII ADVANCES RESEARCH, TALENT DEVELOPMENT
18 SERVING COMMUNITIES STATEWIDE
19 BETTER ENGAGED IN THEIR STORY
21 FINDING NEW GROUND
22 SAILING AHEAD
24 EARLY CAREER SCIENTISTS
27 NUCLEAR SYNERGY
29 FINANCIALS
32 ENROLLMENT

Cover: A student from the UT Health Science Center College of Graduate Health Sciences examines a patient. (Photo courtesy of UT Health Science Center)

The 2025 Annual Report was prepared by the Division of Communications and Marketing on behalf of Randy Boyd, president of the University of Tennessee System.

Editors:
Jennifer Sicking
Ellie Dougherty

Designer:
Michael Folkerth



The University of Tennessee System Leadership Team



Randy Boyd
President,
UT System



Donde Plowman
Chancellor,
UT Knoxville



Lori Mann Bruce
Chancellor,
UT Chattanooga



Melinda Arnold
Chancellor,
UT Southern



Yancy Freeman
Chancellor,
UT Martin



Peter Buckley
Chancellor,
UT Health Science Center



Keith Carver
Sr. Vice Chancellor/Sr. Vice President,
UT Institute of Agriculture



Herb Byrd III
Vice President,
UT Institute for Public Service



Kerry Witcher
Vice President for Development and Alumni Affairs, President and CEO of the UT Foundation, Inc.



UT System President Randy Boyd speaks with UTHSC alumna and UT Board of Trustees member Shanea McKinney (HSC '08) and her husband before the dedication of the Everywhere You Look, UT mural in Sevier County. (Photo by Emma Grace Pytko)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

When we started this journey together, we promised to make this the greatest decade in the University of Tennessee's history. In this report, we show how we're delivering on that in ways that will continue to resonate across the state. We're preparing the most students in our history, we're leading in research even as we prepare the next generation of scientists and we're strengthening communities across the state.

We impact the state by transforming the health of people across Tennessee. If anyone can make a difference, it's the UT Health Science Center. We have the desire. We have the ability. Combined, we are unstoppable.

This year, UTHSC earned R1 status, putting it among the top research institutions in the country. This recognition means more than prestige or academic excellence — it equals increased research funding, more clinical trials and medical breakthroughs, and innovations that strengthen the state's workforce and economy. Together, with our statewide health initiatives, it means stronger medical training and more Tennesseans receive cutting-edge care. From training nurses in rural West Tennessee to running community clinics and dental outreach programs in East Tennessee, we help people across the state who often face barriers to care.

UT's impact extends well beyond health. We're driving a nuclear renaissance in East Tennessee by working with the Y-12 National Security Complex to strengthen national security and workforce development in the nuclear industry. Through the UT Institute of Agriculture, we're helping communities recover and rebuild after Hurricane Helene, providing on-the-ground expertise to support Tennesseans in need. We also welcomed new chancellors to UT Chattanooga and UT Southern — the right people to lead these campuses into the future and continue serving their students and communities.

This breadth of impact reflects our strength and growth. For the sixth year in a row, we set new enrollment records with 64,866 students attending UT — a 20.2% increase over the past five years. This keeps us on track to surpass our goal of 71,000 students by 2030. Growth like this is possible because programs like UT Promise make it easier for students and families to afford a degree — preparing the next generation of talent to continue this progress and strengthen Tennessee's workforce and communities.

By educating students, advancing research and providing solutions, we're helping the state thrive.

Sincerely,



Randy Boyd
President
University of Tennessee System



TWO LEADERS, ONE GOAL: **EXPANDING UT'S IMPACT**

MELINDA ARNOLD

A proven higher education leader with more than 20 years of experience, Melinda Arnold has built her career around expanding access, launching high-demand programs and driving enrollment growth. She was appointed chancellor of UT Southern July 1, becoming the third individual to serve in the role since the campus joined the UT System in 2021.

Career Highlights

Arnold has served in senior leadership positions at regional, comprehensive universities with a strong focus on supporting first-generation, rural, transfer and adult learners. Her work has secured more than:

- $11 million in grants
- $4.5 million in fundraising and partnership support.

At Texas A&M University–Texarkana, she most recently served as special assistant to the president and previously as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs, where she:

- Led record enrollment gains
- Enhanced student support services
- Secured millions in external funding to advance institutional growth.

Vision and Priorities

As chancellor, Arnold is focused on strengthening UT Southern's academic offerings, expanding initiatives for first-generation and rural students, and deepening community partnerships across southern middle Tennessee. Her priorities also include continuing enrollment growth and ensuring the campus continues to serve as a vital engine for regional opportunity.

LORI MANN BRUCE

A Tennessee native and longtime researcher and academic leader, Lori Mann Bruce is passionate about connecting discovery to real-world impact and ensuring students benefit from hands-on research opportunities. Appointed the 19th chancellor of UT Chattanooga on June 30, Bruce brings nearly three decades of leadership experience to the role.

Career Highlights

Throughout her career, she secured more than $20 million in funding for her own research and oversaw more than $100 million in federal and industry funding. As provost and vice president for academic affairs at Tennessee Technological University, she:

- Increased annual research funding from $16 million to more than $46 million
- Led $350 million in campus infrastructure improvements – from new science and engineering facilities to major renovations
- Oversaw the development and launch of multiple new academic programs tied to workforce needs
- Established the Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence to support teaching and research.

Vision and Priorities

As chancellor, Bruce is championing UT Chattanooga's pursuit of R2 research status from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Her priorities include ensuring students graduate career-ready, strengthening UTC's role as a regional leader and leveraging faculty expertise to drive research, innovation and economic development. She was appointed to serve on the UT-Battelle Board of Governors, which advances U.S. scientific leadership, fosters partnerships with UT System campuses and supports science education outreach — including millions of dollars in contributions to local schools and institutions.





Andrew Sherfy, a distinguished lecturer in the UTIA Department of Biosystems Engineering and Soil Science, gives a presentation to his fundamentals of soil science class. (Photo by Steven Bridges)



UT Knoxville

UTK hit a record of 40,421 students, a 4.4% increase, and a 92.4% retention rate. With 7,143 new freshmen, it is the largest first-year class in UTK history. Its four-year graduation rate hit a record of 66.8%.

65.6%

six-year degree graduation rate across the UT System

RECORD-BREAKING **ENROLLMENT**

UT Chattanooga

UTC welcomed its largest student body with 12,060 students, up 2.4%, including 2,378 new freshmen. First-year retention increased to 73.4%. Graduate students hit a record of 1,664, up 5.8%.



UT Southern

UTS hit 1,132 students, the highest enrollment in its history, an 8.2% increase over last year due to a 44.2% increase in transfer students. Graduate student enrollment grew to 41, up 20.6%.

85.8%

first-year retention across the UT System

UT Martin

UTM enrollment grew 8% to 8,096 students, with 1,329 new freshmen — its largest in 16 years. The 708 graduate students showed an increase of 2.6%.



UT Health Science Center

UTHSC student population grew to 3,157 students, an increase of 1.8%. The 1,023 new students who enrolled shows a 3.2% increase from fall 2024.



"Being a UT Promise Scholarship recipient has been a tremendous support in my academic and personal journey. Financial assistance has **allowed me to focus on my coursework without the added stress of tuition costs**, enabling me to dedicate more time to studying and community involvement."



EDUCATION **PROMISES KEPT**

UT Promise is a last-dollar scholarship that assists with covering tuition and mandatory fees for eligible Tennessee residents attending UT campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Pulaski, Martin and Memphis. Designed to make higher education more accessible, UT Promise ensures that after other financial aid — such as Pell Grants, HOPE Scholarships or other institutional aid — is applied, qualifying students won't have to pay out-of-pocket for any remaining tuition and mandatory fees.

4,001
recipients since fall 2020

$3.1M+
scholarship funds awarded

2,359
projected fall 2025 recipients

"The UT Promise program not only **eases financial burdens but also connects students to a network of support** that strengthens their academic and career journeys."



"From my experience, **having someone there to encourage me and give me advice is essential to my success,** academically and personally. The UT Promise platform and my mentor give me great career advice and guidance."

