

Front Page News Story Archive

February 2022



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News Stories Posted Wednesday February 2, 2022



Dr. Brooke Conaway earns Felton Jenkins Jr. Hall of Fame Faculty Award

[Economics & Finance, Department of](#) : Wednesday February 2, 2022

Innovative. Tough. Approachable. Passionate.

In her nomination, these were the words students and colleagues used to describe Dr. Brooke Conaway, associate professor of economics, and 2022 recipient of the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents Felton Jenkins Jr. Hall of Fame Faculty Award.

Conaway is the fourth Georgia College professor in five years and the second in her department to earn this award. At Georgia College for the last 12 years, she also received the Georgia College Excellence in Teaching Award in 2021.

“Teaching is my favorite thing, but the interaction you get with students, the lightbulb moments—that’s wonderful,” she said. “Working with amazing students

and seeing them do something I don't think I could've done at their age, that's the best part of the job."

She doesn't stop at dedication to her profession. Conaway is working to reshape the typical perception of the field of economics, one student at a time.

Dr. Chris Clark, professor of economics and colleague of Conaway for the last 10 years, said those working in the field of economics are typically angry "jerks," and men.

"The fact that economics is viewed as a tough field, where faculty and professors are not always interested in engaging students, she differentiates us in that way," he said. "And women are not common in economics, so to have a woman in the department that's not only in the field, but arguably the best teacher in the state is impressive."

"It means a lot to us to have somebody who can signal to everybody else that we are interested in teaching, and you can be a woman and come into the field of economics and get a Ph.D.," Clark said.

Conaway challenged that view of economics in her former student Julia Fox, '16. She previously considered economics as something she hated, but after attending Conaway's classes, Fox went on to minor in economics and uses what she learned in her career.

"I came in to her class with a lot of strong beliefs as an 18-year-old," Fox said. "She challenged those in a way that didn't make me feel bad. But she made me think critically about preconceived notions I had, and how to make better policy."

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It was also important to me to see a young, vibrant woman in economics," she said. "It can appear as a really inaccessible field, and she made it seem accessible.

- Julia Fox, '16

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Dr. Brooke Conaway speaks at December 2021 Commencement.

"It was also important to me to see a young, vibrant woman in economics," she said. "It can appear as a really inaccessible field, and she made it seem accessible."

Her students' anecdotes are supported by the numbers too. According to her nomination packet, Georgia College has increased its percentage of women earning undergraduate degrees in economics by five-to-10 points above the national average in the last three years.

But to earn this prestigious award, Conaway has reached beyond transforming student views of economics. She's changed their lives.

"I enjoyed the way Dr. Conaway seemed to value robust, in-class, back and forth with students," said David Hale, '20, a former student of Conaway. "She was not simply a 'lecture and go home' professor. One got the sense that she truly cherished educating young minds, and viewed those minds as capable of helping her grow, as well."

Another student and Conaway's current Supplemental Instructor (SI), junior economics and finance double major Matthew Meyer credits his path to Conaway.

"She makes me feel like I'm a part of the process, and I don't feel left out. It really makes me feel special," he said. "Even when I'm graduated, 50 years down the road, I will always remember Dr. Conaway as my favorite professor. She's the reason I got into doing what I love and found my passion."

But to Conaway, far from changing the path of students' lives, she just wants to be the best professor she can be.

"The fact that my research surrounds teaching is not an accident, because teaching is what I love best," Conaway said. "I guess I've just been trying to get better at it over the years. It's stuff I would've done anyway, not to win awards, but what I wanted to do to be a better professor."



Dr. Brooke Conaway innovates away from a "chalk and talk" style of teaching.

News Stories Posted Tuesday February 8, 2022



Women's Leadership Conference embraces social change leadership model

[Leadership Programs](#) : Tuesday February 8, 2022

The Women's Leadership Conference is March 25, 2022, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the Peabody Auditorium at Georgia College. The theme is "Navigating the Road to Resiliency." It's open to alumni, students, faculty, staff and members of the Middle Georgia community.

