In a stunning reversal of last year’s JUCO World Series appearance, the Walters State Senators baseball team won the national tournament.

The team defeated the Yavapai (Ariz.) Roughriders in the final game of the series, held in Grand Junction, Colo. Last year, the Senators were sent home after losing the first two games of the series.

The win ends an unbelievable 61-8 season, a record earned despite a series of injuries.

“T o be honest, I was surprised. World Series MVP honors went to pitcher Jack Tilghman. Stephen Shults was named defensive player of the series for his work at third base. Chad Maddox was player of the game for the final game. He went 3-5 at bat, including a two-run homer in the third inning.

The team brought home the coveted Sportsmanship trophy, an honor determined by players and coaches participating in the JUCO World Series.

Debate Team Tops At Tourney

Walters State’s Debate Team, made up of John Arnold and Bobby Ellis, upset 31 colleges and universities to claim the novice division title at Pi Kappa Delta’s National Comprehensive Debate Tournament.

The win even amazed Malcolm McAvoy, Walters State’s debate coach. “To be honest, I was surprised. Our program has also just been reorganized and we were competing against programs that had been in place for decades,” McAvoy said. “This is an outstanding example of the wonderful things that are happening at Walters State, both inside and outside the classroom,” said Dr. Wade McCamey, president of the college.

The Debate Team has been a popular extracurricular activity throughout the college’s history. In 2004, McAvoy reorganized the team and debate is now offered as a class. McAvoy can proudly name former team members who are leaders in their chosen professions. One of those is Randy Clark, now vice president of strategy, industry standards and governmental relations at Michelin, a leading tire manufacturer.

“I have done an incredible amount of public speaking. Debate was very valuable preparation,” Clark said. After graduating from WSCC, Clark went on to Tennessee Technological University and earned a graduate degree from MIT.

At left: The Senators rush the field to celebrate following the final game of the 2006 Alpine Bank JUCO World Series in Grand Junction, Colo. The team brought home Walters State’s first national team championship. (Photo courtesy of The Citizen Tribune.)

Nursing Program Receives Continued Accreditation

The National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission has granted Walters State’s Nursing Program continued accreditation through 2013. Accreditation shows the college is able to meet or exceed national standards set by the National League for Nursing.

Former V.P. Pens First Novel

Vic Duggins, former vice president for College Advancement at Walters State, has just published his first novel. “Is Anybody There” is a love story sprinkled with some down-home wisdom. Duggins retired in 2004 after 29 years at Walters State. The book is available at local bookstores and through Amazon.

Dr. Apple to Lead Motlow

The Tennessee Board of Regents has chosen Dr. MaryLou Apple, vice president for Academic Affairs at Walters State, as the new president of Motlow State Community College in Tullahoma. She was selected from a pool of 36 candidates. Apple joined the Walters State faculty as an instructor of Nursing in 1978 and has served the college for over 27 years. Apple has served in her present role since 2001.
Alumna Studies The Sun As NASA Program Exec

Walters State graduate Vicki Elsbernd believes the sun’s massive solar storms have a major influence on the Earth—and she’s in a position to prove it.

Elsbernd is the Solar Terrestrial Probes (STP) program executive in the Heliophysics Division of the Science Mission Directorate at NASA headquarters in Washington, D.C. She’s in charge of missions that launch probes to study the Earth’s nearest star.

“Their probes help us see the sun and understand its effects on space,” said Elsbernd.

“Some people may disagree, but we’ve gotten better over the years in predicting the weather and that is largely due to the satellites developed by NASA. We do a better job predicting when a hurricane will come and what path it will take and even how destructive it will be. The work we are doing now will help us understand that even better,” Elsbernd said.

Elsbernd, a Morristown native, has had an impressive 30-year engineering career, the last 16 of it spent with NASA. One of her biggest accomplishments, though, happened very early in her career. While still a student, she was asked to help design and oversee the construction of Walters State’s Observatory. That Observatory is still in use and gives students and thousands of visitors each year the opportunity to view distant planets.

“When I learned that Dr. (James) Ford (professor of Mathematics and Physics) wanted us to design an observatory, I remember thinking ‘Oh my gosh. They want us to do what?’” said Elsbernd.

“I didn’t know if I could do it. The amazing part still is that they implemented our design and it worked. I had no idea then that I would eventually end up working for NASA.”

Ford remembers Elsbernd as a very inquisitive and intelligent student.

“Vicki was very bright and I knew she would make her mark on the world,” Ford recalled.

Elsbernd credits Ford and other teachers with giving her the confidence to succeed in what was a male-dominated field. She was often the only woman in engineering classes at both Walters State and at Tennessee Technological University, where she earned her bachelor’s degree. She was the first female president of an engineering society at TTU. She also received a master’s degree in engineering from the University of Tennessee.

“Here at NASA, a lot of women are in management positions,” she said.

Even after being involved in many launches, she still gets excited watching something she has played such a big role in creating leave the Earth.

“Watching it move from an idea to reality and then finally launch is incredible. Launch day is like the best fourth of July ever,” Elsbernd said.

Elsbernd’s mother, Betty Howard, still lives in Morristown. Her siblings, Mary Simmons and David Howard, are also Walters State graduates.

The work of John May, adjunct professor of Photography, was featured in a spring exhibition at the Carroll Reece Museum at East Tennessee State University. May’s “Pay Phone Series” captures the disappearance of the once plentiful icon.