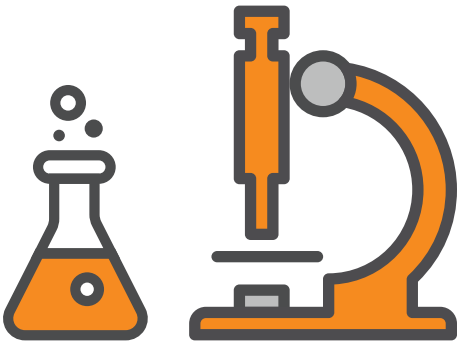
Students attend the first of two undergraduate ceremonies in UTC's McKenzie Arena. (Photo by Angela Foster)

SHAPING COMMUNITY HEALTH

The UT Health Science Center is Tennessee's only public statewide academic health science system, delivering education, research, clinical care and public service. It trains the largest number of health care professionals, including doctors, dentists, nurses and pharmacists, many of whom remain in Tennessee to serve local communities.

R1 STATUS
ACHIEVED

$98M+
in research grants and contract awards



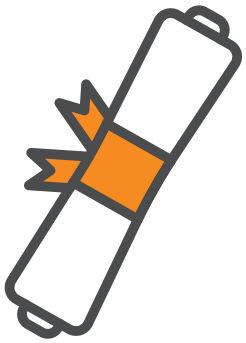
58,974
health care professionals trained since UTHSC opened in 1911

876
graduates in May 2025

1,413
medical interns and residents in training as of May 2025

779
clinical and educational sites

22,343
hours of community service performed



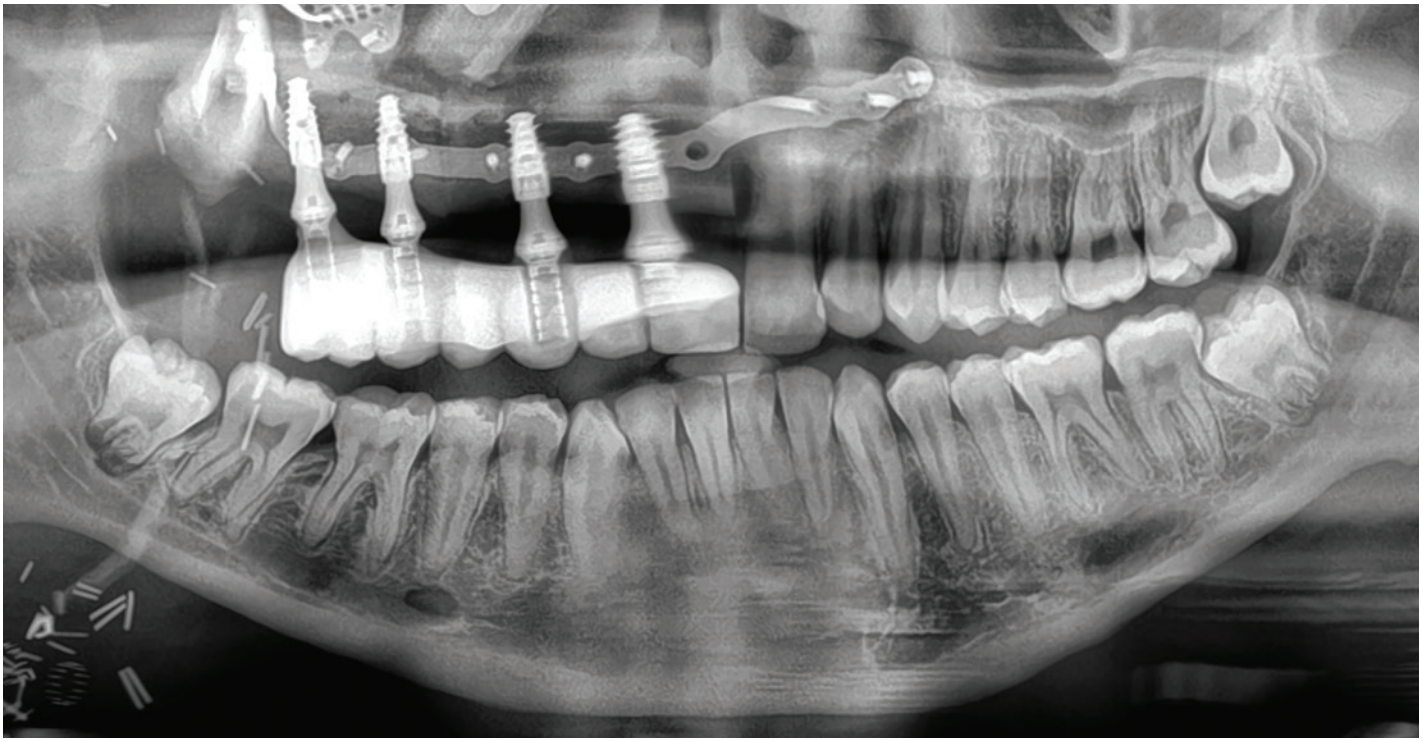
UTHSC GRADUATION RATES

94%
graduate and professional students

89%
undergraduate students



The annual Give Kids A Smile event, hosted by the UTHSC College of Dentistry, delivered more than $19,000 worth of free dental care to almost 90 middle and high school students from across the Memphis area. (Photo by Caleb Jia)



The post-operation x-ray of James Wynn's jaw, after the removal of a tumor. (Courtesy photo)

UTHSC SURGEONS COMPLETE **JAW IN ONE DAY SURGERY**

Called Jaw in a Day surgery, James Wynn was the first patient in Tennessee and the Mid-South to undergo it. A multidisciplinary team of surgeons from the UT Health Science Center, removed a tumor, built facial bones, eye socket and jaw out of Wynn's leg bone, and installed dental implants and prosthetic teeth — all within one day.

This groundbreaking surgery enables a quicker recovery.

"Traditional methods could take several months, sometimes even years, to complete. In contrast, this procedure enables patients to receive a functional jaw in just one day," said Dr. Anas Eid, chief of facial plastic surgery in the UTHSC College of Medicine and leader of the Jaw in a Day surgery team.

The accomplishment was years in the making, starting when Eid formed a team that included experts in facial plastic surgery, head and neck surgical oncology, and oral and maxillofacial surgery. The team meets regularly to discuss cases involving complex facial reconstruction resulting from disease, trauma and congenital defects.

Enter Wynn.

In an operating room at Methodist University Hospital near the UTHSC campus, Dr. Burton Wood, assistant professor of head and neck surgical oncology, removed the tumor. The surgeons then removed the upper jaw, and the bottom of the eye socket, since the tumor had damaged those bones. The reconstructive team meticulously cut Wynn's fibula to create the shape of the face and jaw.

While the bone was still connected to the leg via blood vessels, the team fixed the fibula onto a 3D-printed model of Wynn's skull, allowing Associate Professor and Program Director Dr. Brett Wilson, who led the oral and maxillofacial surgery team, and Dr. Jeffrey Brooks, professor and chair of the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, to place dental implants into the bone. Eid and his team then removed the fibula from the model and attached it to Wynn's face, using a microscope to connect the blood vessels to ensure the bone's survival. Finally, Wilson and Brooks attached the prosthetic teeth to the dental implants.

"The key factor that contributed to the success of this kind of surgery is the collaboration between surgical services at UT Health Science Center," Wilson said. "We have an immense amount of collegiality between our departments, which ultimately results in our patients receiving the highest level of care."

> "The key factor that contributed to the success of this kind of surgery is the **collaboration between surgical services** at UT Health Science Center."
>
> **—DR. BRETT WILSON**



Logan McCulley, third from left, completed clinical hours in Lake County as part of his UTHSC doctoral of nursing practice degree requirements. (Photo by Caleb Jia)

ADVANCING **HEALTH CARE INFLUENCE**

When Logan McCulley wanted to expand his influence as a health care provider, he looked to the UT Health Science Center for his doctoral of nursing practice (DNP) degree.

As part of his training, McCulley spent two semesters serving his clinical hours at a primary care clinic in Lake County, staying in Dyersburg while working three to four days at the clinic. He enjoyed the work because he saw the impact of rural health care providers.

"The amount of help that you can give to people who live in these remote areas is just astounding," he said. "A lot of these people didn't have a car, so they would walk, ride their bike or take their electric wheelchair to the clinic. You could do bloodwork, order an ultrasound, drain an abscess. You could change their outcome."