"We're focusing on the 'navigating' part of the theme, so people will walk away from this conference having concrete ideas of something they can implement tomorrow, in a week, or next year," said Ashley Copeland, assistant director of Leadership Programs and conference co-coordinator. "They will also continue building on these ideas and tapping into the network that they've made from this conference."

The winning theme was a collective effort from the Conference Steering Committee with representatives from Georgia College, Milledgeville and Macon.

As a hybrid model—offered in person and virtually, this year's conference could capture more participants. The annual conference averages just over 100 participants.

"If participants can't make it in person, they still have an option to engage with the conference, build networks and relationships," Copeland said.

The Women's Leadership Conference is currently in the planning phase, and the search for speakers is on.

"If alumni who are living in New York, or wherever, want to participate as a session presenter, having the virtual track gives us the capability to make it happen," said Dr. Jennifer Graham, director of the Women's Center and co-coordinator of the conference.

The Women's Leadership Conference will begin with discussions on leading change.



Ashley Copeland



Dr. Jennifer Graham



A speaker leads a breakout session as part of the Women's Leadership Conference.

“That's because our conference is rooted in the social change model of leadership theory,” Graham said.

Breakout sessions will last 50 minutes. They will include an interactive workshop, a presenter panel with discussion or 15-minute “Ted Talk” presentations.

“The breakout sessions give attendees an opportunity to dive a bit deeper into the concepts,” Graham said. “We ask presenters to bring something tangible with their presentation, so participants can walk away with something they can immediately apply to their job, school or life.”

“The conference also provides a unique opportunity for people to network and build cross-industry and generational relationships.” Copeland said.



A Women's Leadership Conference participant engages with the group.

Copeland and Graham want presenters to use the social change model of leadership as their guiding theory. In turn, they hope participants will learn about this model with an emphasis on individual and social values, interpersonal relationships, group processes and community.

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“That's very much in the spirit of what we hope people take away from the conference is collaboration, networking, building relationships with people who are different from themselves and who do different things. That’s important, because when we come together, we can do amazing things.”

- Ashley Copeland

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“A real tangible concept that we want people to leave with is having increased knowledge of how to lead, while realizing how their positionality and identity impact their leadership,” Graham said. “We’re all working in diverse communities and with individuals of varying identities, backgrounds and experiences—that’s important. And, it's also useful for our students, as they go into the working world.”

The first Women's Leadership Conference was primarily for students. It was held in the early 2000s and hosted by the Women's Center, when Graham worked alone to put it on. However, due to lack of funds, she was unable to host it again until four years ago.

When Graham realized there wasn't another Women's Leadership Conference in middle Georgia, she and Copeland discussed how they could make it happen, while filling a gap in the community.

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“A real tangible concept that we want people to leave with is having increased knowledge of how to lead, while realizing how their positionality and identity impact their leadership. We're all working in diverse communities and with individuals of varying identities, backgrounds and experiences—that's important. And, it's also useful for our students, as they go into the working world.”

- Dr. Jennifer Graham

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“We want students to continue attending this conference to get that professional experience,” Copeland said. “And to show them that our university has a mission of leadership and engaging for the public good.”

“With the road to resiliency, we hope that participants will leave with tangible skills in how to build resiliency in their own lives,” Graham said. “What does that look like? It's self-awareness in leadership, as well as in those small moments with things you can do to refill your own bucket, like overcoming burnout or charting new paths.”

The conference is the result of collaborative planning between four Georgia College offices—the Women's Center, Leadership Programs, University Advancement and the College of Business—as well as community members.

“That's very much in the spirit of what we hope people take away from the conference is collaboration, networking, building relationships with people who are different from themselves and who do different things,” Copeland said. “That's important, because when we come together, we can do amazing things.”

Learn more about the Women's Leadership Conference including [how to submit a proposal or register for the conference](#).



True Valentines—three married couples have one thing in common—Georgia College

[Alumni](#) : Tuesday February 8, 2022

Robert “Rob” Abbott, ’19 and Raasha Gutierrez Abbott, ’20, met their junior year at Georgia College in September 2018. Although they majored in different fields and have different personality traits, they complement each other. Raasha’s major was art and Rob’s literature. However, they were both artists with similar creative sensibilities and passions. So much so, the couple published in the same issue of “The Peacock’s Feet.”



