

# Distinguished alumni receive awards during Homecoming

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### Noel L. Allen '69 — Distinguished Alumnus of the Year

Allen has become one of the nation's top attorneys and legal scholars after graduating with a bachelor's degree in history from Elon.

He is now a president and founding and managing partner of Allen and Pinnix law firm.

He focuses on public policy, occupational licensing and administrative, antitrust and trade regulation law.

He was named North Carolina's "Legal Elite," in Business North Carolina magazine, one of the state's top lawyers by North Carolina Super Lawyers and received the International Service Award from the N.C. Bar Association's International Law and Practice Section.

He claims his greatest honor is that he has served as a member of Elon's Board of Trustees since 1985, during which time he has served as board chair for a few terms. He was important in the board's decision to open the Elon University School of Law in Greensboro, where he serves on the board of advisers.

He has also been an adjunct professor at Campbell University of Law and published articles on ethics, the use of expert witnesses and legal challenges for regulating Internet practice.

### Bonnie Baxter '88 — Distinguished Alumna of the Year

Since she graduated in 1988 with a degree in biology, Baxter has made revolutionary discoveries in biology and astrobiology.

"My career path was really influenced by where I grew up, where I went to college and all the professors who were here," Baxter said.

Baxter is internationally known for her DNA cell repair research, especially at the Great Salt Lake where she found multiple species of microorganisms called "halophiles." This evidence contradicted the theory that life cannot exist in a high-saline environment.

Her work has been used as a



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left to right: Bonnie Baxter, Noel L. Allen, Lunden B. Sims, Laith al-Majali and Joan Summers Drummond received alumni awards last weekend.

starting point for studying the possibility of life on other planets, particularly Mars.

Baxter was awarded the Utah Governor's Medal for Science and Technology and was also profiled in Salt Lake magazine in a story titled "Five Women Changing Utah."

### Joan Summers Drummond '52 — Alumni Service Award

In 1952, Drummond graduated from Elon with a degree in biology and chemistry and began working for Vick Chemical Co. as an analytical laboratory chemist. She was the first woman to be promoted to manager at Vick Chemical. Even when the company was sold to different companies, Drummond remained an important asset to the company.

She retired in 1990 and has since worked with the Hospice League of Alamance/Caswell counties, and now serves on the league's board. She has also spent a lot of time working at the Women's Resource Center of Burlington, the Humane Society of Alamance County, Residential Treatment Services of Alamance

County, Democratic Women of Alamance County and Meals on Wheels, where she is a coordinator.

Drummond and her husband gave back to Elon in 2006 when they donated \$25,000 to establish the Joan and James Drummond Endowed Scholarship in Chemistry. There is now a research lab in McMichael named after them.

### Lunden B. Sims '02 — Young Alumna of the Year

Since graduating in 2002, Sims has used her history education and Spanish degrees to further her career and help others.

After graduation, she spent more than two years in Nicaragua with the Peace Corps, where she trained school teachers and taught students.

Since returning from the Peace Corps, she has taught Advanced Placement World History and Spanish II at R.J. Reynolds High School in Winston-Salem, N.C.

She also helped develop R.J.R. W.O.R.L.D., a program that encourages students in the honors world history classes to volunteer in Forsyth County. She has assisted her students

in finding these opportunities by bringing the Kiva.org Project to Reynolds High School.

Sims is also a translator at the Centro La Comunidad/Community Care Center.

### Laith al-Majali '05 — Young Alumnus of the Year

Ever since he was a student in the Elon School of Communications, Majali has shown tremendous potential as a filmmaker.

Majali was the first King Hussein of Jordan Scholar to come to Elon in 2001. He was active in campus organizations and media groups.

While still an Elon student, Majali interned in Los Angeles, where he collaborated with Amin Matalqa, also from Jordan. The two recently produced "Captain Abu Raed," the first feature film to emerge from Jordan in 50 years. The film received the World Cinema Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival in 2008.

He has recently been working on a sitcom for the Showtime network. It is based on what he experienced as an Arab student in the South.

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