McCulley is proud to be a graduate of the DNP program at UTHSC, which is known for its rigorous standards.

"The response you get in the community for being a UT Health Science Center graduate is worth making it a point to come to UT Health Science Center," he said.

> "The amount of help that you can give to people who live in these remote areas is just **astounding**...You could change their outcome."
>
> **—LOGAN MCCULLEY**



The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program prepares advanced practice registered nurses for enhanced roles.

- The program is ranked No. 14 among public universities by U.S. News and World Report.
- Largest producer of doctorally prepared nurses in Tennessee.
- New nurse executive concentration enrolled its first cohort in fall 2025.

UTHSC DNP concentrations are:

- Family nurse practitioner
- Nurse anesthesiologist
- Nurse midwifery
- Adult gerontology acute care
- Psychiatric mental health nurse
- Pediatric primary care nurse
- Pediatric acute care nurse
- Neonatal nurse practitioner
- Nurse executive

Top left: A UTM nursing student carefully practices suturing during a hands-on clinical training session. Top right: Two UTM nursing students practice in-patient care under supervision. (Photos by Nathan Morgan)





EXPANDING **THE RURAL NURSING WORKFORCE**

With the aid of grants, the University of Tennessee is preparing even more nurses to work in rural West Tennessee.

A $300,000, 17-month grant from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development is funding the Tennessee Rural Nurse Scholars program for eight nursing students: four at UT Martin and four at UT Southern. The students receive financial support in their final year of nursing school, a paid student nurse internship experience and additional training through an online rural health program.

A $500,000 UT Grand Challenge grant will put three rural health units on the road to provide outreach, education and training to the communities and the health care workforce. One unit will be sent from: UT Martin, UT Southern and UT Health Science Center.

"The collaboration of our three nursing programs truly exemplifies the Be One UT values, especially the 'united and connected' category," said Wendy Likes, UT Health Science Center nursing dean. "These grants are unique, innovative opportunities to expose our students to rural health as a career option and to help prepare them."

Tennessee ranks 44th in the nation for health outcomes, with rural residents experiencing grave disparities versus their urban counterparts. Health care workforce shortages also plague rural areas, in part due to isolation and limited professional development opportunities.





Getting Mobile

MobileMOC (medical outreach clinic) brings health care to rural communities in southeast Tennessee as well as provides training for UT Chattanooga students. The mobile clinic provides preventative screenings, chronic disease management, wellness exams and social support services for older adults and caregivers.

It operates in Bledsoe, Bradley, Grundy, Hamilton, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea and Sequatchie counties — thanks to a $2.6 million grant from the Tennessee Department of Health.

"These rural counties have many older adults with limited access to essential resources. Some of those counties do not have hospitals or emergency departments, making health care accessibility a significant challenge," said Kristi Wick, UC Foundation assistant professor and Vicky B. Gregg chair of gerontology at UT Chattanooga. "Senior centers in these communities serve as vital hubs, building strong relationships with older adults. Partnering with these centers gives us a tremendous opportunity to collaborate with their staff and enhance the programs and services they already provide."



Simulated patient scenarios help UTS students build confidence in life-saving respiratory care. (Photo courtesy of UT Southern)

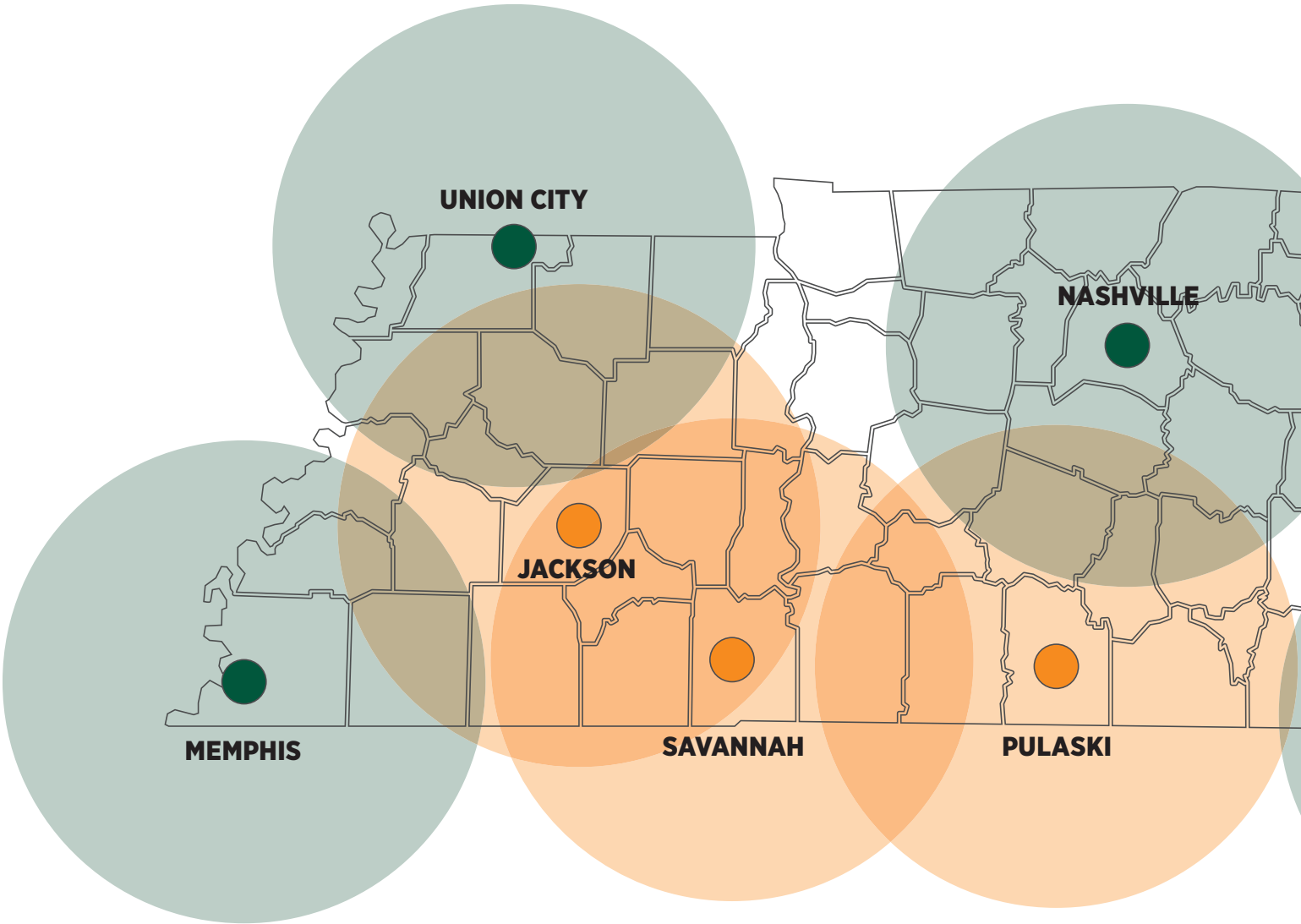
SOMETHING **TO SMILE ABOUT**

Need a smile? The Healthy Smiles project, which began in 2022, aims to grow the state's dental workforce and provide people across Tennessee, particularly those in rural areas, the oral health care they desperately need.

The state committed $94 million over the span of the initiative for improving oral health for Tennesseans ($28.5 million for the Tennessee Department of Health; $52.9 million to UT Health Science Center's College of Dentistry and $12.9 million to Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry).

By increasing class sizes of dentists and dental hygienists as well as opening clinic locations across the state, leaders hope to strengthen the safety net for rural and underserved communities.

Now, that's something to smile about.



