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November 2020



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News Stories Posted Monday November 2, 2020



Breaking the glass ceiling—majority of women in GC economics go on to graduate school

[Economics & Finance, Department of](#) : Monday November 2, 2020

For years, women have worked to break the invisible barrier that keeps underrepresented groups from climbing the corporate ladder. But even with that hard work, women remain under the “glass ceiling” and are still unrepresented in certain careers.

In the field of economics, women represented only 7 percent of new Ph.D.’s in 1972, according to a 2018 report from the [American Economic Association’s Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession \(CSWEP\)](#).

In nearly 50 years, the representation of women receiving an economics Ph.D. has grown, but only to 32.9 percent nationally in 2017. That statistic has remained stagnant since the early 2000s, hovering between 30-35 percent.

Georgia College’s economics department bucks that national trend. Of the spring

2020 graduates majoring in economics, 50 percent of those were women and 25 percent of those women went on to pursue graduate school.

Hanna Kagele graduated in 2018 with double majors in economics and math. More than half of her fellow economics majors were women and 44 percent of them went to graduate school.

“Georgia College was not an environment where women in the field are treated differently,” said Kagele. “I didn't even realize that was a thing in economics until I left Georgia College.”

“The field itself is definitely very male-dominated,” she said. “but that wasn't the case at all at Georgia College. I always felt very respected.”



Hanna Kagele

Kagele is the first student from Georgia College's economics program accepted to Emory University's economics Ph.D. program. She received a full scholarship.

It wasn't until her junior year at Georgia College when she started seriously considering a Ph.D. as an option. She knew she wanted to double major, and economics paired well with math. Then after becoming a Supplemental Instructor for math, she realized she enjoyed and had a knack for teaching others—sparking in her the thought of becoming a professor.

“One day, I stayed after in Dr. Chris Clark's econometrics class, and I just was like, ‘do you really think this is something I could accomplish?’ I said ‘you can be completely honest with me; would I even make it through grad school?’”

“Dr. Clark replied with ‘oh yeah, 100 percent. If that's what you want to do you would definitely make it,’” she said.

The rest is history Kagele said. She credits the research project she completed her senior year to helping her stand out to Emory.

“I was the only person in my cohort that was coming straight from undergrad so everyone else had a master's or they had been doing research type jobs before they came to the Ph.D. program,” said Kagele. “I was a little bit nervous because I kind of felt like the underdog. But Georgia College prepared me so well. I definitely didn't have a disadvantage”

The research project for students begins during fall semester senior year. In the econometrics course, they learn how to formulate research questions, collect, clean and analyze data, and use appropriate econometrics techniques to answer those research questions.

“They complete memo projects that eventually become the basis of their final research papers,” said Dr. Brooke Conaway, assistant professor of economics. “Their papers are completed, polished and presented in the spring during our senior seminar course.”

“These projects give our students an edge as they apply to grad school since this is the kind of research they would be doing,” said Conaway. “But it also benefits them as they apply for jobs, since the paper is a signal of many qualities employers are looking for in new hires.”

Georgia College’s economics curriculum focuses on the development of analytical and critical thinking, deductive reasoning, quantitative and communication skills. These skills are sought by employers in all fields. Majoring in economics can open doors for students to graduate school, law schools or the workforce.

“The faculty in the Economics and Finance Department are wholly dedicated to the success of our students, and many co-author papers with undergraduates,” Conaway said. “We have award-winning faculty using high-impact practices to teach students skills highly desired by employers and graduate programs.”

Senior Kendyl Lewis chose the major based on her interests in research and policy.



Kendyl Lewis

“Studying both economics and psychology has had a major impact on my career plans,” said Lewis. “I am so thankful that I have been able to take both psychology and economics classes because I have been able to apply what I am learning in each field to the other.”

Lewis is deciding whether she wants to pursue an economics Ph.D. or a dual-degree program where she could earn her Ph.D. in economics and law degree at the same time.

“I ultimately want a career where I can do research that is focused on improving public policy,” said Lewis.

As they set out to make their marks on the world, both women credit professors with helping them along their journey.

“Econ professors have gone out of their way to provide me with opportunities to help me prepare for graduate school and my future career,” said Lewis “They push me and provide me with extra opportunities to put my skills into practice, so I feel like I would not be able to have the same quality of economics education anywhere else.”

They know their perspectives are needed and valued in the field.

“Economics is a really unique field in that different perspectives give you such an advantage,” said Kagele. “I think the perspective that women, in particular, bring is important.”

News Stories Posted Tuesday November 3, 2020



Students start nonpartisan political group during contentious election season

[Student Organizations & Clubs](#): Tuesday November 3, 2020



Senior Michael Haug

Throughout the 2020 ruckus of pandemic and political mayhem, a new student organization was born at Georgia College. It effectively proved that political discourse can be diverse—even polar opposite—and still remain civil and polite.

What is a public liberal arts education, after all, if not the open discussion of ideas?

That's what senior Michael Haug was looking for last winter, as the presidential election earnestly got underway. On campus, he found groups for the Young Democrats, College Republicans and Young Democratic Socialists of America. There was Bobcat

Votes, the American Democracy Project and Turning Point USA. Everyone seemed to have a safe space for likeminded friendliness and a sense of belonging.

But Haug, a political skeptic, didn't seem to fit anywhere. He wanted a place where the undetermined, doubters and "political oddballs" would feel comfortable speaking alongside people with sure convictions.

So, Haug started a nonpartisan group, the GC Political Society, with junior Andrew Fierbaugh. The two business management majors wanted to provide a platform where both sides of the political spectrum could talk regularly and be exposed to opinions and ideas that directly clash with their own.



Club logo.

“

It's a rough time to be interested in politics. What our organization's trying to do is provide that model, that example of how adults disagree. We want more than anything to be a model for our fellow students and, frankly, for our parents, our older siblings and society in general.

- Michael Haug

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The importance of dialogue is more apparent than ever. The rancor in this year's presidential election troubled the two friends. Currently in-between parties and political ideals himself, Haug said he wanted to create a forum where all sides come together, argue and listen without vindictiveness or bitter resentment. A place where everyone—young and old, right, left or in the middle—could join discussions and debates without fear of ridicule and insult.

“It’s a rough time to be interested in politics,” Haug said. “What our organization’s trying to do is provide that model, that example of how adults disagree. We want more than anything to be a model for our fellow students and, frankly, for our parents, our older siblings and society in general.”

“Essentially, what our organization’s trying to do is bring about a situation,” he said, “where we can disagree civilly like adults.”

To get people talking, the friends developed a constitution last spring and registered their group on campus. The GC Political Society airs debates and discussions on their Facebook page, which has about 200 followers so far.

They hosted debates on criminal justice reform and the Electoral College, as well as discussions about the future of the ‘left and right’ in America.

They also partnered with Dr. Brandy Kennedy’s Public Opinion class. Her students research Gallop polls on things like the Electoral College and various voting systems. Haug provides that information to group members before, during and after debates and discussions. He wants to partner with the political science department more in the future, so the club is educational and spurs more young adults to vote. People always say, “This is the year. It’s going to happen. The young will go out and vote. But, each time,” he said, “we keep dropping the ball.”

Part of the problem is youth don’t feel they’re allowed to openly discuss or question politics. Haug recalls his family’s table. A few minutes into the meal, his father would say, “No politics at dinner.” This disappointed Haug, because he always loved politics. With only his four sisters to text on political topics, he feels this generation hasn’t been given adequate opportunity to debate ideas.



Michael Haug, president of GC Political Society

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As a young person, it’s really frustrating, especially with the kind of deterioration we’ve seen in American politics. It’s really frustrating for young people just tuning in. But if we don’t like the way political discourse is; if we don’t like the way the presidential debates went; if we don’t like the options that are in front of us—it’s our responsibility to get engaged and fix that.