(Left) Raasha Gutierrez Abbott, ’20 and Rob Abbott, ’19, at Georgia College. (Center) Fellow alumni in the Abbott’s wedding party included: Raasha’s sisters who are GC students—Nadya and Saira Gutierrez. The bridal party included: Jenna Brunson, ’20, Shelby Cannon, ’19 and Will Henry, ’20. Attending the wedding were: Harley Blackwelder, ’19, Lauren Butera, ’20 and Heather Cerny, ’19. (Right) Rob and Raasha Gutierrez Abbott

Raasha’s and Rob’s personality qualities drew them together at Georgia College.

“I loved that she was an artist like me, but also unlike me,” Rob said. “Raasha works mostly in visual and plastic arts— especially ceramics and photography—

whereas I am a poet, musician and songwriter,” Rob said. “I also love the immediate energy and dynamics she brings to a room and so willingly and completely pours into people, since I’m quite introverted.”

“Rob was so quiet and reserved that I wanted to get to know him more,” Raasha said. “I quickly learned how talented he was. He’s a deep thinker who’s passionate about literature, philosophy and music. As a visual artist, I was so drawn to that, because I also have to think creatively, passionately and deeply. We understand each other on that level so well and how important it is to support each other in our passions as we pursue our crafts.”

Building a relationship at Georgia College was unique, the couple feels.

“We loved being so close together—Raasha lived just five minutes off campus, and I lived in Bell Hall,” Rob said. “We participated in many different activities around Milledgeville as members of Hydrolove and Baptist Collegiate Ministries, where we met many close friends.”

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“Rob was so quiet and reserved that I wanted to get to know him more. I quickly learned how talented he was. He’s a deep thinker who’s passionate about literature, philosophy and music. As a visual artist, I was so drawn to that, because I also have to think creatively, passionately and deeply. We understand each other on that level so well and how important it is to support each other in our passions as we pursue our crafts.”

- Raasha Abbott

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They also spent much time together on Front Campus, at Sunset Fields and the Greenway. Their favorite memory at Georgia College was spending their one-year anniversary at Sunset Fields.

“We celebrated with a picnic with homemade cider and vegan soup,” Rob said, “and watched one of the most extraordinary and memorable sunsets either of us have ever seen.”

The couple married Nov. 14, 2021, in North Carolina, with 10 to 15 Bobcats in attendance.

The Abbotts stay busy in their professional lives. After teaching middle and high school for two years, Rob began a master's program in literary studies at Georgia State University (GSU). He also works at GSU's Writing Studio as a writing tutor.

Raasha was a COVID-19 tester and now works at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta as a behavioral and mental health tech. She hopes to pursue a graduate program in art therapy.

"This Valentine's Day is particularly special to us, since it's our first Valentine's Day as a married couple," Rob said. "And it's our three-month anniversary, as well. It's also our first Valentine's Day living in Atlanta—we moved here last summer."

Kaitlin Forbes Card, '17, and Brett Card, '15, met at Georgia College in March 2014 when a friend introduced them on a double date.

"I was hanging out with my friend, who said, 'I'm going to a formal, and this girl's friend needs a date,'" Brett said. "Originally, I said, 'No, I need to go back home that weekend.'"

Brett became curious who this girl was, so he asked his friend.

"As it turned out, we had Intro to Psychology together that semester," Brett said. "I had a bit of a crush on her. So, I told my friend, 'Absolutely, I'm going to the formal.'"



(Left) Kaitlin and Brett Card at Georgia College. (Center) Kaitlin and Brett Card's wedding party photo included: Georgia Abdallah, '17, Jonathan Brantley, '16, Gabrielle Williams Turner, '17, Nicole Justice Waldron, '17 and Callie Reynolds Whigham, '17. (Right) Kaitlin, Brett and Emma Card

GC's small campus made it easy for Kaitlin and Brett to connect.

"When we first met, we were always running into each other on campus and in between classes," Kaitlin said. "We would go to the Max quickly or just see each other in the library."

Their favorite memories included going to formals and social gatherings. Kaitlin was in Zeta Tau Alpha Sorority and Brett was in Kappa Alpha Order Fraternity.