Existing College of Dentistry Clinics — 1 Hour Drive Time

Planned College of Dentistry Clinics — 1 Hour Drive Time

FY2025 IMPACT

+30%
IN DOCTOR OF DENTAL SURGERY CLASS SIZE

+100%
IN DENTAL HYGIENE CLASS SIZE

10,000+
PROCEDURES PROVIDED AT CLINICS

19
STATEWIDE PARTNERS

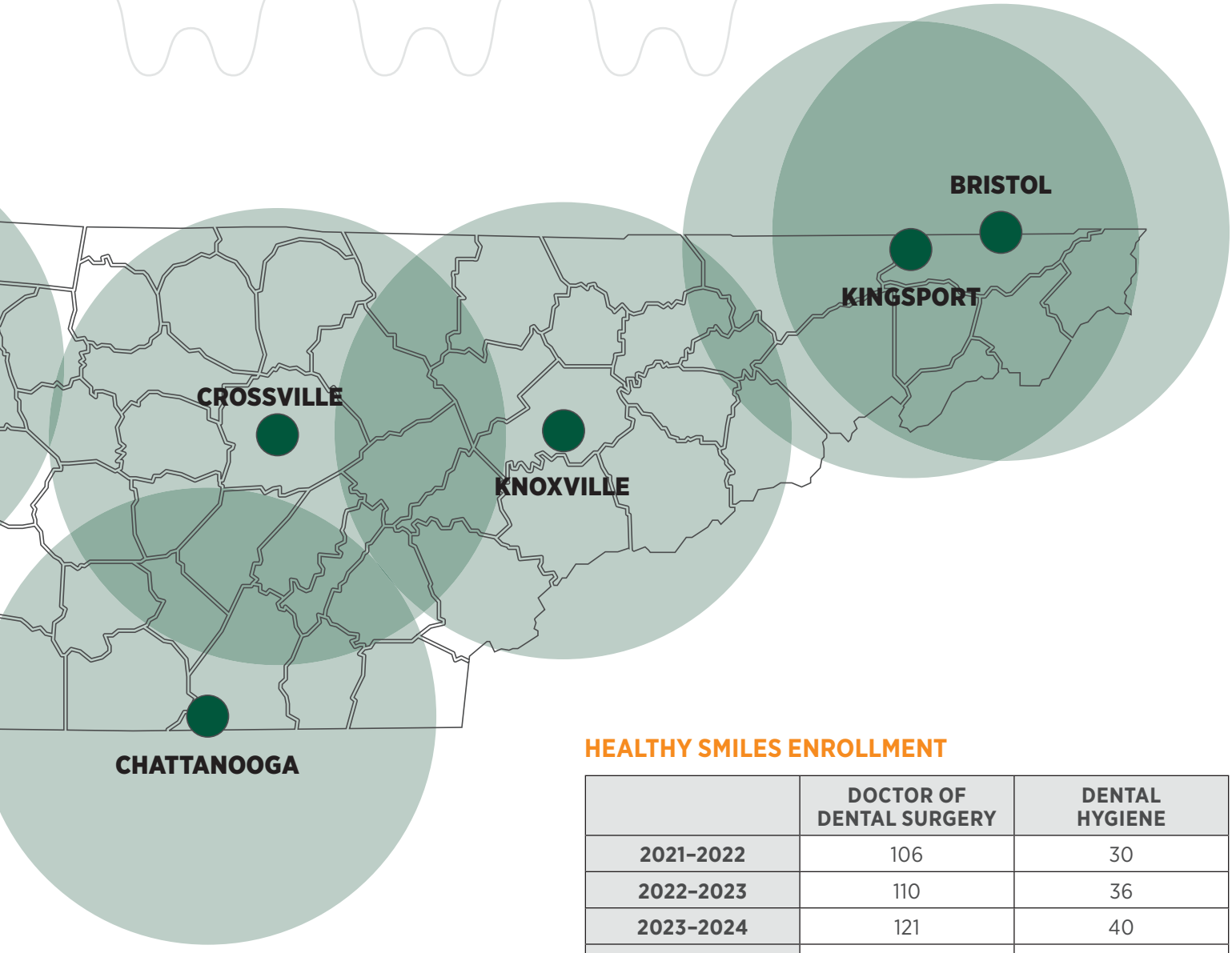
$25M
IN CURRENT AND PLANNED INVESTMENTS

PROJECTED 2030–2031 IMPACT

37,000+
PROCEDURES PERFORMED PER YEAR

$7M+
IN ANNUAL CARE PROVIDED

910+
NEW DENTISTS AND HYGIENISTS ADDED TO TN



HEALTHY SMILES ENROLLMENT

	DOCTOR OF DENTAL SURGERY	DENTAL HYGIENE
2021–2022	106	30
2022–2023	110	36
2023–2024	121	40
2024–2025	130	43
2025–2026	**130**	**48***

* Projected – 24 students anticipated in 2026 spring cohort

UT-ORII ADVANCES
RESEARCH, TALENT DEVELOPMENT

The UT-Oak Ridge Innovation Institute (UT-ORII) serves as a hub for research and talent development between the University of Tennessee and Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

"By combining the strengths of UT and ORNL, we have made remarkable progress in just a few years — from record enrollment in our joint doctoral research programs to collaborative research that strengthens Tennessee's economy and addresses national challenges," said David Sholl, UT-ORII executive director.

Since its launch in 2021, more than $67 million has been invested in UT-ORNL collaborative research. Nearly 40 joint researchers have been hired and more than 300 faculty members and students have received funding to drive innovation in areas of national importance while generating long-term economic impact across Tennessee.

The Next Generation

UT-ORII's Bredesen Center for Interdisciplinary Research and Graduate Education has doubled enrollment in its three UT-ORNL doctoral programs over the past four years. This fall, the center welcomed its largest incoming class with 63 students, bringing total enrollment to 210 — another record.

The Bredesen Center's doctoral programs at UT Knoxville in data science and engineering, energy science and engineering, and genome science and technology prepare future scientists and engineers to tackle some of the nation's most pressing challenges.

"We have a unique opportunity to train students in truly interdisciplinary research, drawing on the breadth of scientists, expertise and world-class facilities at both ORNL and UT," said Brynn Voy, education director for UT-ORII and the Bredesen Center.

Convergent Research

UT-ORII is advancing collaborative discovery between UT's research faculty across the state and ORNL through five Convergent Research Initiatives (CRIs) in critical areas:

- Fusion technology and materials for extreme environments
- Transportation
- Circular bioeconomy systems
- Radiopharmaceutical therapies
- Advanced manufacturing for affordable building construction, launched in 2025.

By 2030, UT and ORNL expect to hire about 100 joint researchers and 125 graduate students associated with these CRIs. This includes an active search for four new UT-ORNL governor's chairs, three UTK-ORNL governor's chairs and the first UTC-ORNL governor's chair in quantum information science and engineering. These researchers will help drive innovation and position Tennessee as a national tech hub.



Undergraduate students from public, private, large and small universities across the country participate in the SMaRT program. (Photo courtesy of *Our Tennessee*)

Since its launch in 2021, more than **$67 million** has been invested in UT-ORNL collaborative research.

STEMOVATE Across Tennessee

UT-ORII launched STEMOVATE: Powering Tennessee's Future Innovators in sixth-grade classrooms across 21 counties this school year. The hands-on science program builds on a successful 2024 pilot.

Developed in partnership with Tennessee 4-H, the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) and UT-Battelle, STEMOVATE lessons focus on artificial intelligence, engineering design, nuclear energy and the impact of non-native species — and are all aligned with state of Tennessee curriculum standards. In August 2025, 4-H agents and classroom teachers received training, lesson plans and all necessary materials. ORISE educators will provide ongoing support.

The program will be offered to all 95 Tennessee counties in 2026-27. Plans are underway to extend STEMOVATE to seventh- and eighth-grade students within five years.



