

Caleb J. Cummings

Board of Directors

UNA Alumni Association

Rita Becallo Harris

Board of Directors

UNA Alumni Association

December 26, 2025

Dr. Kenneth D. Kitts

President

University of North Alabama

Florence, Alabama

Dear Dr. Kitts,

We write to you today in our capacity as members of the Board of Directors of the UNA Alumni Association, and more broadly, as representatives of a deeply engaged and passionate alumni community. It is with respect for your leadership and sincere concern for the future of the University of North Alabama that we bring this matter to your attention.

Specifically, we wish to express our grave concern regarding the current state of the Department of Music within the School of the Arts, particularly as it relates to the circumstances surrounding the potential retirement of Dr. Lloyd Jones. While retirement is a natural milestone in a distinguished academic career, we are increasingly troubled by reports of the treatment Dr. Jones has received from direct superiors and peers within the Department of Music. In addition, we are hearing from parents of several current students who have expressed concern over being placed in compromising situations and experiencing unprofessional behavior from the Department Chair, the Associate Dean, and other band staff outside of Dr. Jones. These accounts raise serious concerns about departmental culture and student support—concerns that warrant immediate attention.

The Jones family legacy is inseparable from the history and success of the UNA band program and, indeed, from the broader identity of the University itself. Dr. Lloyd Jones, following in the footsteps of his father, Dr. Edd Jones, represents generations of service, leadership, and unwavering commitment to UNA. Together, their contributions have shaped not only a program, but a culture—one rooted in excellence, integrity, mentorship, and student development.

The Department of Music within the School of the Arts has earned a reputation—regionally and in many cases nationally—for producing exceptional music educators and professionals. That reputation did not happen by chance. It is the result of decades of dedicated leadership, high standards, and respect for students and faculty alike. Dr. Jones has embodied those values throughout his 25 years of service to the University.

Under Dr. Jones' leadership, the band has grown into one of the largest and most visible student organizations on campus, serving as both a recruitment engine and a source of pride for UNA. He has been instrumental not only in attracting outstanding musicians, but in developing quality students who have entrusted their time, effort, and futures to his leadership.

Most recently, the band achieved one of the most significant honors any collegiate program can receive—an invitation to perform in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. Dr. Jones and his students represented the University of North Alabama on a global stage with professionalism, precision, and pride. Many observers have described their performance as among the finest in the history of the event. However, we were deeply disappointed to learn that neither the Department Chair nor the Associate Dean were present for this milestone event, and that they were noticeably absent from fundraising and support efforts related to the Macy's Parade and the Washington, D.C. trip. Parents, alumni, and supporters have expressed concern that there was little to no institutional support from within the Department of Music or the School of the Arts to assist these students during this historic opportunity.

Equally concerning is the response we are receiving from alumni, donors, and supporters of the program. We are hearing from a growing number of alumni and donors who have already begun withdrawing their support and financial contributions to the University as a result of this situation. Both of us have spoken directly with one of the largest donors to the band program, who expressed deep disappointment, frustration, and unwavering support for Dr. Jones. This individual, along with others, has communicated that their continued support of UNA is now in question.

We have also heard from respected colleagues across the collegiate band profession who have emphasized how detrimental Dr. Jones' retirement would be—not only to UNA's reputation, but to the stability and future success of the program. Multiple professionals have stated that replacing a leader of Dr. Jones' caliber would be extremely difficult, if not impossible. More importantly, they have stressed that such a loss would be most harmful to the students who have committed themselves to the program and entrusted their education and development to Dr. Jones' leadership.

Our concern—and our fear—is that without meaningful intervention, cultural remediation, and visible institutional support, Dr. Jones' retirement will become inevitable. Should that occur, we believe the band program, the Department of Music, the School of the Arts, and the University as a whole would suffer a tremendous and lasting loss.


We respectfully urge you to turn your attention to this matter and to consider engaging directly in efforts to address the underlying cultural issues within the Department of Music and the School of the Arts. More importantly, we ask that you demonstrate clear institutional support for Dr. Jones and work toward a solution that encourages him to remain in his role for as long as he is willing and able to serve.

As alumni of the band program and members of the UNA Alumni Association, we speak not only for ourselves but for a broad and unified alumni voice—one that is deeply invested in the success of UNA and unwavering in its support of Dr. Lloyd Jones. We implore you to do everything within your

power to make this right, to restore confidence among students, families, alumni, and donors, and to allow the Jones family to continue serving as a beacon of excellence and stability for the University of North Alabama.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and thoughtful consideration of this important matter. We remain hopeful that, under your guidance, UNA will continue to uphold the values, people, and programs that have made it such a respected institution.

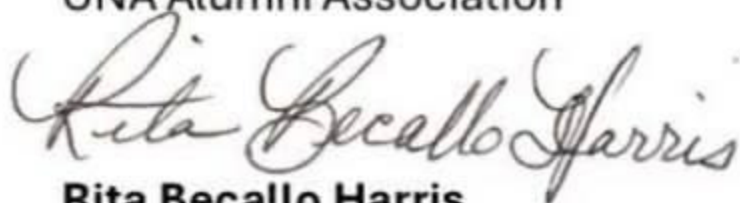
Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Caleb J. Cummings".

Caleb J. Cummings

Board of Directors

UNA Alumni Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rita Becallo Harris".

Rita Becallo Harris

Board of Directors

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