Sandra Kay Heck, associate professor of English, wrote some of the entries that make up “Encyclopedia of Appalachia.” The book was published this spring by UT Press. Heck’s topics included Andrew Carnegie, Food Lion and BAE Systems (formerly Holston Defense).

Sherri Jacobs, instructor of English, was honored with the Lana Doncaster Award from the TBR Distance Education Committee. The award recognizes college instructors for excellence in distance education.
Five Faculty Members, Six Staff Retire in 2006

Walters State is losing five popular faculty members to retirement this year. Dr. Orville Bach, Dr. Jim Ford, Richard Warren, Dr. Paul Wolford and Carolyn Wyss all chose to make the 2005-06 year their last.

Bach, professor of Economics, has helped hundreds of students develop leadership skills as advisor of Students in Free Enterprise. In addition to his teaching duties, Bach has spent his summers as a seasonal ranger at Yellowstone.

Ford, Distinguished Regents Fellow and professor of Mathematics and Physics, was a charter member of Walters State’s faculty and began teaching even before the first building was built. Ford mentored many students in science, math and engineering. For seven years, he served as president of Cleveland State Community College. Then, he returned to Walters State as a faculty member.

Warren, associate professor of Biology, joined Walters State in 1971. Since then, he has helped numerous biology students through the dreaded dissection process, counseled students about career opportunities in science and watched many become nurses and doctors. Warren has also devoted many hours to community service projects.

Wolford, professor of Developmental Education, Reading and Writing, was often the first professor encountered by nontraditional students. He has helped many attain the fundamental skills needed to pursue a college education and successful careers. Through his popular speed reading course, he also offered busy students a way to increase the efficiency of study time.

Wyss joined Walters State’s faculty in 1978, having worked as a staff nurse in surgical and critical care units. Over the years, she has worked to not only train nurses, but also prepare them to deal with the demands and disappointments that accompany the field. Dr. Nancy Gray-Barnett, assistant vice president for Academic Affairs will also be retiring, along with five other staff members: Ralph Collins, Mack Susong and Truman Taylor, all in Plant Operations, Ann Ford of Information and Educational Technology and Patti Endres of Purchasing.

Polk Funds Scholarship To Honor WS Mentors

Alumnus Kevin Polk, shown above at left, has established a scholarship in honor of three individuals who positively affected him while he was a student at Walters State. Those three are Walters State President Dr. Wade McCamey, shown at right, Dr. James Ford, Distinguished Regents Fellow and professor of Mathematics and Physics, and the late Arlene Snowden, assistant director of Financial Aid. Polk plans to utilize the matching gift program provided by his employer which will, in effect, double his contributions. To learn more about giving opportunities or the Walters State Foundation, call Henry Drinnon at (423) 585-2629.

1994
Blake Sempkowski, A.S. General Studies, is practicing law in Morristown with the firm of Sempkowski and Sempkowski.

1995
Gayla Knight Askew, A.S. Nursing, received the Silver Lamp Award for Community Nursing. Askew is a manager with Baptist Home Health. She lives in Newport with her husband, Brian.

1998
Jason Henegar, Police Certificate, is now a police officer and lives in LaFollette.

2000
Casey Nicholson, A.S. General Studies, has earned a Master of Divinity degree from Memphis Theological Seminary.

2001
Renee Morie, A.S. General Studies, is now a collections officer with City Employees Credit Union in Knoxville. She and her husband, John, have one child and live in Seymour.

2002
Benjamin Schlechter, A.S. Psychology, earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in applied psychology from Carson-Newman College in 2004 and is currently enrolled in graduate school at Western Carolina University. He also serves in AmeriCorps.

2003
Jacquelyn Gaut, A.S. General Studies, earned a B.S. from ETSU in December and is planning to enroll in the Nashville School of Law this fall.

2004
Carshonda Harris, A.S. Pre Physical Therapy, is vice president of the study body at ETSU.
The Senators baseball team wasn’t the only team in contention for a national title this spring. Walters State’s golf team finished fifth in the NJCAA National Tournament in Scottsboro, Ala. Kevin Morgan placed second in individual scoring at the tournament. Phillip Lee finished in 12th place.

During the first round of the tournament, Lee along with Lucas Tabor fired two under 69 to put the Senators atop the leader board.

The team won the chance to compete at the nationals by winning their 14th regional title. They fought for that title, making up 7 shots on the final day. The Senators shot a six under 282 with par being 288.

The Senators golf team is led by coach Bill Gardner, a member of the TJCCAA Hall of Fame. Gardner has been with the college over 30 years. Before guiding the golf team to national prominence, he coached men’s basketball and baseball. Many of Gardner’s players have gone on to play at four-year institutions. One, Ryan Cabbage, is now assistant coach of the Auburn Tigers golf team.

The Lady Senators also proved to be a formidable team, finishing the season 38-19 overall and 22-10 in the conference.

The team lost to Jackson State with a 1-0 score during the TJCCAA/NJCAA Region VII Tournament held in Columbia in May.

Catcher Elisha Collins received first team All-Conference Team honors. Blair Calloway and Jamie Swank were named to the second team. Kayla Short was named to the third team. Collins and Short both had 11 home runs, leading the team.

The team will start next season with high expectations. Eleven freshmen, including Short, Collins and Swank, return to play sophomore seasons.

This season marked coach Larry Sauceman’s eighth season at Walters State. He has a 261-102 record. Sauceman is a WSCC alumnus, having played on the 1983-84 Senators baseball team that finished the season ranked No. 5 in the nation.

Walters State is a component of the State University and Community College System of Tennessee governed by the Tennessee Board of Regents.