SERVING **COMMUNITIES STATEWIDE**

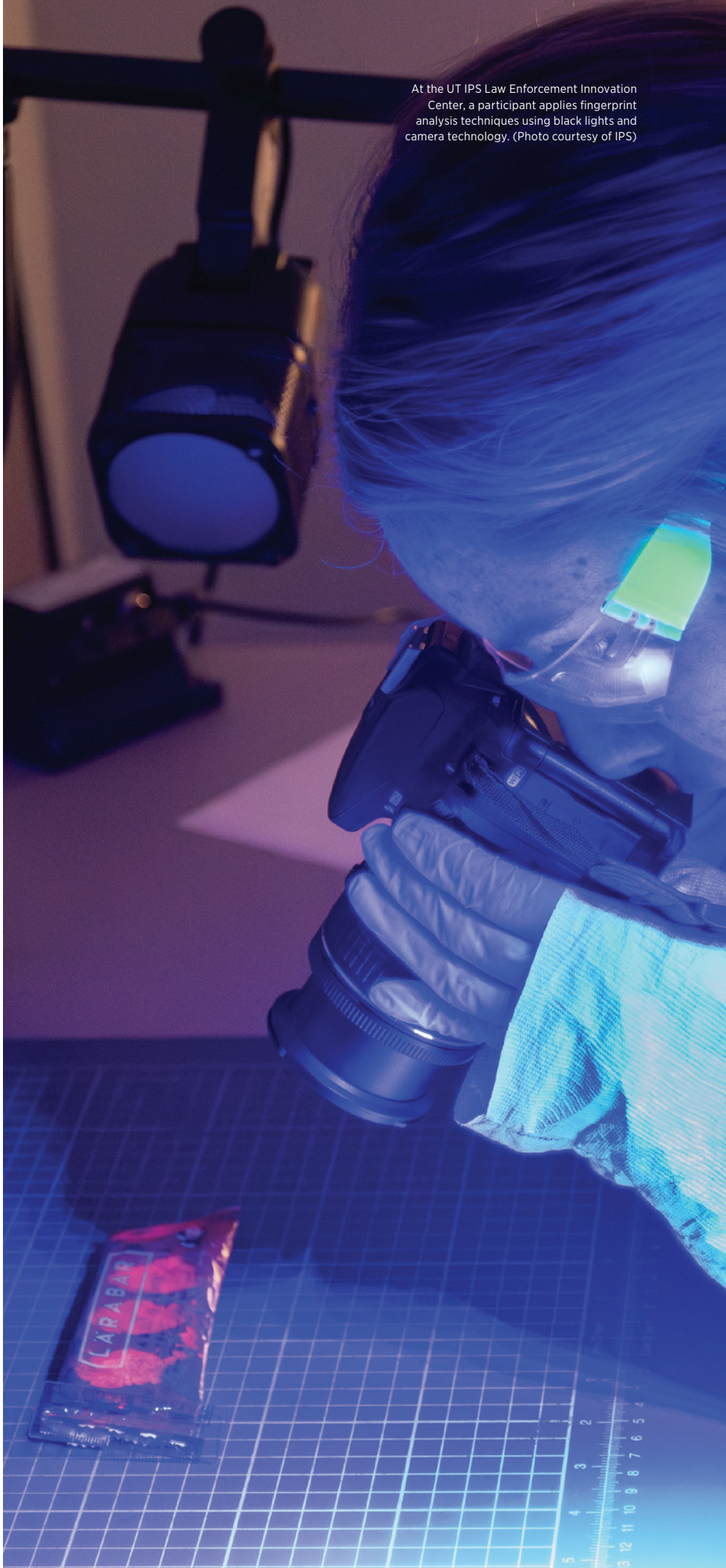
The UT Institute for Public Service serves businesses and government to improve the lives of Tennesseans. The institute is the public service outreach organization for the UT System. With offices statewide, IPS is the parent organization for agencies that provide technical consulting and training for state and local government, law enforcement, and business and industry.

113,704
requests for assistance

1,141,127
contacts

43,066
training participants

$2.77B
economic impact



At the UT IPS Law Enforcement Innovation Center, a participant applies fingerprint analysis techniques using black lights and camera technology. (Photo courtesy of IPS)

BETTER ENGAGED **IN THEIR STORY**

To better understand challenges across the state, the University of Tennessee has begun meeting with local leaders in an initiative called One UT Community Days.

The days — led by Victoria Hirschberg, UT System assistant vice president and chief economic development director, and Tintin Czach, Tennessee Certified Economic Development program manager for the UT Institute for Public Service's Center for Industrial Services — bring UT experts to the communities to learn from local officials, economic developers and industry leaders. As the UT team listens to community and industry leaders, they look for ways that UT can partner to help solve challenges.

"We're grateful to see how we could be better engaged in their story," Hirschberg said.

"Every community has its own strengths and challenges, but the passion for making the lives of every Tennessean better is the same everywhere we go," said Czach. "It's amazing what happens when we take a day to slow down, listen and share ideas — that's when real collaboration starts."

Since the One UT Community Day in Wayne County, UT has returned for additional meetings about resources to support local industries.

"We also are collectively working on some exciting proposals with UT that stemmed from the conversations that day," said Rena Purdy, executive director for the Joint Economic and Community Development Board of Wayne County. "It was special to brainstorm around the table about what could be possible."

Representatives from UT campuses, institutes and the system administration attended the five UT Community Days held across the state this year. The UT team has learned what companies and communities need and their goals, which can influence how the system educates and trains the next generation of workforce leaders as well as how UT researchers and experts can come alongside local leaders to help solve issues.

"The goal is to find beneficial opportunities that emerge from people just taking the time to listen and learn," Hirschberg said. "If we are not understanding what is happening on the manufacturing floor, if we are not understanding what our workforce or community partners are dealing with, if we're not looking at how we can innovate together, we are missing an opportunity."

Czach agreed.

"We want our partners to know UT can be their one-stop shop, a true partner they can lean on," she said.

Counties visited in 2025:

- Coffee
- Lawrence
- Rhea
- Wayne
- Wilson

> "Every community has its own strengths and challenges, but the **passion for making the lives of every Tennessean better** is the same everywhere we go."
>
> **—TINTIN CZACH**



Members of the UT System met with local business and community leaders to learn more about their needs and potential partnership opportunities. (Photo courtesy of UT System Division of Government Relations, Advocacy and Economic Development)



Hurricane Helene's **economic impact** to Tennessee farmers and forestland owners is now estimated at **$547 million to $1.8 billion**.

The Tennessee Department of Agriculture Division of Forestry estimates **a loss of 74,238 cubic feet of timber valued at $59,902,544**.





Rresources critical to farming, including hay supplies, were destroyed as Hurricane Helene swept through the region. (Photo courtesy of UTIA)

FINDING **NEW GROUND**

In September 2024, the remnants of Hurricane Helene surprised residents in the Appalachian Mountains of East Tennessee and North Carolina with devastating flooding.

At its peak, the Nolichucky River poured 1.3 million gallons of water per second — nearly double the volume of Niagara Falls — over the dam near Greeneville. Lives, homes and roads were washed away. The UT Institute of Agriculture responded quickly to aid the residents affected, and UTIA researchers continue to learn about the depths of the devastation as they work to help the region recover. They're also designing tools to help wherever and whenever similar disasters strike.

The Immediate Aftermath

Relief efforts began almost before the flood waters receded. UT-TSU Greene County Extension staff, and staff from other Extension offices across a 10-county region, unloaded truckloads of donated human and animal food. The UT Northeast Tennessee AgResearch and Education Center provided 45 acres to stage debris as well as equipment for local cleanup efforts. The College of Veterinary Medicine collected animal feed and rendered aid to farm animals and pets. The institute posted online recovery resources and information, including links to state and federal aid resources. In the months that followed, UT Extension hosted many gatherings with communities and individuals as they worked to rebuild their lives.

Recovery Continues

UT Extension economist Aaron Smith and information technologist Brad Wilson developed a new tool to characterize the full impact of the flooding on farmland and communities. The tool overlays satellite imagery with datasets to track changes in vegetation and land. The top soil for some farms along the river was almost entirely washed away. To help, a new initiative blossomed involving specialists from across UT and scientists from other universities.

Team members secured needed forages for overwintering cattle, analyzed sediment and assessed the land's capacity to return to productive use. On Aug. 20 they hosted a field day to share what they have learned.

For many, the recovery will continue for years to come.

David McIntosh, coordinator of the UT Beef and Forage Center, member of the flood recovery initiative, and an eighth-generation native of the region, said, "For me, this is a once-in-a-lifetime project — for the relief that it brings now and the legacy it builds for future generations in northeast Tennessee."

Top left: David McIntosh inspects land erosion in a farmer's field, part of efforts to restore productivity after Hurricane Helene. Bottom left: Bruno Pedreira, UTIA associate professor in the Department of Plant Sciences, reads a soil sample taken at the Flood Recovery Initiative Field Day in Limestone. (Photos by Raffe Lazarian)



UTM students enjoy the fresh air while preparing for class assignments. (Photo by Nathan Morgan)

SAILING **AHEAD**

UT Martin received a more than $500,000 Tennessee Believes grant from the Tennessee Department of Disability and Aging to start SAIL (Skyhawks Achieving In Life) for students with intellectual disabilities.