- Haug

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People told Haug a nonpartisan political club wouldn't work. They said discussions would become hostile, much like the 2020 political atmosphere. Haug thought they might be right. Politics has become a “join or die kind of thing. Either be on my side or you're the enemy,” he said.

But, it turns out, Georgia College students can discuss opposite political views without insulting or attacking one another. Club debates have been “courteous and kind,” Haug said. The recent discussion on criminal justice reform had “tons of consensus too.”

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We don't condone any personal attacks under any circumstances. That's a huge rule, and we're really serious about it.

- Haug

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“Everybody was there in good faith, and it was just lovely to model how adults can have a political conversation,” he said. “We don't condone any personal attacks under any circumstances. That's a huge rule, and we're really serious about it.”

“You can call somebody's idea any name under the sun—we're free speech in that way. If you need to use some colorful language to do it, that's ok as long as it isn't aimed at any person,” Haug said. “But never ever will it be allowed in the GC Political Society to try and paint the other side as evil or in some way fundamentally bad as people, because they're not. They're our fellow Bobcats. And, if you find their ideas reprehensible, then you can explain to them why they're wrong in a civil manner.”

Now that the election's over, club officers intend to host weekly political discussions online, in an attempt to act as a healing catalyst and “broadly foster camaraderie and community” on campus.

When he graduates in May, Haug plans to get a master's in public policy and pass the club presidency to Fierbaugh. He hopes other students will step forward to carry on their work, as well, so the liberal arts education at Georgia College continues to provide a place where all political views are politely discussed and tolerated.



Haug hopes GC Political Society can act as a healing catalyst in months to come.

“

I'm a guy that likes it all. I'm interested in all political parties. I'm somewhere lost, figuring out which way to go. And it's a messy time to figure it all out. That's why it's so much fun doing this GC Political Society, because I'm talking to everyone.

- Haug

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News Stories Posted Friday November 6, 2020



#GCUnted going strong, offering support for Georgia College and local community

[Alumni](#) : Friday November 6, 2020

The idea of #GCUnted launched March 20—just a few days following the closure of schools and businesses due to COVID-19. The initiative, founded by the Alumni Association and the Foundation, allows alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends of the university the opportunity to virtually connect with Georgia College (GC) and Milledgeville during the pandemic.

“We want to ensure alumni, faculty, staff and community members have a safe virtual place to gather and engage with their peers to take their mind off of what’s going on,” said Mausmi Patel, '16, assistant director of Alumni Engagement at Georgia College. “#GCUnted allows us to meet these individuals where they are by bringing the discussion and fun to the audience.”

More than 50 livestreams—including story time for kids, financial planning, lunch-time violin performances, museum tours and yoga sessions—have been featured. Dozens of Georgia College and Milledgeville community members joined the events and helped the Alumni Association. The Instagram page gained 200 followers since May, as a result of their continued presence. They also recently teamed with the Milledgeville-Baldwin County Chamber of Commerce.



Mausmi Patel, '16

“Since #GCUnited had already been effectively producing online content, it made sense for us to partner with the Chamber to offer additional resources for the local community,” said Patel. “We can offer more resources to our members by tapping into our accomplished alumni, faculty and staff. We’ve qualified some of them to share their knowledge about business best-practices during this pandemic.”

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“Attentive listening is everything. When I serve on panels, listening to not only the facilitator, but to fellow panelists who are key to gaining a better understanding and sharing more thoughtful, well-rounded answers.”

- Lindsay Scholz

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The Chamber focuses on offering educational tools to Milledgeville and Baldwin County residents who may have lost their jobs or business revenue due to the pandemic. Using #GCUnited branding, Georgia College and the Chamber provide panels and presentations on the changing legal and human resources rules and regulations, business marketing, social media marketing and other topics to benefit small business owners. The ultimate goal is to make sure local business owners and community members have the necessary tools to safely maintain their revenue and minimize layoffs.

Since #GCUnited’s inception, the local community implemented the means to cope with the pandemic, so the initiative shifted its focus to offering current, event-related content. Patel finds alumni who specialize in various topics, then conducts livestream panels on topics surrounding COVID-19 including the Paycheck Protection Program, housing market, financial planning and marketing your business.

Lindsay Shoemake Scholz, ’13, founder of Lindsay Scholz Studio—a creative studio focusing on branding and web design for women-owned businesses—was a guest panelist for the “Marketing Your Business During COVID-19” livestream. During the panel, she answered and discussed several questions on how to pivot marketing ventures in a different direction and continue to thrive as a business owner in the midst of a pandemic.

As a panelist, Scholz applied the listening skills she learned from her time as a student at Georgia College and an editor-in-chief at the Colonnade.

“Attentive listening is everything,” she said. “When I serve on panels, listening to not only the facilitator, but to fellow panelists who are key to gaining a better understanding and sharing more thoughtful, well-rounded answers.”

Scholz feels serving as a panelist for Georgia College was an enlightening experience.

"I enjoyed encouraging fellow Bobcats by sharing marketing strategies that can be implemented by most business owners in our current climate," she said. "Although GC graduates are dispersed across the world, we share a common bond. I'm grateful that these helpful resources are available to all, especially this year."



Lindsay Scholz, '13

Ross Sheppard, '13, a real estate broker with Ansley Atlanta Real Estate and historic preservationist, was delighted to share his expertise as a guest panelist on "The Housing Market and COVID-19."

"I am always happy to volunteer for anything at Georgia College if I have the time," he said. "One thing I loved about being a student, and now as an alumnus, is the strong commitment so many in the GC community have when it comes to pitching in when asked."



Ross Sheppard, '13

One of the issues he touched on was interest rates for homebuyers.

"Interest rates are at a historic low at 2.99 percent for those with good credit," said Sheppard. "If Congress doesn't spend any more, we have every indication from the Feds that the interest rates will remain low."

Patel often gets suggestions from alumni for new livestream ideas.

"People have really enjoyed the livestreams," she said. "The recent panels have been extremely popular with community members engaging with the discussion in the comments section."

Some upcoming livestream sessions include: "Digital Marketing Strategies," as well as "Accounting Tax Considerations amid COVID-19" led by faculty of the

College of Business.

“Whether you’re a Bobcat, Colonial or Jessie,” Patel said, “Georgia College has always been about more than what you’ve learned in the classroom. Community is at the heart of the Georgia College experience. We hope to continue spreading that message through #GCUnited.”

#GCUnited is hosted through the Georgia College Alumni Facebook, Instagram and YouTube platforms. #GCUnited panels can be found at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxsi1PSuQ84EjMHqCEdgsDg>.



Veterans Day remembrance: Alumnus shares his story of military service

[Alumni](#) : Friday November 6, 2020

U.S. Army Sergeant Douglas Payne, '13, knows what it's like to be in the boots of a soldier. He took a different career path than most new alumni. Instead of delving into corporate America after graduation, the criminal justice major and business administration minor, enlisted in the U.S. Army.

He found Georgia College to be a good fit to set the foundation for his career in the military.

"It's big enough that it has a lot of great resources like a large university does, but the class sizes are relatively small and so is the campus. It is the best of both worlds," he said. "I also wanted to have that relationship with professors, so I could talk with them outside of class. That's what sets Georgia College apart from the other universities."

Dr. Sara Doude, associate professor of criminal justice and criminal justice coordinator, stood out to Payne. She was very knowledgeable and approachable.

"She just made the classroom environment fun and something to look forward to every day," he said.

Doude also frequently checks in with criminal justice alumni to provide them with potential job opportunities.

"That's something that's really awesome to see," Payne said. "Initially, I asked her to write a reference letter for me to get my masters, and she was willing and able to do this. She told me that whatever I needed from her, she was here to help."

While pursuing his undergraduate degree, Payne also took advantage of leadership opportunities as a member of the Georgia College Leadership Certificate Program (LCP) and Model U.N. He was also a senator with the Student Government Association (SGA) and treasurer of the Residential Student Association.

