

Brewing Up a Better Tennessee

December 10, 2020

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UT President Randy Boyd

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Coffee is not just a drink. Generally speaking, good coffee is not "ready-made" like most other beverages—it requires advanced planning, careful measurement and setting aside the appropriate amount of time to brew to perfection.

While coffee is a great way to start the day, it's also a great way to start a conversation. That's why it's not surprising that the idea to bring Martin Methodist College into the University of Tennessee family first began over a good cup of coffee with Martin Methodist President Mark LaBranche. As we talked about challenges and opportunities for each institution, one thing became abundantly clear: creating a partnership could open countless doors of opportunity for students in southern middle Tennessee, as well as for our entire state.

Since the Morrill Act was passed in 1862, the University of Tennessee has fully embraced its land grant mission to serve all of the people of this state. From Mountain City to Memphis, UT continually seeks to build and enhance partnerships that will improve the state of Tennessee in all areas.

Following a detailed due diligence process undertaken by UT System administration, the UT Board of Trustees took the next step in this process by voting to seek the necessary approvals and funding for adding Martin Methodist College to the UT family. The measure must now go before the Tennessee General Assembly, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, as well as other state entities. The Board of Trustees at Martin Methodist College recently voted in support of seeking the necessary approvals for this acquisition.

We remain excited about the possibility of adding to our family. Martin Methodist's graduates are vital to the economic success of our region and our state. Right now, more than 1,200 high school graduates in southern middle Tennessee cross our state line to receive their postsecondary education at neighboring public institutions in Alabama. Simply put, we must retain our best and brightest Tennesseans, provide affordable higher education opportunities and prepare students today for our workforce needs of tomorrow. A partnership with Martin Methodist College isn't just a nice thing to do, it's a must do.

To learn more about our partnership efforts with Martin Methodist College, please visit <https://tennessee.edu/transparency/mmc/>.



Randy Boyd
President, The University of Tennessee System

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