Clinton Smith, chair of the UTM Department of Educational Studies, said, "These programs help to remove barriers and provide students an opportunity to achieve their desired outcomes in a manner similar to students without disabilities."

The SAIL program improves the strong ties the university has with the community by helping prepare students with intellectual disabilities to live and work in their hometowns, which supports rural workforce sustainability.

Alisha Melton, executive director of the Office of Research, Outreach and Economic Development, said participating students would qualify for internships and work-study opportunities.

"What's exciting about this program is that it will bring in individuals who might never otherwise have the opportunity to experience life on a college campus," she said. "They will be able to work with other college students; they're going to be involved in student organizations and clubs. They will be able to interact in a way they've never done before."

Applications for the SAIL program open in November for the 2026-27 school year with the program beginning Aug. 1, 2026.

"These programs help to **remove barriers and provide students an opportunity** to achieve their desired outcomes in a manner similar to students without disabilities."

—CLINTON SMITH

SAIL
SKYHAWKS ACHIEVING IN LIFE



UTM mascot Captain Skyhawk and cheerleaders join the parade during the 2025 Tennessee Soybean Festival in Martin. (Photo by Nathan Morgan)



EARLY-CAREER **SCIENTISTS**

Breakthroughs in cancer research often make headlines when a new drug reaches the market or a clinical trial offers hope to patients. What's less visible is the years, sometimes decades, of basic research that makes those milestones possible.

Left: Microscopic view of ductal cell carcinoma, adenonocarcinoma from human breast cancer. (Adobe Stock image)
Right: Research takes shape as a student investigates new possibilities in the UTHSC Center for Cancer Research. (Photo by Charles Kemp)



"In science, you have to be okay with delayed gratification...You have to be **patient**. You have to be **persistent**."

—DR. RAMESH NARAYANAN

Behind every breakthrough is a pipeline of early-career scientists, experiments that fail before they succeed and institutions willing to invest in ideas before their impact is obvious. That pipeline starts with people like Sarah Asemota — graduate students, postdocs and junior faculty — who conduct foundational research that set the stage for tomorrow's therapies. But, for the pipeline to function, it needs support. Without funding, mentorship and access to research infrastructure, even the most promising discoveries can stall.

When Asemota — then a graduate student at UTHSC — observed the unusual cellular changes in her research project, the next step was a high-risk, high-cost experiment: analyzing the genetic activity of individual cells, specifically by reading the RNA instructions each cell was using, to understand how those cells had been reprogrammed. The price tag? Around $45,000 to $50,000, a daunting figure for a student-led project.

Fortunately, she had a mentor who understood the science and the system. Dr. Ramesh Narayanan is a professor in the Division of Hematology and Oncology in the College of Medicine, Muirhead Endowed Professor of Pathology and the deputy director of the Center for Cancer Research. A senior cancer researcher with substantial federal and industry funding, he encouraged Asemota to apply for a National Institutes of Health research supplement, an award that adds funds to an existing grant to support promising students.

She got it.

The result was a study that led to a high-impact publication in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Asemota's success highlights how the right ecosystem nurtures emerging scientists.

At UTHSC, faculty mentors create small, independent research projects for postdocs and high-performing students, giving them a runway to generate publishable data and apply for grants. Internal seed grants and pilot funding help bridge the gap between ideas and full-scale studies.

"In science, you have to be okay with delayed gratification," Narayanan said. "A project my lab started in 2014 just entered phase one clinical trials. It took more than a decade to get here, and we're still far from approval. You have to be patient. You have to be persistent."

That persistence gets harder when funding is scarce. In the 1990s, the National Cancer Institute funded one in three grants. Now, it's one in 11.

Curiosity keeps Asemota, who received her Ph.D. in 2023 and is now completing clinical rotations to become a surgical oncologist, going.

"I do this because I have questions. And when I find one answer, it usually opens the door to 50 more. That's the beauty of science. That's what makes it fun."



Top: Graduate student Lance Drouet measures plutonium beryllium sources in the Graphite Pile Lab in the UTK Zeanah Engineering Complex. Right: Graduate and undergraduate students work in the control room during an experiment with the fast neutron source in the UTK Zeanah Engineering Complex. (Photos by Steven Bridges)

UTK established the **nation's first nuclear engineering department** in 1957, and today its engineering programs are **consistently ranked among the best** in the nation.



NUCLEAR **SYNERGY**

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, and the Y-12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge are driving a nuclear renaissance to meet the industry's needs in research, education and workforce development.

In May, UTK and Y-12 signed an agreement to collaborate on energy and national security imperatives. The collaboration's cornerstone is development of the National Security Prototype Center, where a UTK and Y-12 team will solve complex manufacturing problems by creating new processes and technologies in the areas of nuclear energy, defense and deterrence. The center will be a UT–Y-12 building on the Oak Ridge Enhanced Technology and Training Center campus.

Y-12 brings experience in high-precision classified prototyping for parts needed in steam reactors, pump housing and other nuclear energy applications, while UTK researchers are skilled in advanced manufacturing research and qualifying components to make sure the fabricated parts meet technical specifications. Y-12 also plans to accelerate prototyping for nuclear deterrence and defense components that can sustain extreme pressure and high-temperature environments.

"Marrying the unique expertise of our two institutions can potentially reduce the development timeline from years to weeks," said Martin Williamson, Y-12 senior director for global security and strategic partnerships programs. "That will be a transformational impact."

UTK established the nation's first nuclear engineering department in 1957, and today its engineering programs are consistently ranked among the best in the nation. Proximity to Y-12 and other facilities offers students opportunities to work alongside faculty in research for the U.S. Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NASA and nuclear utilities.

"This enhanced partnership with Y-12 will include the NSPC (National Security Prototype Center) building that enables us to take ideas from first principles to qualified prototype manufacturing processes, which will be transformational," said Tickle College of Engineering Dean and Wayne T. Davis Dean's Chair Matthew Mench. "We will also be hiring at least one joint faculty between Y-12 and UTK and growing a talent pipeline through educational programs to further strengthen the collaboration."