“LCP really ignited my desire to be a leader in college and beyond,” Payne said. “That was a great avenue to learn, speak and be with like-minded individuals. Model U.N. was a good competition—one that had a lasting impact, because it made me think about strategic implications on a global scale. We lived in the shoes of the people of that country. So, it was really cool to mirror what they thought about. We also learned how to communicate with allies to make the world a better place.”



Douglas Payne receives his promotion to sergeant certificate.

“One of the big things I took to heart when I was in the army was that you join the military, because you want to fight for your country. But when you’re working with individuals, you realize that you’d fight for the person to your left and to your right. Having that type of relationship with individuals is a real win.”

- Sergeant Douglas Payne

In addition, Payne worked for Student Night Auxiliary Patrol (SNAP) his last two years at Georgia College, which he holds in high regard.

“Working for Public Safety was the best experience I had while I was there,” he said. “It was so much fun. I learned how that type of career works and got to be

mentored by those professionals. It was outstanding.”

A few months after graduating from Georgia College, Payne enlisted in the U.S. Army and left for basic training in October. He was able to apply the effective communication skills he learned at Georgia College to his role as an intelligence analyst in the army and, later, as an analyst at the U.S. Department of Defense. Those skills proved vital in his military and civilian career.

“Words have meanings,” Payne said. “In times when it matters most—when people are deployed—you need to make sure you know what you’re saying and that you’re saying the right words with the right tone to get your thoughts across, because some service members aren’t able to speak for long periods of time.”

When serving on active duty in Italy for five years, he focused on African topics and issues related to U.S. involvement in operations in Africa. Payne even deployed to partner with some African nations.

“We are trying to find ways to partner with African nations, building a better place for each country there,” he said.

“In Italy, I analyzed different enemies and reported that to military officials, as well as other agencies, so they could see the big picture and make important decisions,” Payne said. “It was really cool, because I got to work in different echelons, from lower to more strategic levels.”

This experience helped him decipher what different individuals wanted, whether an enlisted member, a state department individual or four-star general. He met many individuals there and formed some lasting relationships.

After a year in Italy, he married Melissa Perez Payne, ’14, whom he met at Georgia College. The couple lived in the country for the remainder of his time on active duty. During his downtime, they traveled throughout Europe, visiting various ancient churches, Stonehenge and Vatican City to see the Pope.

When he returned to America, Payne became an analyst for the U.S. Department of Defense. His experiences at Georgia College helped in his transition to a civilian job.

“Being able to find and hone those skills I learned what I want to do was really beneficial,” Payne said. “Having that and being mentored by an individual who was already in the field, put me ahead of the game.”

Now that he’s working as a civilian, he strives to make



Sergeant Douglas
Payne, analyst, U.S.
Department of

sure those who are deployed stay safe.

Defense

"It's given me job satisfaction to know that some of the work we're doing is ensuring that these people are safe and that they're going to come home to their family and friends," said Payne.

When the couple had their first child this year, Payne was deployed. Now, he's glad to be home with his family. Serving in the army makes him value the time spent with them.

"You begin to appreciate the small things, like when I took my daughter, Grace, to the swings for the first time recently," he said.

A soldier's life is 24/7, and that can be tough on families. So, on Veterans Day, Payne wants others to remember the families of military service members, who are often times forgotten.

"Many times, veterans and active members of the military get thanked and the families are forgotten," he said. "We should thank them, because they're making the sacrifice, as well. My wife knew me before I joined the military. She knew where I was wanting to go. Yet, she was ok with it. That's what happens many times. Family members tend to make a sacrifice just as much or more than service members."

Throughout it all, Payne finds his position at the Department of Defense particularly rewarding. It has national implications. He works hand-in-hand with other like-minded individuals to ensure the nation is secure, while protecting Americans here and abroad.

"One of the big things I took to heart when I was in the army was that you join the military, because you want to fight for your country. But when you're working with individuals, you realize that you'd fight for the person to your left and to your right," said Payne. "Having that type of relationship with individuals is a real win."



Sergeant Douglas Payne with his wife, Melissa, and their baby, Grace.

Georgia College pays tribute to all military service members on Veterans Day and throughout the year.



Theatre professional builds imagination through plays and books

Alumni : Friday November 6, 2020

J.“Scott” McElheney, '92, comes from a family of librarians. He grew up appreciating books and using his imagination when reading.

This love for the written word is evident in McElheney's latest pursuit. After an accomplished career teaching at different universities, he recently opened Walls of Books Bookstore on North Columbia St. in Milledgeville.

McElheney's passion for theatre, journalism and reading led him down a colorful career path lasting nearly 25 years. He was a freelance lighting designer, high school theatre teacher, assistant professor of theatre at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and Middle Georgia State University and theatre technical director at Georgia Southwestern State University.

Through the years, he especially enjoyed “seeing the light bulb come on” students' faces when they would understand a concept he taught them.

“I was teaching students who weren't necessarily majoring in theatre,” McElheney said. “They were taking technical theatre classes, because they had to. Later on, these students discovered they enjoyed it, because I would work with them to understand these new ideas. And that was always a treat for me to see.”

McElheney majored in journalism at Georgia College and was editor of the Colonnade. But, he spent most of his time in the theatre. He was in the Drama Club, as well.

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“Georgia College’s Theatre program taught me problem-solving skills and how to work on a team. You’re one person on a grand scale, and you just can’t do everything yourself. You’ve got to rely on everybody else to make it work. So, we were a very tight-knit department.”

- Scott McElheney

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Although the Theatre Department was small, the faculty were very student oriented. A lot of student labor went into building sets and that impressed McElheney. Students were encouraged to participate as early as freshmen year.

In this way, McElheney learned lighting design. He handled lighting for a couple of Georgia College productions. Teaching Assistant Peter Pauzé guided McElheney through his first shows, helping him lay a solid foundation in lighting design. Theatre Director David Moore instilled a good work ethic in him, as well.

“Georgia College’s Theatre program taught me problem-solving skills and how to work on a team,” he said. “You’re one person on a grand scale, and you just can’t do everything yourself. You’ve got to rely on everybody else to make it work. So, we were a very tight-knit department.”



Scott McElheney plays Rev. David Lee in "The Foreigner" during the fall quarter of 1990 at Georgia College.

McElheney enjoyed his time teaching theatre. But when his last three teaching positions folded due to limited student enrollment and budget cuts, he knew it was

time to move on. After exploring other career opportunities and following the advice of his mother, McElheney opened his bookstore.

[youtube embedcode="_C6ePyINVyM" style="fullwidth"]Scott McElheney describes how working at the Colonnade helped set him up for success at the bookstore.
[/youtube]

McElheney believes reading strengthens the imagination and is vital to success.

"I grew up in a house full of books," he said. "There's something about reading a book that's such a joy. So, I knew this would be a great fit for me."

"Reading helps with all sorts of different skillsets," McElheney added. "The more you read, the more you're going to learn and the better you're going to communicate. It's been proven that readers have a better vocabulary. They also tend to learn a little easier than people who don't read."

Taking Dr. Bob Wilson's history class reinforced McElheney's love of reading.

"He turned this kid, who was interested in history, into a lifelong history buff," McElheney said.

The way Wilson delivered lessons was intriguing too.

"Dr. Bob's teaching method was very enjoyable," he said. "It influenced me later on as a professor to try and keep my lessons in theatre light and pleasurable."

Wilson also taught McElheney to think positively—something he practices every day at work.

"You never saw him have bad days," he said. "So that had a great bearing on me. You can't be in a bad mood, when you're the face of the business."

In addition, McElheney learned critical thinking skills from Pauzé and Moore, that have served him well in life and at work. Instead of offering quick solutions, they made students think about problems and how to solve them on their own.

This helped in theatre, where there are always last-minute problems that need to be solved. Even now, McElheney daily applies the problem-solving skills he learned from Georgia College.