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“When we first met, we were always running into each other on campus and in between classes. We would go to the Max quickly or just see each other in the library.”

- Kaitlin Card

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“Doing that kind of stuff together was always fun,” Brett said. “But, we'd also meet and go downtown for lunch or dinner. Some days we'd get sushi at Kuroshima or a drink or two at the Velvet Elvis. It was just nice to have campus close to downtown.”

Approximately 30 Bobcats attended their wedding, which was held November of 2018. Many of Kaitlin's bridesmaids are Georgia College alumnae, whom she met in the education cohort.

Today, she teaches seventh grade English.

Brett was a physics major at Georgia College and is now an engineer in a manufacturing facility.

For Valentine's Day, the Cards are planning to include their baby daughter, Emma, in the celebration.

“With the holidays, we haven't been able to go out or do anything,” Kaitlin said. “We're looking forward to just being at home with her. I think this will make it a bit more special.”

Allison Gordon Cornay, '14, and TJ Cornay, '13, met in December 2018—after they graduated from Georgia College. Although the couple met online, they recognized each other from when they were students.



(Left) TJ and Allison Gordon Cornay (Center) L to R: Samantha Hart, '14, Christina Rogers

Hillis, '12, Allison Gordon Cornay, '14, and Emily Evett, '13. (Right) L to R: Stephen Hundley, '13, Ward Bowles, Andrew Whittaker, '12, (back), Powell Cobb, '13, (front), TJ Cornay, '13, Kevin Brewer, Andrew Sickafoose and Ray Cornay, '11.

"Her first message to me was 'Bobcats on top,'" TJ said. "After investigating our past, we discovered we lived on the same street in Milledgeville. We also attended the same Rocky Horror Picture Show."

The more Allison and TJ delved into their student experiences, the more they realized they were circling around each other during that time frame, yet never met.

"I could've sworn up and down that I knew him," Allison said. "We connected about that, and then realized we had lots of shared stories."

Georgia College holds a unique place in their heart. It became the fabric that drew them to each other.

"The familiarity and immediate conversations we had—most of which revolved around our time at Georgia College—is what connected us initially," Allison said. "I think having that commonality without knowing each other just brought us a sense of ease."

"I think it was interesting and unique to hear about a different student experience than I had," TJ said. "Allison was in the early childhood teaching cohort and had very different schedules and academics than I had as an economics major."

Some of Allison's favorite memories included attending Tent City during Homecoming and earlier, participating in Greek life as a student where she was a member of Delta Zeta Sorority.

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"It was such a formative time in our lives that we've been able to maintain the friendships we made as students. It's really been fun, informative and important for us. We've been able to build something that lasts."

- TJ Cornay

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"I really enjoyed serving as a student ambassador and on SGA," TJ said. "I also liked sitting on the rocking chairs on Bell Hall's front porch, catching up with classmates. Just being able to hang out there and enjoy the sights and sounds of the college was something I remember fondly."

The couple also built genuine connections with other students.

“It was such a formative time in our lives that we’ve been able to maintain the friendships we made as students,” TJ said. “It’s really been fun, informative and important for us. We’ve been able to build something that lasts.”

The couple married October 2021 in Atlanta and were surrounded by approximately 25 GC alumni.

Allison has been teaching third grade for seven years. And TJ plans events for nonprofit organizations.

Although TJ will be out of the country on business for Valentine’s Day, the couple plans to celebrate with a nice, post-Valentine’s Day dinner.

“This Valentine’s Day will be our first as a married couple,” TJ said. “That’s hard to top for sure.”



A welcoming place for inclusivity, compassion and growth

Cultural Center : Tuesday February 8, 2022

The Cultural Center's doors are open to all students, especially underrepresented individuals, to provide support during their time at Georgia College. Students who enter will learn cultural competence and celebrate the identities of others while building a more inclusive community.

"We aim to provide a space where students can find resources, study, have conscious conversations, feel a sense of belonging and build meaningful relationships," said Nadirah Ross Mayweather, '08, '10, director of the Cultural Center.