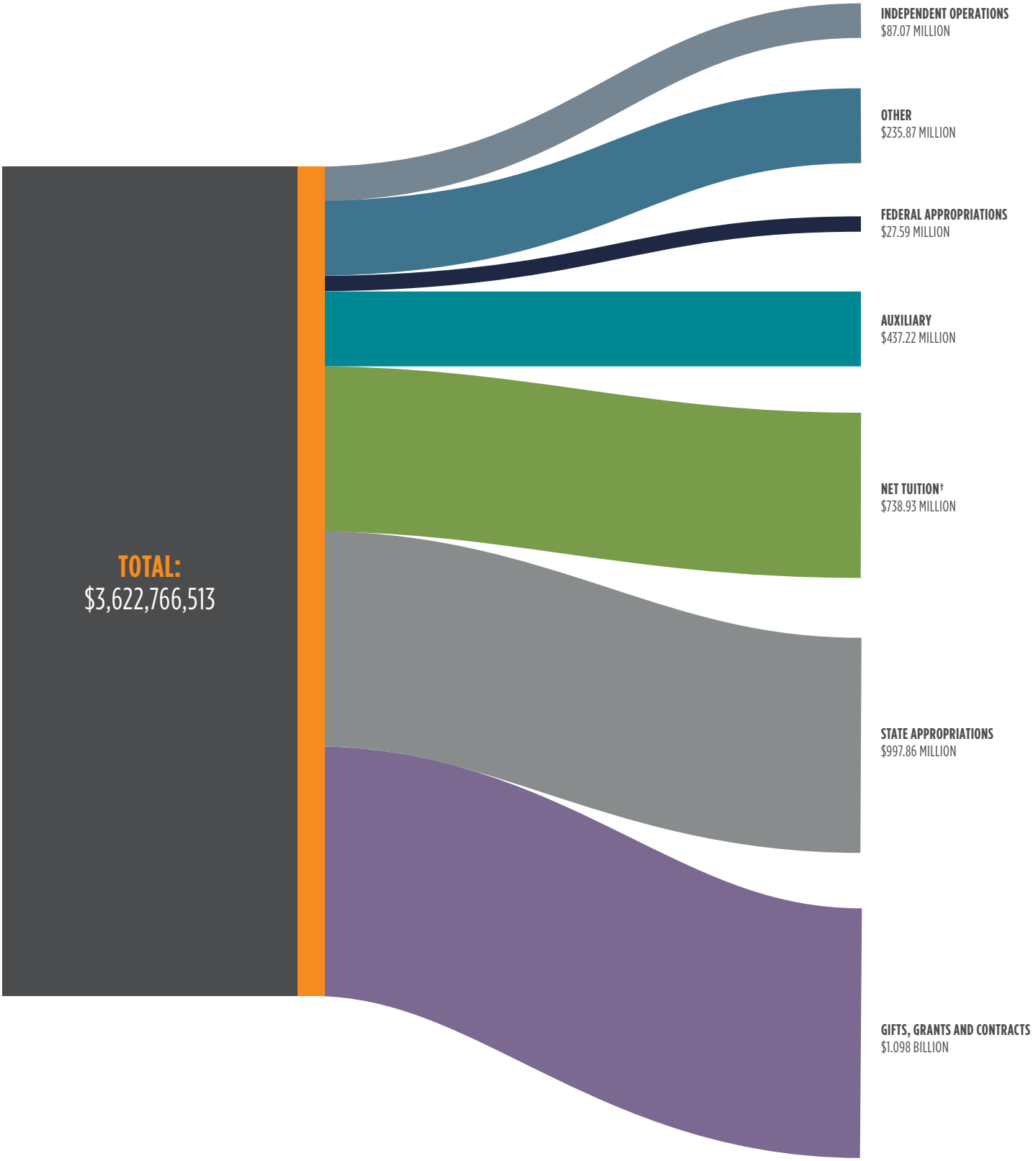


Oak Street Roast, Sunday on Chamberlain Field at UTC.
(Photo by Angela Foster)