"When I worked at UNC Wilmington, a very large institution with a well-funded theatre program, I still had to figure out how to roll things on the cheap and make them look nice," he said. "I had to figure out how to work with the resources I had."



Scott McElheney with a book by Flannery O'Connor.

These same critical thinking skills also serve him well at the bookstore. His experience as a Georgia College student prepared him for business. He would encourage other alumni to take the leap.

"I would say, 'Take that chance,'" said McElheney. "I was always the kind of person who was so afraid to step out into the abyss, because I needed the job security. To a certain extent, that's true. But, then the last three jobs I've had just proves what you think about may be a secure job today, may not necessarily be secure tomorrow."

Owning his bookstore has brought refreshing new rewards, different from his theatre days.

"Once I got into the business, the security aspect eventually faded away. I have faith this business venture is going to work," McElheney said. "It's worked so far even during the pandemic. It looks like it's going to be just fine."

More information on Walls of Books and other alumni-owned businesses can be found on our searchable business directory: <https://www.bobcatsforbusiness.com/>.



Young couple aims to mentor and ease financial burden for student-athletes

Alumni : Friday November 6, 2020

When Ashley Savransky Hazel, '17, and Steve Hazel, '14, '16, were student-athletes at Georgia College (GC), they realized the significance of being selected as scholarship recipients.

Ashley, a three-year team captain, played four years for the inaugural volleyball team and Steve was a baseball player. They knew how it felt to be supported by people who believed in them. It helped them make efficient use of their time in school, resulting in valuable lessons learned on- and-off the court and field.

Ashley is now a marketing coordinator for a hospitality management company that operates several hotels and restaurants in Grand Rapids, Michigan. She enjoys the uniqueness of her profession, where she gets to try different food and drinks and visit distinctive hotels. This keeps her up-to-date on what's going on in the community.

Ashley got fundamental knowledge from her classes at Georgia College, which eased her entry into the professional world.



Ashley prepares to spike the ball.

“I’m more of a generalist in my role, so I do a lot of everything,” said Ashley. “The marketing and management classes, as well as other courses, covered the basics of everything and really set me off to be successful at what I’m doing, because it created the groundwork for what I do.”

Ashley especially enjoyed Professor of Marketing Dr. Joanna Schwartz’s class on consumer behavior. This course helped her understand the purchasing decisions people make.

“I try to take this into account all the time,” she said. “It’s not just about making the sale, but understanding and providing value for people and knowing where their motives came from. Those lessons have really stuck with me. I use these skills, because they’re very important.”

Playing volleyball taught Ashley how to connect with others and understand different communication styles, as well.

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“We had rules to follow to represent Georgia College and the volleyball team, and you really had to present yourself a certain way, because it matters. I think there are a ton of lessons to learn from that, as well as the work ethic I gained

from that experience.”

- Ashley Hazel

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“We had different personalities on our volleyball team. They all click in a different way, and that’s true in the workplace too,” she said. “So, I would talk to people in distinctive ways to resonate with them.”

Sports also taught her time management and self-discipline. Ashley would wake up early, do workouts then go to class.

There wasn’t as much time for napping, watching TV or hanging out with friends. Instead, idle time was spent being productive.

“When I was on the bus going to a game, I didn’t just watch Netflix. I spent that time getting my work done first,” Ashley said. “Dealing with that distraction is also true in the workplace. As I work from home now, there are so many distractions, but being able to focus helps. Volleyball helped me schedule my life and focus on time management, so I use these skills all the time.”

While at Georgia College, she represented a brand as a volleyball player, and now she represents a company.

“We had rules to follow to represent Georgia College and the volleyball team, and you really had to present yourself a certain way, because it matters,” she said. “I think there are a ton of lessons to learn from that, as well as the work ethic I gained from that experience.”

Steve is a territory manager with Shaw Industries. Georgia College also provided him with a good business foundation.

“I deal with small business owners who perform a lot of different tasks,” he said. “Because I had management, finance and marketing classes, I can talk about a lot about different topics with them.”

Steve feels his business statistics Professor Dr. Chuck Ryan had the most influence on him.



Steve runs a play.

“If you showed you were putting in the work, he would help make you a success,” Steve said. “I got an A on his first test and then got a B on the second one. He told me to come see him in his office after the second test and said, ‘This is not acceptable for you.’ And I thought, ‘I got a B man.’ He said, ‘You’re better than that.’”

Ryan expected excellence from his students. This makes a big impact on how Steve performs everyday tasks.

“Now, I demand excellence from myself and everyone around me,” he said. “I’m very thorough. I want to get things done the right way. Not just at work, but in anything I do.”

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“Even though we don’t know the students who receive our scholarship, we want them to understand there are people out there who care about them and want to invest in their future. We might not know them, but we are still interested in making GC a better place for them.”

- Steve Hazel

Steve also considers being an athlete a full-time job. When baseball season was in full swing, he felt he was more productive. Being on the road with little time to spare ensured he used every spare minute.

Steve was a recipient of the Martha Erwin Sibley Scholarship, and Ashley also received scholarships. Now they want to reciprocate and provide this advantage for other students with the Hazel Baseball Scholarship.

“Even though we don’t know the students who receive our scholarship, we want them to understand there are people out there who care about them and want to invest in their future,” Steve said. “We might not know them, but we are still interested in making GC a better place for them.”

“Having the opportunity to get scholarships, like the one we’re offering, had a direct impact on Steve’s life and now our lives,” said Ashley. “Steve and I are passionate about financial peace. This scholarship can impact students, so they can start their careers after coming out of college debt-free and having support from people who care deeply about them.”

Considering Ashley and Steve haven’t been out of college long, they feel they can relate to the financial strain students have.

“We understand what that looks like,” said Ashley. “We’d like to mentor students by providing guidance whether it’s struggles in their sport or coming out of school. I’m a strong believer in networking, so being that resource for athletes is important to us.”

The Hazels have no doubt they made the right decision to offer a baseball scholarship. They eventually plan to offer one for students who play volleyball, as well.

“It’s a good way to stay connected,” said Steve. “We’re Bobcats for life.”



Former student-athletes Ashley and Steve Hazel

News Stories Posted Monday November 9, 2020



Second archaeological dig to provide further insight into life at Andalusia

[Andalusia](#) : Monday November 9, 2020

A second archaeological dig took place Nov. 4 - 6 at Georgia College's Andalusia: Home of famed author Flannery O'Connor in Milledgeville, Georgia. The principal archaeological excavation team focused their efforts on areas around the grounds of the main house, the Hill House, equipment shed, dairy barn and the milk processing shed. The excavation is part of a multi-year survey conducted by Southern Research Historic Preservation Consultants to discover artifacts on O'Connor's property. The last archaeological dig was in June 2019, which pinpointed the location of pens where she kept her flock of more than 40 peacocks.

"We're trying to paint a better picture of what the site looked like in the past," said Matt Davis, director of historic museums at Georgia College. "Through archeology, primary document research and analysis of the site's extent buildings, we can gain a fuller understanding of the property's historic resources and better tell the story

of O'Connor's life at the farm."

The archaeology crew began the excavation process with shovel tests marked by flags secured in the ground. The tests are performed on a grid measuring 10 meters apart from where they had excavated last year.



Gretchen Eggiman, researcher with Southern Research Historic Preservation Consultants, discovers buried artifacts at Andalusia.

"We do shovel tests—exploratory holes—in the ground to gage what the soil looks like," said Liz Williamson, principal investigator and archaeologist, overseeing the project. "This helps show us if there are concentrations of artifacts in those areas."

“

"This excavation has been one of our favorite sites. Flannery's home is contemporary. It's one of the most recent sites I've ever worked on where the period of interest is so close to our times. That's pretty cool."

- Liz Williamson

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Last year, the crew focused their efforts on the backyard of the main house.