Many students pass through the doors every day, however the number varies depending on what's taking place. There may be 30 students attending a LIFE (Leaders Igniting the Fundamentals of Excellence) meeting or Tupperware Tuesday social. Or there might be up to 10 students studying or simply hanging out in the center's multipurpose spaces. Even more students attend movie nights.



Nadirah Mayweather

Whatever brings them to the center, located on the first floor of Blackbridge Hall, Mayweather is ready to assist in making them feel comfortable in that space, as they grow to become successful as students and in their personal lives.[youtube embedcode="cbj8hIN85pc" style="fullwidth"]Explore the Cultural Center.[/youtube]

Another way the Cultural Center broadens the student experience is by providing cultural heritage programming through campus and community collaborations like Black History Month.

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“I’m thankful to have the opportunity to work with talented, intellectual, passionate and creative students. It fills a happy place in my soul to build relationships with students in hopes that my work will make a positive impact in their lives.”

- Nadirah Mayweather

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“The focus of Black History Month this year is about collaborating and honoring the heritage we have close to home,” Mayweather said. “The Cultural Center is excited this year to partner with offices, groups, students and individuals off campus to celebrate the beautiful heritage of those who have gone before us and the bright future of those paving the way for generations to come.”

Events include a series of lunch seminars for students in Georgia College’s LIFE Mentorship Program and MALE (Mentoring African Americans for Leadership and Education) Connection programs and a Social Justice Soul Food Sunday to explore activism and discuss justice issues.

The Cultural Center also supports the efforts through the Black Student Alliance and the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Fraternity and Sorority Life, as they celebrate and raise awareness around Black History Month.

“Towards the end of the month, we will highlight and support the Black-owned businesses and their leaders in our community,” Mayweather said.

Mayweather also serves as co-chair for the Martin Luther King Jr. Planning Committee at Georgia College. She and staff from the Office of Inclusive Excellence and the Cultural Center, along with campus friends and partners collaborate each year to plan events to honor Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“We wanted to honor the life and legacy of Dr. King,” Mayweather said. “We

planned the King Commemoration Ceremony on Front Campus, hosted movie nights presenting films that provided insight into his life, such as “Selma,” and collaborated with the GIVE Center to have a service Saturday opportunity for students.”

Georgia College also participated in a virtual global summit held during Martin Luther King Jr. Day through the King Center in Atlanta.

Around 40 individuals participated in the King Commemoration Ceremony on Front Campus. And, approximately 20 students and staff engaged in service and reflection by implementing King’s philosophies in their own lives by volunteering at the Brave Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center in Gray, Georgia and the Collins P. Lee Center in Hardwick, Georgia.



Nadirah Mayweather speaks with GC students at the Cultural Center.



The singing group "Voices of Joy" sang "Lift Every Voice and Sing" during the Martin Luther King Jr. celebration on Front Campus.

Prior to becoming the director of the Cultural Center, Mayweather had many mentors and friends with the Georgia College staff.

"I know how powerful it was to know I had people who deeply cared about my success, progress and development," she said. "It brings my heart joy to be able to provide the same support to students."

Mayweather hopes that students who pass through Blackridge Hall's doors feel loved and know they matter and, in turn, show empathy and understanding to others. She wishes for them to thrive in their academics, engagement opportunities and challenges they will face. At the Cultural Center, they can test and refine their critical thinking skills and thought patterns.

"The best growth happens when we are stretched and pushed beyond what we think our capacity is," Mayweather said.

She uses the analogy of a seed for students to become the best versions of themselves.

"If the particles in a seed only grow inside—the shell that they're initially wrapped in—roots would never sprout, leaves would never form and blossoms would never bloom," Mayweather said. "A seed must dare to go beyond and reach for the sun,

water and earth.”

“It’s the same with us,” she said. “Students need to engage in events, opportunities and resources offered through the Cultural Center, so that they can step outside of their comfort zones and view themselves and others through clearer lenses.”

Mayweather wants all students to feel a sense of belonging, celebrated and embraced by campus during their time at Georgia College.

“I’m thankful to have the opportunity to work with talented, intellectual, passionate and creative students,” Mayweather said. “It fills a happy place in my soul to build relationships with students in hopes that my work will make a positive impact in their lives.”

