

## **2017 OUTSTANDING ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR**



No stranger to Hiwassee College, Blaina's mother and sister both attended Hiwassee to pursue their educations. Due to this, Blaina often found herself shooting basketball in the gym, swimming at the pool, and running across the Quad to the Rymer Student Center throughout her childhood. A native of Tellico Plains, Blaina Tallent Best married her high school sweetheart, Eric Best, in May of 2011. After learning that Hiwassee College expanded their academic programs to offer four year degrees in 2010, Blaina decided to transfer to Hiwassee College to complete her degree in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts. Once at HC, Blaina graduated with her Associate of Science Degree and Bachelor of Science Degree, while cheerleading and playing basketball. Being a student at HC was an experience of a lifetime for her and a decision she is so glad that she made. Immediately after graduating from Hiwassee, Blaina jumped right in to her graduate studies at Liberty University and graduated with a Master of Arts Degree in Human Services & Executive Leadership in May of 2013. Blaina is currently the Director of Student Affairs at Hiwassee College and is also pursuing her Ph.D. in Psychology at Grand Canyon University. Blaina believes that some of her greatest accomplishments would include the growth she has been able to assist with at Hiwassee over the last seven years. Blaina and her husband, Eric, hope to continue to be a part of all of the wonderful things happening on campus for many years to come as they raise their daughter, Ana, to be a Hiwassee Tiger.