"It's a little bit less systematic this year," she said. "but we've created a station, so we know exactly where we are."

First, crew members use shovel tests to determine where to dig. Then, they lay out a one-meter by two-meter unit outlining where they excavate. They dig at different levels. The top 10 centimeters will be dug with all artifacts bagged separately from the soil. From the next 10-centimeter level down, artifacts and soil will be bagged together to maintain control of the artifacts.

In close proximity to one of the excavation sites is a partially buried brick walkway.

"There was more going on with these walkways than what we see now, especially with Flannery having lupus and needing to have walkways to get around," said Williamson. "There was once a path here. So, we're hoping to intersect it and find remnants of the brick pavers. This will help in restoring the pathways and walkways as they were during Flannery's time."



Principal Investigator and Archaeologist Liz Williamson (right) discusses excavation procedure with fellow researchers at the Hill House.

During the excavation, the crew discovered murky soil indicating it has a lot of organic material in it.

"The other test unit behind the Hill House is situated in what we think is sheet midden [thin layers in the ground of discarded food scraps and other cultural materials] prior to municipal trash pick-up service," she said. "Back then, they threw trash out the back door or in the nearest gully. We've already found a bit of broken ceramics and glass and some bones that have been heated."

The crew was excited about researching a more modern-day locale, considering most of their archaeological settings are older.

"This excavation has been one of our favorite sites," said Williamson. "Flannery's home is contemporary. It's one of the most recent sites I've ever worked on where the period of interest is so close to our times. That's pretty cool."

Andalusia is open for tours Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. and

Sunday from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m.

News Stories Posted Monday November 16, 2020



The Nutcracker: Sparkle of holiday cheer undimmed by pandemic

[Theatre & Dance, Department of](#): Monday November 16, 2020

Like the Grinch who stole Christmas—COVID-19 produced particularly dreary headlines in early 2020. The Washington Post declared “The Nutcracker” nationwide had become the “latest casualty” of the coronavirus. By October, it reported numerous cancellations of the ballet were hitting “dance companies hard.”

In places like Washington, D.C. and Houston, Texas, virtual performances were announced. But in many others like New York City, Atlanta and Macon, the much-beloved holiday classic was scrapped altogether.

Dance instructors at Georgia College—like their partners in music and theatre—determined ‘the show must go on.’ They were given the greenlight by administration after months of planning, numerous rewriting of reports and the setting of strict guidelines.



A Nutcracker from previous years.

“Students are so thankful that we’re doing ‘The Nutcracker’ this year, and I’ve told them over and over again—I said ‘y’all just don’t know how fortunate we are to be doing this,’” said Amelia Pelton, director of dance and head of the university’s popular GC Community Dance Program.

Senior Abbey Reber of Eatonton is a public health major with a minor in dance. She’s been in the dance program since age three and has performed in “The Nutcracker” every year since, playing everything from a mouse and reindeer to Clara. This year, Reber plays the Sugar Plum Fairy, whose solo dance is the most difficult. She also plays Big Mouse, Dream Fairy, Snowflake and Arabian Princess.

Perhaps more than ever, she said, it’s important for “The Nutcracker” to continue.

“Because I’ve been dancing in ‘The Nutcracker’ my whole life, I can’t imagine a Christmas season without it,” Reber said. “I think what I love the most about ‘The

Nutcracker’ is the sheer innocence of it. Life can be overwhelming, scary and dark—especially in the season we’re living in right now.”

“‘The Nutcracker’ is a happy ballet full of magic, presents and sweets. During the performance,” she said, “audience members and dancers alike forget about the seriousness of the world for a minute and fully immerse themselves in a beautiful story. That’s what I love most about it.”

COVID-19 has complicated dance, Reber admitted. Masks and strenuous movement make it difficult for her to catch her breath, and she loses energy more quickly. But Reber feels “incredibly blessed” to be in “The Nutcracker” this year, when so many performances were canceled.



Senior Abbey Reber is Sugar Plum Fairy.

“

Being able to do ‘The Nutcracker’ makes today’s world feel a little more normal. If anything, I feel like now’s the time we need these performances and need the arts to provide us with an escape from how overwhelming the world can be.

The pandemic forced Georgia College’s dance program online in March. But dancing alone in front of a computer screen isn’t much fun, Pelton said. Families and students were happy when in-person classes resumed in September. They were even more relieved to hear “The Nutcracker” was still on schedule. To allow this: All ballet barres, doorknobs and frequently-touched areas are sanitized between every class. Class sizes are limited. Everyone wears a mask and stands six feet apart.

Georgia College’s “Nutcracker” will be performed with these restrictions as well. It’ll still be on stage at Russell Hall Auditorium but without an audience. The 1892 Russian ballet will be prerecorded in sections and then available for purchase on DVD by Dec. 10. Small groups, one at a time, will be filmed in segments that are edited together for a fluid performance.

Normally, four performances in two weekends sellout at Russell—985 seats each time. Although there won’t be a live audience on campus this year, the Nutcracker cast of 85 children and students will perform in front of a live, drive-by audience at Lockerly Arboretum’s inaugural Christmas lights display in Milledgeville. Georgia College’s Nutcracker will be staged outside with all the props, lights, ballet and holiday magic audiences have come to expect.

In Lockerly’s dazzling nighttime wonderland—“The Nutcracker” will first be seen in the distance. As cars slowly round bends and hills, people will hear Christmas music and see dancers in tutus through a myriad of Christmas lights and trees—adding to the ballet’s already dreamlike mystic.



GC Community Dance student Libby Mathis of Milledgeville rehearses her role as Candy Cane Princess.

Lockerly's light show is five weekend nights from 6 to 9 p.m. and costs \$10 per car. Georgia College's dance troupe will appear on two nights. Act one—the party scene with mice, soldiers, tap dancers and snowflakes—will be 6 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. Act two—the land of sweets and dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy—will be 6 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 12.

Most everything will be incorporated into “The Nutcracker” DVD and many sets will also be at Lockerly. The enormous Nutcracker props that normally line either side of Russell stage will be there, along with a huge blow-up Nutcracker. The throne, Clara's sleigh and the Christmas tree that “grows up to the ceiling” are in the DVD, Pelton said.

On DVD, the university's two snow machines will also be used to make snow; fog machines will make fog; pyrotechnics will produce booming fireworks; and the giant Chinese dragon will float across stage, breathing smoke. Reindeer will do their Rockette dance in velvet brown tuxedos and antlers. And Georgia College's Nutcracker performance will still include the “crazy fun” Bollywood dance.



3-year-old Eliza Zoeteway of Milledgeville plays a trumpeteer.



Junior David Connel plays Clara's Prince.

“It's all very magical. We have lots of special effects. It's a labor of love, and it's my favorite time of year,” said Pelton, who after 26 years at Georgia College says she never wants to retire. She enjoys teaching dance with her assistant director and senior dance lecturer Natalie King, who's instrumental in getting “The Nutcracker” onstage each year.

“This year's been a huge challenge,” Pelton, “but we're so grateful for the opportunity to present ‘The Nutcracker’ in some form.”

Junior David Connel of Grayson, Georgia, is also thankful for the chance to continue dancing. The theatre major and dance minor plays Clara's Nutcracker Prince. Even though the performance

won't be live at Russell Auditorium, he said, this year's Nutcracker is historic and will be remembered.

He's especially looking forward to the live, outside performance at Lockerly.

“

The quality of our performance has not been deterred, and I want to share the hard work we've put into this show with as many people as possible. I'm glad we'll be able to share what we're doing and, hopefully, we'll bring people joy through our performances.

- Junior David Connel

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News Stories Posted Wednesday November 18, 2020



50th Anniversary for honors program coincided with new Honors College designation

[Honors College](#) : Wednesday November 18, 2020

Since 1970, Georgia College nurtured and developed bright minds through its honors program. In time for its 50th Anniversary celebration in November, the program transformed into an Honors College—complete with its own dean and plans to make the honors experience even more dynamic for students.