Mayweather welcomes alumni and friends to take part in Cultural Center events and programs by following Instagram @GC_Cultural_Center or by subscribing to the newsletter. To learn more, contact her at 478-445-8155 or nadirah.mayweather@gcsu.edu.

News Stories Posted Wednesday February 9, 2022



English major named Georgia College's Academic Representative

[English, Department of](#) : Wednesday February 9, 2022

Ellen Yeudall embodies what it means to be a stellar student. Her dedication, highest scholastic achievement and devotion to service was noticed by the University System of Georgia (USG) which identified Yeudall as Georgia College's 2022 Academic Recognition Day representative.

The senior English major has a concentration in literature and minor in theatre. Graduating in May with a 4.0 GPA, she's a member of the Honors College; non-fiction editor of Georgia College's literary magazine, "The Peacock's Feet;" and secretary of Eta Sigma Alpha, the student honors association. In addition to being a Spanish tutor, Yeudall's done several literary papers and won multiple honors, including the Rising Star Award from the Department of World Languages and Cultures and the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival award.

"Ellen has presented her research at the MURACE conference, served as dramaturg



Ellen Yeudall

for ‘The Revolutionists’ and crafted a dynamic senior thesis,” said Dr. Brian Newsome, director of the John E. Sallstrom Honors College. “I would add that Ellen is also a warm and giving individual. At Honors Convocation in the fall, for example, she came early to set up and stayed late to clean up. This spirit of generosity is a hallmark of GC students, and Ellen exemplifies this spirit at its best.”

Each year, USG asks each member institution to select an Academic Recognition Day representative—the graduating senior who best exemplifies outstanding academic achievement. To make this selection, a committee “examines not only GPA but also academic awards, evidence of scholarship or creativity and diversity of intellectual pursuits,” Newsome said.

Yeudall was a little overwhelmed to learn she’d been picked. She hadn’t told anyone she put her name forth to be considered.

The Evans, Georgia, native chose Georgia College because larger schools felt overpowering and smaller ones “a bit suffocating.” The campus was a perfect “in-between,” and Yeudall felt at home here. She’s been happy with her choice, which enabled her to make meaningful connections with professors and

peers.



Yeudall with GC President Cathy Cox.

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My experience at Georgia College has definitely helped me grow as a person. I’ve been able to take a diverse array of classes that allow me to understand the

world from new perspectives and still be able to fuel my creativity through my work.

- Ellen Yeudall

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“My experience at Georgia College has definitely helped me grow as a person,” Yeudall said. “I’ve been able to take a diverse array of classes that allow me to understand the world from new perspectives and still be able to fuel my creativity through my work.”

“Especially since the majority of my college experience has been during the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic,” she said, “I’m able to adapt to situations much better than I ever thought I’d be. I think it’s also made me more accepting, considerate and motivated among my friends, peers and the campus community.”

Yeudall has volunteered as a Spanish tutor in the Language Resource Center since freshman year. She helps students with homework, learning grammar structures, practicing conversation skills and prepping for presentations. She’s also been a member of the Honors College since freshman year and joined associations like Eta Sigma Alpha, the student honors association, and Alpha Psi Omega, the theatre fraternity.

Junior year, Yeudall dove deeper into research. She presented findings on “Chaucer’s Wife of Bath” at the university’s annual MURACE Research Conference. As dramaturg for theatre’s production of “The Revolutionists,” Yeudall investigated the French Revolution and Reign of Terror for character background information. In her “Jane Austen on Film” class, she adapted the author’s work into a modern screenplay.

Yeudall’s most challenging project was for her senior undergraduate thesis, “‘Don’t Tell Me What My Limits Are:’ The Representation of the Female Detective and Emotional Bodies in Chris Chibnall’s Broadchurch.”

“With the amazing guidance of Dr. Jennifer Flaherty, I used feminist and affect theory to research and explore the relationship between gender and emotion in the British crime series and its main detective characters. It was a rewarding experience being able to complete it and present my work to my fellow peers,” she said.

Yeudall will receive a letter of commendation from USG’s Chancellor, along with signed resolutions from the Georgia House of Representatives. She was honored, along with other academic reps, at a Board of Regents meeting and luncheon Feb. 8.