SOURCES OF CURRENT FUNDS

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

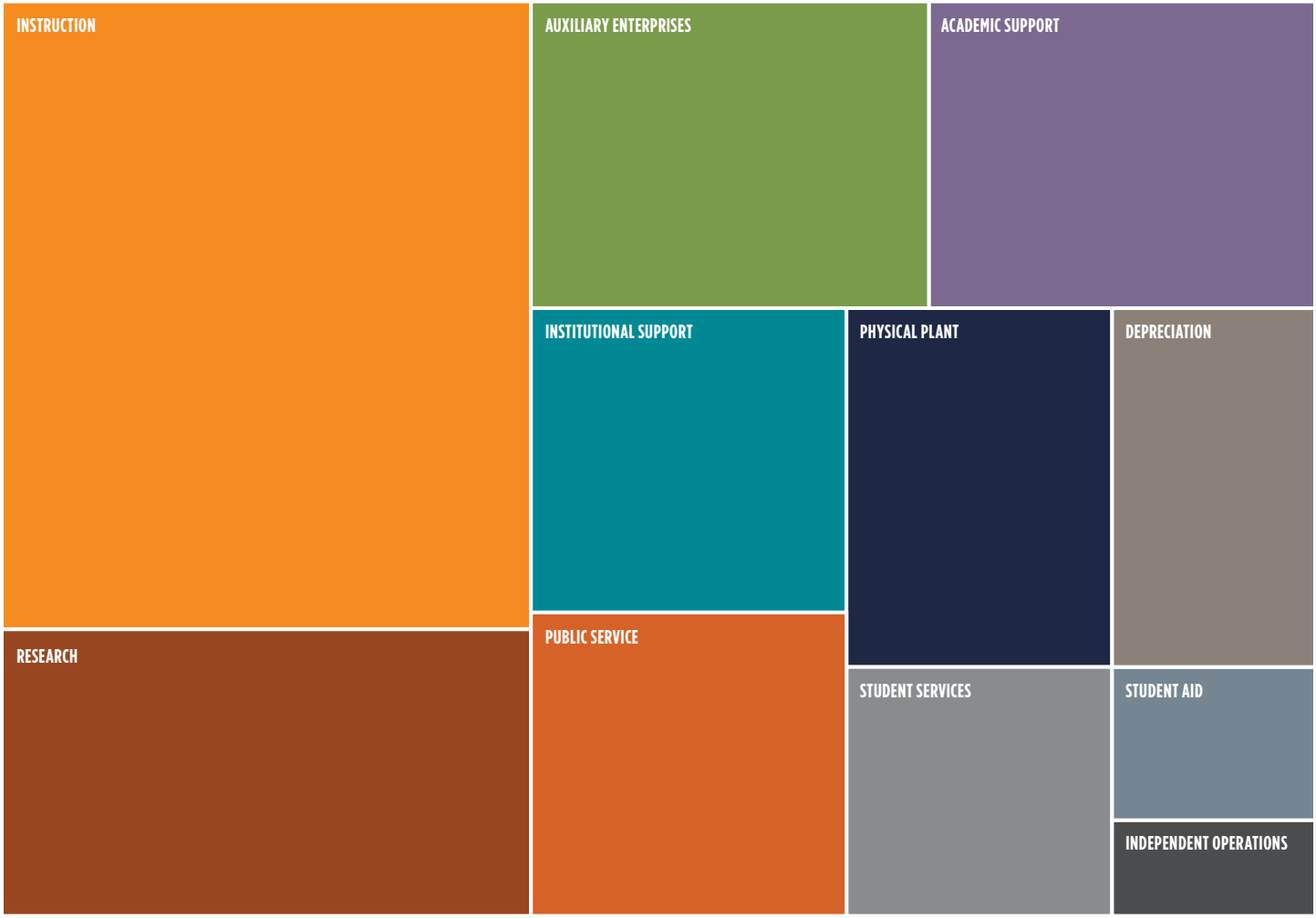


† *ACTUAL REVENUE NUMBERS WITH NET TUITION AND FEES*

USES OF CURRENT FUNDS

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2025

TOTAL: $3,208,135,931



INSTRUCTION
$842.64 MILLION

RESEARCH
$401.68 MILLION

STUDENT AID
$107.07 MILLION

PHYSICAL PLANT
$242.85 MILLION

AUXILIARY ENTERPRISES
$371.45 MILLION

ACADEMIC SUPPORT
$326.13 MILLION

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT
$265.71 MILLION

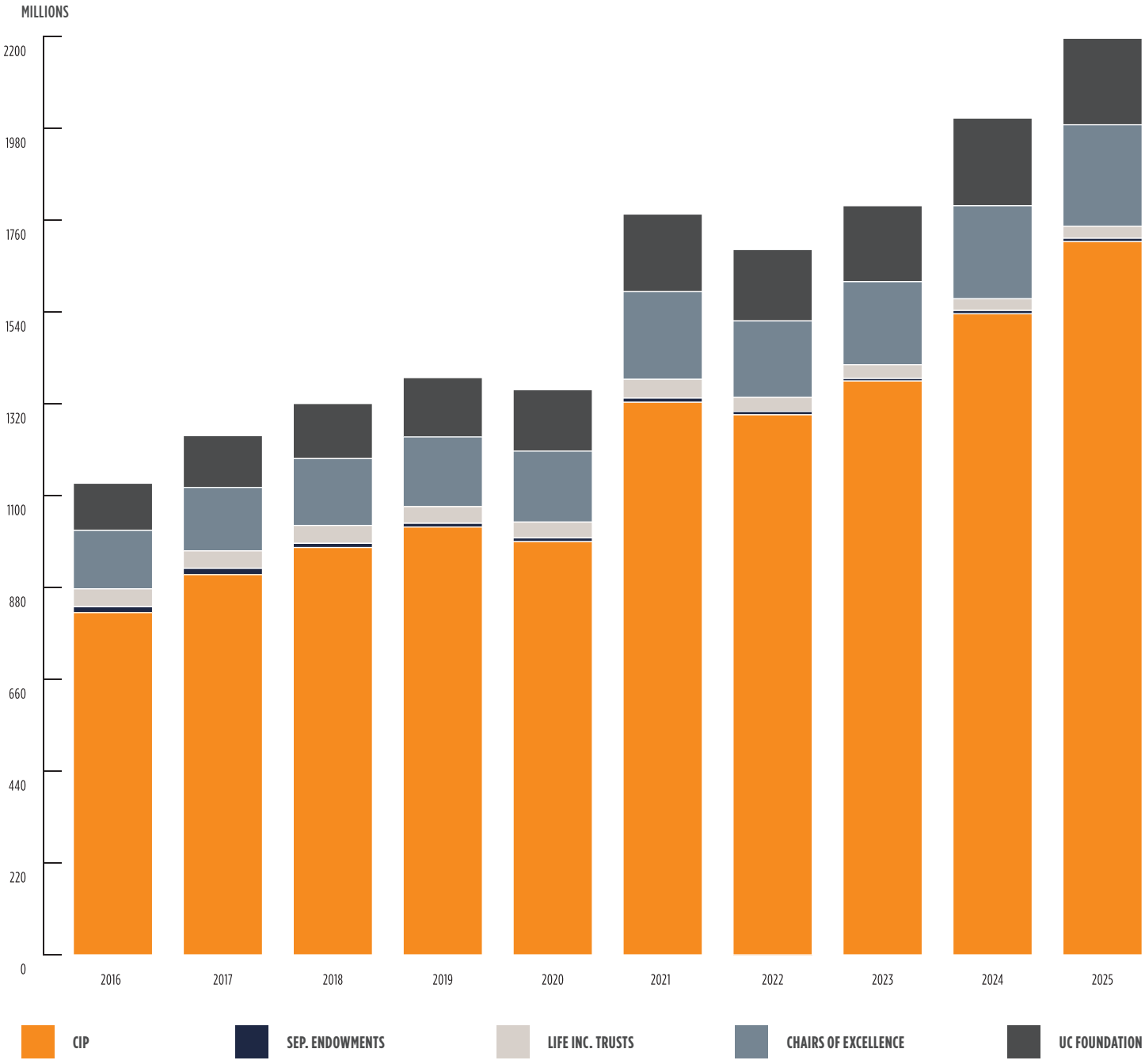
PUBLIC SERVICE
$247.58 MILLION

STUDENT SERVICES
$153.83 MILLION

INDEPENDENT OPERATIONS
$56.47 MILLION

DEPRECIATION
$192.73 MILLION

TOTAL FUNDS INVESTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF UT

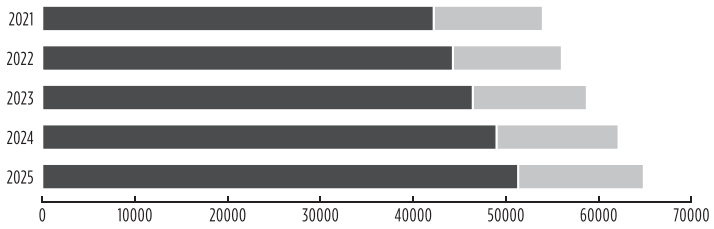


	CIP	SEP. ENDOWMENTS	LIFE INC. TRUSTS	CHAIRS OF EXCELLENCE	UC FOUNDATION	TOTAL ASSETS
2016	$820M	$14M	$43M	$140M	$113M	$1.13B
2017	$911M	$15M	$42M	$152M	$124M	$1.244B
2018	$976M	$10M	$43M	$160M	$132M	$1.321B
2019	$1.025B	$9M	$40M	$167M	$142M	$1.383B
2020	$990M	$9M	$38M	$170M	$147M	$1.354B
2021	$1.324B	$10M	$45M	$210M	$186M	$1.775B
2022	$1.294B	$8M	$34M	$183M	$171M	$1.690B
2023	$1.375B	$6M	$33M	$199M	$182M	$1.795B
2024	$1.536B	$8M	$28M	$223M	$194M	$1.989B
2025	$1.709B	$8M	$29M	$243M	$206M	$2.195B

STUDENT ENROLLMENT DATA

UT SYSTEM

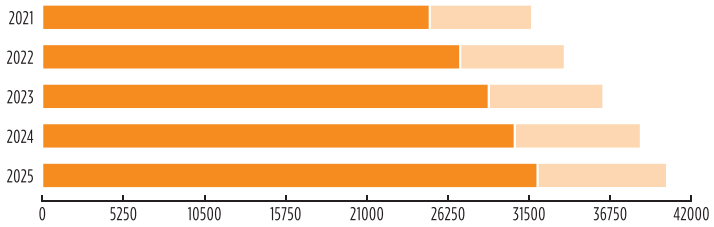
UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	51,315	+4.8%	+21.6%
GRADUATE	13,551	+2.9%	+15.1%
TOTAL	64,866		

UT KNOXVILLE

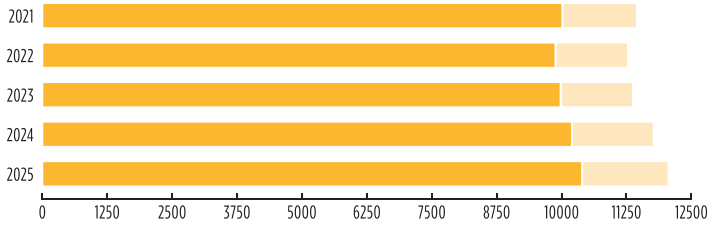
UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	32,041	+4.8%	+27.8%
GRADUATE	8,380	+2.6%	+26.3%
TOTAL	40,421		

UT CHATTANOOGA

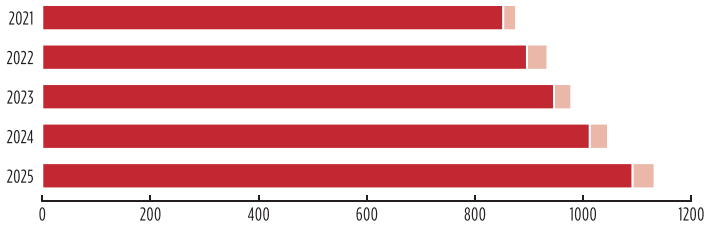
UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	10,396	+1.9%	+3.8%
GRADUATE	1,664	+5.8%	+15.5%
TOTAL	12,060		

UT SOUTHERN

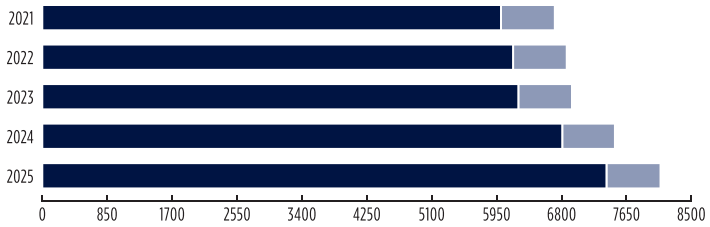
UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	1,091	+7.8%	+28.1%
GRADUATE	41	+20.6%	+70.8%
TOTAL	1,132		

UT MARTIN

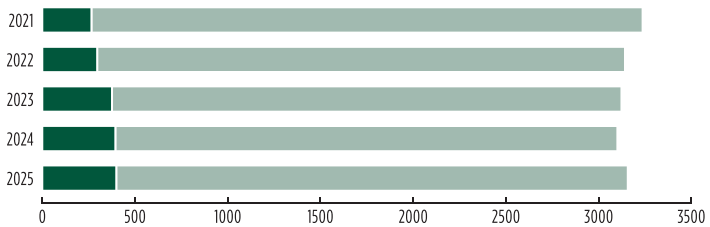
UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	7,388	+8.5%	+23%
GRADUATE	708	+2.6%	+0.4%
TOTAL	8,096		

UT HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

UNDERGRADUATE
GRADUATE



	2025	1-YR CHANGE	5-YR CHANGE
UNDERGRADUATE	399	+1.3%	+50.6%
GRADUATE	2,758	+1.9%	-7.2%
TOTAL	3,157		



A silhouette of a graduation cap during the doctoral hooding commencement ceremony inside the UTK Thompson-Boling Arena at Food City Center. (Photo by Craig Bisacre)

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SYSTEM

© The University of Tennessee System. All rights reserved.

The University of Tennessee is a statewide system of higher education with campuses in Knoxville, Chattanooga, Pulaski, Martin and Memphis; the UT Institute of Agriculture with a presence in every Tennessee county; and the statewide Institute for Public Service. The UT System manages Oak Ridge National Laboratory through its UT-Battelle partnership; enrolls about 65,000 students statewide; produces about 14,000 new graduates every year; and represents almost 497,000 alumni around the world.