“Moving to an Honors College adds prestige. It’ll position Georgia College to compete in an ever-tighter marketplace for honors students in the region, the state, the nation and even in the world because we have something really special here at Georgia College,” said Dr. Brian Newsome, inaugural dean of the Honors College.

The naming of the college after Dr. John E. Sallstrom was approved by the



Dr. Brian Newsome

University System of Georgia Board of Regents in October in time for the program's 50th Anniversary celebration during Alumni Weekend. Sallstrom founded Georgia College's honors program.

There are no specific criteria to meet when forming an honors college. A national honors council dictates best practices for such units—the key practice being appointment of a dean. This raises the honors program as an equal among colleges at the university. Newsome attends Council of Deans meetings and reports directly to Dr. Costas Spirou, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.

A distinguishing feature of an honors college is “robust financial support,” Newsome said. A substantial financial gift was donated for the new Honors College by Professor Emeritus Dr. Ken Saladin.



Ribbon cutting ceremony in October with Honors College Dean Brian Newsome, GC President Steve Dorman, Provost Costas Spirou and Professor Emeritus Ken Saladin.

With the naming gift, Transformative Experience grants will be available to support study abroad and internships. In addition, a new Saladin Scholars grant program will offer additional support for students seeking to use transformative experiences as a springboard for graduate school or national scholarship

applications. Students interested in honors typically seek a higher-level of engagement with critical texts and tough questions. They “want to be engaged enthusiastically in the pursuit of ideas,” Newsome said. The naming gift makes these intellectual adventures possible.

“It’s about raising the profile of honors at Georgia College,” he said. “An honors college means having the resources for transformative experiences. When I interviewed here, I found a deep appreciation for that type of honors community, and that appealed to me.”

The Augusta, Georgia, native came armed with lots of honors experience and plenty of ideas. He has a background in modern European history and international relations and was dean of curriculum and assessment at Elizabethtown College in South Central Pennsylvania.

“

From my perspective, honors isn’t about doing more. It’s not about piling on work for the sake of piling on work. Rather, it’s about doing things differently. Tackling tough questions, engaging in material and doing it as part of a community of peers and faculty members.

- Dr. Brian Newsome

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Newsome praised the work of his predecessors: Sallstrom, Dr. Doris Moody and Dr. Steve Elliott-Gower. Gower, especially, spent many weeks helping Newsome transition into the job.

To start off, Newsome talked with Admissions, Advancement, the Honors Faculty Council, Registrar’s Office, Advising, University Housing, Outdoor Center, the Leadership Program and GIVE Center to come up with strategic priorities for the Honors College. He held ZOOM listening sessions with honors students to be certain their needs were met. He’s also solicited input from honors alumni for their perspective.

“From my perspective, honors isn’t about doing more. It’s not about piling on work for the sake of piling on work. Rather, it’s about doing things differently. Tackling tough questions, engaging in material and doing it as part of a community of peers and faculty members,” Newsome said.

His plans are multi-faceted. New honors students will be grouped in cohorts for icebreaking and teambuilding activities during orientation and beyond. They’re encouraged to live at Bell Hall into their sophomore year for additional bonding and gather at the newly-renovated Humber-White House for honors activities. Space



Humber-White House

includes a kitchen for food receptions, lounge and study areas and a conference room for “dynamic conversations.” The program’s longstanding, popular book discussions and presenters series are also held there. Students are being encouraged to do more community service, as well, and round out senior capstone projects for honors credit.

Newsome hopes the John E. Sallstrom Honors College will help boost recruitment and retention rates. He plans to develop an honors pathway for students from two-year colleges to transfer to Georgia College, and he’s working on establishing an admissions pathway for first-generation and ESL (English as Second Language) students, as well.

“

The 50th Anniversary served as a wonderful jumping off point to the future and gave us a way to honor the work of my processors and the wonderful programs they’ve led over the years and use them as a springboard to the next 50 years of honors.

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News Stories Posted Thursday November 19, 2020



Class of 2020: English major aims to pursue degree in computer science

[English, Department of](#) : Thursday November 19, 2020

Dontavius Wilson

Where are you from? I am from Sparta, Georgia.

What classes did you enjoy most and why? British Literature and English Romanticism classes. British Literature has a lot of wonderful works. I learned about the many different social issues that society has had and that it still deals with now aside from racism. We also studied humanity for their marginalization errors, hierarchy and their dependence on superficiality--things of that nature.

What organizations did you belong to? I belonged to the International English Honor Society for a brief period of time and the Black Student Union (BSU). I gained some experience with meeting people in the BSU. It was nice seeing people of my skin color whom I could relate to. There were other students dealing with

trying to build up their careers with their majors just like me.

Who were your favorite professors and why? Dr. Katie Simon, associate professor of English, has been very informative in addressing many issues, like with the books she assigned us and discussed during class. It's been very informative to be a part of her class, and I appreciate the knowledge I gained. She was very understanding and helpful with which topics I needed to pursue for papers.

Dr. Julian Knox, assistant professor of English, was my British Literature professor. He was very understanding and flexible when it came to meeting with him. If there were any hiccups with turning an assignment in, then I could do it another time. He was very helpful with my papers. He would also help me come up with ideas.

What profession do you see yourself in? I may do some writing jobs for newspaper outlets on the side. I feel like I need to try something new. I want to pursue another undergraduate major in computer science. I like gaming and there are different aspects of computer gaming with writing code and getting the settings right, that I think I'll do well in computer science.



Dontavius Wilson

News Stories Posted Friday November 20, 2020



Georgia College selects new Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management

[Enrollment Management](#) : Friday November 20, 2020

Joel Robinson has been selected as the Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management at Georgia College following a national search.

Robinson comes to Georgia College from Ruffalo Noel Levitz where he has served as an enrollment consultant since 2017. Robinson has an extensive history in enrollment management and student success. Prior to his work with Ruffalo Noel Levitz, Robinson has served as Assistant Provost in Academic Affairs for Northern Kentucky University, Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management at Northern Kentucky University and Senior Associate Director of Admissions for Marketing/Recruitment at the University of Cincinnati.

"We are excited to welcome Joel to Georgia College in his new role," said Dr. Costas Spirou, provost and vice president for academic affairs. "The knowledge and expertise he brings will be of great value and importance to our continued enrollment efforts. I thank the search committee for doing an outstanding job attracting many highly qualified candidates across the nation."

During Robinson's time with the Northern Kentucky University, he focused on

enhancing the recruitment and retention of diverse student populations, which produced record-setting results. As Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management with the university, his leadership resulted in six consecutive years of record enrollment growth that reached nearly 16,000 students.

“I look forward to joining the team at Georgia College as we continue to recruit the best and brightest students from across the state and beyond,” said Robinson.



Joel Robinson

Robinson received his Master of Education and bachelor's degree in Communication from the University of Cincinnati.

Robinson will begin his role as Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management on Jan. 1, 2021.

News Stories Posted Monday November 23, 2020



Class of 2020: Double major made the most of his college experience

[Information Systems & Computer Science, Department of](#): Monday November 23, 2020

[Congrats Class of 2020](#)

Connor King

What's your major(s)?

I am a double major in Management Information Systems and Mass Communication.

Where are you from?

I am from Atlanta, Georgia.

What activities have you been involved with during college?

I served one year in my Residence Halls Community Council and one year as a Community Advisor for University Housing. I worked for the Sports Information Department during my entire five and a half years at GC. I completed the three programs in GC's Leadership Programs with Emerging Leaders, the Leadership

Certificate Program (LCP) and the Georgia Education Mentorship (GEM) program.

What was your favorite class/professor and why?

My favorite class was Newscast Production with Dr. Jim Schiffman in the Department of Communication because I discovered my passion for working as a television news reporter, something I hope to pursue as a career after graduation.

