

# Tar Heel of the Year

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## The Goodnights: Tar Heels of the Year

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### TAR HEELS OF THE YEAR

1997: Hugh McColl

CEO of NationsBank

1998: John Hope Franklin

historian

1999: Franklin Graham

missionary

2000: Larry Wheeler

director of the N.C. Museum of Art

2001: Molly Broad

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UNC system president

2002: Kay Yow

N.C. State women's basketball coach

2003: Jim Goodmon

CEO of Capitol Broadcasting

2004: Howard Manning Jr.

Wake County Superior Court judge

2005: Martin Eakes

CEO of Self-Help Credit Union

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They don't have servants or chauffeurs. They do their own grocery shopping. A housekeeper comes twice a month, and Ann does the rest of the cleaning and all the cooking.

That is not to say they live just as the rest of us do.

Their Cary home is valued at \$2.2 million, and they own homes in Wrightsville Beach and Steamboat Springs, Colo., where they ski twice a year and spent this Christmas. They travel the world in three SAS jets. Jim spends weekends on the golf course, sometimes making business deals on the greens.

Ann turns out stylishly dressed whenever she leaves the house. And, as arts benefactors and education leaders must, they regularly attend black-tie galas.

### **Grad-student wages**

When Leah was born, in 1968, the family's one-bedroom apartment was so small that they had to set up a nursery in a closet. For five years, they made do on graduate student wages.

In 1971, Jim got a job with the N.C. State statistics department, working on a project called the Statistical Analysis System. The goal was to create software to analyze agricultural experiments.

When Jim and three co-workers incorporated SAS in 1976, he merely hoped to make as much as his university salary, less than \$28,000 a year.

The company's software was quickly recognized as a revolutionary data management tool. It could sort the results of drug trials, analyze insurance claims, catalog personnel information, even help manage the U.S. Census.

In the late 1970s, with fewer than 50 employees, SAS bought a tract off Interstate 40, at Cary's northern edge. And the Goodnight kingdom took root.

Jim quickly established himself as the company's leader, and two founders, Tony Barr and Jane Helwig, left in the early years.

Barr, who invented the original SAS software with Goodnight, said he sold his share because he found Goodnight controlling and difficult to work with. Barr, who now runs a software company in Florida, refused further comment, saying it was "not a Christian thing to do."

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Helwig, now a doctor in Virginia, declined to comment.

Another founder, John Sall, still owns one-third of the company but has ceded management to Goodnight. He is a co-investor in almost all of Goodnight's projects and still works at SAS, but he is rarely seen in public. Goodnight says he and Sall are not friends and have little contact. Sall did not return phone calls.

With Goodnight as president and CEO, the SAS campus has grown to 300 acres and 19 buildings, and the company has come to be known as a sort of worker's nirvana. Enormous metal sculptures glint in the sunlight -- in 30 years, the company has amassed 5,000 pieces of original art to decorate its 400 offices. Neatly mowed grass and pruned shrubbery cover roadsides. Glass buildings perch atop wooded hills.

Employees have free access to an on-site health clinic, a fitness center and an indoor pool. The company provides on-site hairdressers, physical therapists and day care for \$350 a month. In two cafeterias, employees buy gourmet food at discount prices, get free drinks and eat to the strains of live piano music.

Inside the buildings, plants are always green, tended by a nursery staff and nurtured in an on-campus greenhouse. Glass bowls are full of M&Ms.

The Goodnights have personally overseen virtually every decision about the company's amenities and decor. They have created their own universe.

"There has to be a sense of isolation," said Betty Fried, who headed SAS' public relations staff before retiring in 2002. "You never really know if people like you for who you are or what you can do for them."

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**Staff researcher Lamara Williams-Hackett contributed to this report.**

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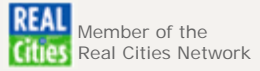
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