What would you say has impacted you most during your time in college?

I feel that the professors have played a huge role in my education at GC. The professors here are open to hearing opinions from their students to improve the overall experience and they are open for discussion outside the classroom in their office hours or around campus.



Connor King



Connor climbs rockwall

How have you dealt with the challenges of the pandemic?

The pandemic has been difficult because there are minimal social interactions these days, but I have felt that the adjustment to synchronize online classes went well and professors remain open to student interactions through a virtual environment. The job search is tricky with no in-person job fairs and networking events, but it is important to utilize connections and attend virtual events to find job opportunities during a pandemic.

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to work full-time after graduation, then eventually go to graduate school.

Anything else you'd like to mention?

I have very much enjoyed my five and a half years at GC and even though the Class of 2020 has an unprecedented ending to our undergraduate careers, I will never forget all of the memories I have from my time at GC.



Political Science faculty dominate local media coverage during election

Government & Sociology, Department of: Monday November 23, 2020

From Oslo, Norway, to Chattanooga, Tennessee; from Atlanta to Columbus; from Macon to Milledgeville—Georgia College’s government faculty seemed to be everywhere this electoral season.

They helped the media and public navigate a quagmire of political jargon, rumored illegality, swinging states and possible voter fraud.

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We greatly appreciate the expertise of our faculty members and their willingness to participate in this highly-visible media initiative. They provided insightful analysis and commentary in an area where public interest is clearly very high, and their contributions in the media further elevated the profile of Georgia College.

- Omar Odeh, associate vice president for Strategic Communications

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On election night, faculty gave live commentary at multiple locations. As results trickled in, they guided viewers through messy partisan confusion and helped a perplexed nation come to grips with polarizing political divide.



Dr. Benjamin Clark

Along the way, faculty also provided a historical fact or two and a bit of calming wisdom.

“It always feels like the nation is on the verge of coming apart at the seams, but times of cultural and political upheaval are often followed by seasons of relative cultural and political stability,” said Lecturer Dr. Benjamin Clark, who provided morning-after coverage at WGXA News, an affiliate of Fox24/ABC16 in Macon.

“Even if it’s not always clear what’s driving these cycles or how long they’ll last,” he said, “the fact that this is a recurring pattern can itself be reassuring.”

Presidential elections always stimulate great interest, attracting more attention and higher voter turnout. This year, however, it was “record breaking,” according to Senior Political Lecturer Claire Sanders. In Georgia alone, half of registered voters cast early ballots and large numbers voted on election day, as well.



Claire Sanders in the McClatchy video.

Prior to the election, Sanders appeared in a [national video](#) in The Telegraph by McClatchy news group about Georgia moving from red to blue and becoming a purple state. Professor Dr. Hank Edmonson, spoke with WGXA News about [families on the campaign trail](#). And Professor Dr. Scott E. Buchanan, new chair of the Department of Government and Sociology, spoke to WGXA News about the

[Electoral College.](#)

On election night, three faculty helped the media sort through incoming results.

Sanders provided legal context for viewers at WGXA News. Buchanan was on Zoom, giving political commentary for WRBL News Channel 3, a CBS affiliate in Columbus. And Assistant Professor W. Clif Wilkinson Jr. answered questions via Zoom for 13WMAZ, a CBS affiliate in Macon. Wilkinson has been a guest expert at that station for years. An average of 37,000 households watch the 6 p.m. newscast on a nightly basis, according to 13WMAZ News Director Lorra Lynch Jones.



W. Clif Wilkinson in past election coverage at 13WMAZ in Macon.

In the election aftermath—Sanders gave numerous interviews to media outlets. This included two articles in Norway’s largest newspaper, VG (Verdens Gang). Norwegian reporter Nora Thorp Bjørnstad came to campus to interview Sanders about the [Georgia recount](#) and how [partisanship in Congress](#) could affect President-Elect Joe Biden’s ability to enact his legislative agenda.

Sanders also spoke to 13WMAZ about legal challenges and [what a recount would look like](#) in Georgia. She was interviewed at WGXA News on [poll workers](#), the [state’s political leanings](#) and [what’s next](#) in the election. WGXA News Director Mallory Huff wrote to Sanders after election-night coverage: “Claire—you did fantastic! Your passion and knowledge for politics certainly came out in your interview, and you were a natural!” Executive Producer Alexa Denagall also wrote, saying “Your political analysis of the election provided a great explainer for our viewers.”

“This was my first time conducting a live interview on television, which was an exciting yet nerve-wracking experience,” Sanders said. “The frequency of the interviews definitely contributed to my professional growth. These interviews allowed me to take my experience in election law and administration and share it outside the comfort zone of my classroom.”

Students got involved, as well. Senior Michael Haug, co-founder and president of the newly-formed GC Political Society, was interviewed by two news organizations: [13WMAZ](#) and [WABE 90.1](#) radio in Atlanta about modeling polite political discourse.

Most recently, Buchanan was interviewed by WGXA24 about [election fatigue](#). That story re-aired on [Channel 9 ABC News](#) in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Other media requests continued to roll in weeks after the election from WGXA News, asking for clarification on the title 'president-elect,' and 13WMAZ on [Republican party feuds](#). Voice of America's Los Angeles bureau did a piece about [demographic changes](#) in Georgia.



Dr. Scott Buchanan on election night for WRBL3 in Columbus.

The media blitz wasn't without challenges. This year's election muddle made it difficult to predict results in many states as votes were counted. Buchanan also noticed "how almost all national media outlets gave up any pretense of objectivity" this year. Locally, he said, media outlets showed more impartiality, but their reporters are usually new "and lack broad historical knowledge in terms of the questions they ask."

Faculty were able to provide these invaluable lessons from history. "Without historical context," Buchanan said, "one is like a rudderless ship at sea. Lack of historical knowledge leads to false assumptions."

History proves the rancor and ruckus of this year's election is not unusual. Buchanan pointed to 1824 as one of the most controversial elections in history. At first, Andrew Jackson won more electoral votes and the popular majority. But the House of Representatives ultimately made John Quincy Adams president by awarding him more electoral votes. Like President Donald Trump, he said, Jackson was an outsider "who frightened the Washington power brokers."

Clark raised parallels between 2020 and 1968, a "tumultuous election year with unusually high levels of cultural conflict." That year witnessed riots and a shift in support among voter groups too, he said. Sanders noted similar themes between this election and the year 2000, when Democratic candidate Al Gore challenged voting results.

This year, "the American electorate seemed to dig deeper into their partisan trenches," Sanders said. Georgia witnessed increasing party competition, as well, causing it to become a new battleground state. To alleviate political tension, Sanders called for continued belief in the "democratic consensus" and a "willingness to proceed democratically, even if one's party or candidate did not win."

Buchanan agreed, saying “people are prone to exaggerate the historical significance of our own moment.” The U.S. Constitution has withstood tests and survived, since its ratification in 1789. So, he hopes everyone will “have faith in the process.”

Being available for media appearances is one way faculty can help secure that faith and a peaceful future—while also emphasizing the importance Georgia College places on public service and critical thinking.


“

I hope the analysis we provided helped others understand the election process, and I hope students will become interested in politics by seeing the passion our department has for political discourse.

- Claire Sanders

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Congratulations Class of 2020

Class of 2020: SGA Chief of Staff Receives President Award

[College of Business](#) : Monday November 23, 2020

What first sparked your interest in SGA?

I knew I wanted to do something more on this campus but I wasn't really sure what that would look like. I was in a weird place in my college career right before joining SGA - I had just made a drastic change in majors and I wasn't really sure what my next move was. I was just randomly checking my email one day when I saw an email blast saying that SGA had a couple vacant senate seats and they were taking applications. I didn't know much about SGA at Georgia College and what they did, but I thought that this opportunity could be what I needed to refocus me and point me in my next direction. So without another thought, I applied.

Have you taken part in any other groups on campus during your college tenure? If so, which ones and why?

Other than SGA, the majority of my campus involvement has been with my sorority, Delta Gamma, and in the Panhellenic community. I joined DG my freshman year and was drawn to the opportunities they provide their members. There are just under forty officer positions in the chapter, and everyone is encouraged to run. I ran

for my first position my first year in DG and have held a position every year since (Director of Chapter Archives, Director of Public Relations, Director of Recruitment Records, and I'm currently finishing up my term as VP: Finance).

What is your proudest moment at Georgia College, and can you describe the events that led to that moment?

My proudest moment at Georgia College was receiving the Student Government Association's President Award. I was finishing up my term as Chief of Staff in SGA and because we were all online, it was looking a little different. I was proud of what I was able to get done but also feeling disappointed because I knew it was my last position in SGA

since I would be graduating the following semester and there was so much more I wanted to do. Typically the SGA awards are announced at the end of year banquet, but due to the pandemic, they were all announced on social media. When the President's Award was announced and it was me, I felt so incredibly honored. I had joined SGA just over a year prior and yet I was able to accomplish so much in my time. It meant the world to me that my peers were proud of what I had done and Amelia Lord, the president at the time, who I had worked closest with, also was proud of my work.

What are your plans after college?

I have not quite solidified my plans for after graduation yet, but I am so excited for the next chapter. I am currently interviewing for positions at several third party logistics companies and I'm looking forward to seeing how those pan out and where I end up.

What is the single, most important event that led to your interest in Management?

As I mentioned earlier, I had a drastic change in majors my junior year. I had just



Jessica Easum

been accepted into the nursing cohort so I should've been overjoyed but deep down I knew that wasn't where I was meant to be. After weeks of going back and forth, I knew that I was better suited to a career in the business field. Even then I wasn't sure exactly what that entailed, so I blindly just switched to being a Marketing major. My first semester of business classes I was taking a marketing class and also a management class, and some general business electives. Though I enjoyed all my classes and knew I was headed in the right direction, I fell in love with my management class. I was taking Principles of Management with Dr. Beadles. I had been warned he was a hard professor so I came in nervous, but I ended up looking forward to the class every week. I learned so much about management but also just life in general and what it means to be a leader. That same semester, I decided where I really needed to be was in the Management major.

What is the importance of a Management major in today's world?

I believe Management is such an important field that can sometimes be overlooked just because of its broad nature. One of the ideas that we have talked about in a few of my classes over the past couple years is the belief that managers and leaders are not synonymous. Managers are made while leaders are born. While I believe there is some truth to this, it raises the question: what happens if a natural born leader never receives any training or education in management? You get an ineffective leader. To me, that's why Management is such a critical field to study. A team's performance has everything to do with who they're led by.

Where do you hope to go next?

I hope to settle down with a company I love and work my way up. I want to stay in Georgia for at least a couple years, but after that I would love to move around if my job gives me the freedom to.

What did you find most surprising about Georgia College?

I was most surprised by the opportunities here at Georgia College. It's a smaller school so I thought that would mean less opportunities, but it's been quite the opposite. If you go looking, there is a place for everyone to grow and thrive on this campus. The sense of community at Georgia College is unreal. We are all so connected and yet there is a place for every single person to explore their interests and pursue their goals.

What was your favorite part of attending Georgia College and how do you think that might influence your future?

My favorite part of attending Georgia College was the relationships I've been able to form on this campus. As I've said, the community of students is so uniquely tight knit and I hope to carry these friendships with me for years to come. Through my

time with Panhellenic and SGA, I've been able to grow close to staff members who gave me incredible guidance and advice the past few years. The same goes academically. I have professors such as Dr. Karl Manrodt who I have taken several classes with now who have helped me grow so much and equipped me with the tools to succeed past graduation. These relationships will undoubtedly influence my future for the better because I know even after I graduate I can count on these people for advice, recommendations, and anything else that comes up.

Finally, what advice would you give to incoming students at Georgia College?

My advice for incoming Georgia College students is to soak up every single minute. Don't feel like you have to have it all figured out on day one. I surely didn't and I'm still graduating! I want all the incoming students to take advantage of everything Georgia College offers and make the best out of their time here. There is so much to learn here at Georgia College and I hope all of them take this opportunity to grow and become the best versions of themselves.

News Stories Posted Monday November 30, 2020



Class of 2020: Theatre major finds vision and voice through collaboration, community

Theatre & Dance, Department of: Monday November 30, 2020

Stephanie Perez-Telon

What is your major, and where is your hometown?

My major is theatre with a double minor on French and Psychology. I had two hometowns which are San Juan, Puerto Rico which is where I was born and resided for 13 years, and Buford, Georgia which is the place where I finally felt like I found a home when I moved to Georgia.

What inspired you to become a theatre major?

I started theatre in my sophomore year of high school and I really just fell in love with it, but I think what really drew me to becoming a theatre major was auditioning for the new student scholarship theatre audition at Georgia College. When I

auditioned three years ago, I wasn't expecting to get anything because I really didn't believe that I had what it took to do anything with theatre after high school, so I was just auditioning for fun, which is why I was so shocked when I received an email from Dr. Karen Berman, our theater department chair, a few days later, telling me that she would love to work with me and offering me a theatre scholarship. I stood stunned for a few minutes, just staring at her email because I couldn't quite believe that a complete stranger who watched me perform for about a minute at an audition with so many talented people, saw in me a potential that I didn't even see in myself. It made me want to take a chance to try out the theatre major and I am glad I did.

What skills do you feel like you've honed during your time as a theatre major that will help you in other areas of life?

My theatre major has helped honed my artistic skills. I feel like I have grown so much as an artist thanks to our amazing theatre department. Other important skills that I feel like I've honed during my time as a theatre major are my communication and collaboration skills. I am a highly introverted person, so I often had trouble speaking up my mind and communicating well with others. Working on multiple productions and collaborating with so many different people has taught me to speak up for myself and not be afraid to share my ideas and adapt to different situations.

What has been your experience with Alpha Psi Omega, the national honors society for collegiate theatre?

In the short time that I have been part of APO, it has been great being able to support our wonderful theatre community and have a family that truly encourages you and supports your work.

Can you tell us about your involvement with Academic Outreach?



Perez-Telon in "Looking Through the Lens: Immigrants and Their Stories"

I was honored to be part of this amazing education program that teaches science to pre-k through high school students through fun, engaging activities. The program is facilitated by GC students and it does after school programs, classroom visitations, and fun field trips. My role in Academic Outreach was to organize and prepare materials for the program, assist the instructor and sometimes I even got to teach science to the students. So, it was a really fun and rewarding experience.

You're also a Student Ambassador. Can you tell us more about this experience?

My favorite part of being an Ambassador was working on tour and getting to talk with potential students and their parents.



Perez-Telon, right, in "The Nutcracker." This image was taken before the COVID-19 pandemic.

When you think back on your time here at GC, what are some of the lessons you have learned along the way, and what advice would you impart to our incoming freshmen?

Some of my best experiences that I have during my time at GC were the ones that involved me getting out of my comfort zone. So, the best advice that I can offer to the underclassmen is: don't be afraid to try new things, even if they're out of your comfort zone because seeking new experiences that makes you uncomfortable is

the only way you can evolve and grow as a student and as a person.

Do you have a favorite professor, and a favorite course you've taken at GC?

My favorite professor is Dr. Amy Pinney. I took acting III, directing and solo performance courses with her and those were some of my favorites courses. She is actually, currently, my capstone mentor.

What is your favorite spot on campus?

Outside of Russell Auditorium. If you stand in the middle of the front of Russell Auditorium and talk, your voice echoes, and I just love that.

What are your plans after graduation in December?

I want to become a drama therapist as well as a playwright, so my plan upon graduation is working to pay my way to grad school.