After graduation, Yeudall would like to take a year off before pursuing a masters. She hopes to find work that incorporates her analytical and creative sides—perhaps something in theatre, film or television.

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Thankfully, Georgia College and its English department have shown me my major and its skills can be applied in a vast range of fields. They’ve provided me with wonderful resources and professional connections that I have no doubt I will use.

- Yeudall

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News Stories Posted Thursday February 10, 2022



African American Alumni Council Executive Board compelled to serve

[Alumni](#) : Thursday February 10, 2022

Debra White Minor, '88, is president of the African American Alumni Council (AAAC). She's also a registered nurse assisting the elderly and disabled population to live safely in their home or community as long as possible.

Minor enjoys staying connected with Georgia College. She's accomplished quite a bit since serving as president since AAAC's inception in 2019.

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“AAAC will need everyone's help to accomplish these goals. We'd like alumni to participate in events, volunteer, encourage friends and family with children who will be entering college to consider Georgia College and donate to AAAC scholarships.”



“Simply put, I love to serve,” Minor said.

Through her leadership, Minor led her team to create scholarship funds, engage support of African American alumni, increase the membership base, develop a signature event: “A Night Under the Stars Gala,” offer a healthcare initiative, alumni picnic and virtual Bingo.

Minor and the Executive Council have also set AAAC’s goals for 2022. These include developing a strategic plan to create new scholarships while maintaining the integrity of existing scholarships, increasing alumni engagement, participating in the Office of Recruitment and Admissions outreach efforts and engaging more with different departments and student organizations, such as the Black Student Alliance, the Cultural Center and more.

“Our 2022 goals lead us to the fulfillment of the AAAC’s mission,” Minor said, “which is to foster pride and support among alumni and promote sustainable growth in the recruitment, retention and advancement of African American students.”

Minor delivers a call to action for GC alumni to collaborate towards achieving these milestones.

“AAAC will need everyone’s help to accomplish these goals,” she said. “We’d like alumni to participate in events, volunteer, encourage friends and family with children who will be entering college to consider Georgia College and donate to AAAC scholarships.”



(Left to right) Debra minor, president, AAAC and Dr. Kwanza Gardner, vice president, AAAC

Dr. Kwanza Oliver Gardner, '97, '99, is vice president of AAAC. She's also the program director for a child placement agency in Savannah—the only African American, female-owned child placement agency in the Southeast.

Gardner believes she'll enjoy learning how to support Georgia College in its efforts to increase the African American presence on campus.

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“Georgia College is my foundation. The education I received—a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Public Administration—has enabled me to lead a successful and prosperous career. I truly believe if more African American students were exposed to older, professionals who matriculated through Georgia College, they might be compelled to attend.”

- Dr. Kwanza Gardner

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“I am willing to partner closely with our president and aid her endeavor to meet and exceed the goals for 2022,” she said.

Gardner is a firm believer that to know where you're going, you have to know where you came from. She hopes to mentor African American high school students.

“Georgia College is my foundation,” she said. “The education I received—a Bachelor of Business Administration and a Master of Public Administration—has enabled me to lead a successful and prosperous career. I truly believe if more African American students were exposed to older, professionals who matriculated through Georgia College, they might be compelled to attend.”



(Left to right) Felicia Cummings, secretary, AAAC; Jemeria Cummings, co-event coordinator, AAAC and Timberly Spikes, co-event coordinator, AAAC

Felicia Cummings, '02, is secretary of AAAC. She runs her own public relations company—Cummings League Marketing & Design Firm.

Cummings looks forward to giving back to a university that provided the foundation for her achievements and helped shape her into the community-oriented and goal-setting professional she is today.

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“Since Georgia College notified me that I was the recipient of the inaugural 'Humanitarian of the Year Award' for the College of Arts and Sciences, I realized my alma mater saw the work I did for my community and felt I was a great representative of what a Georgia College graduate can accomplish. I want to be a part of a college organization that encourages other young African American students to do more for their community, and the AAAC felt like a perfect fit for me.”

- Felicia Cummings

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“Since Georgia College notified me that I was the recipient of the inaugural 'Humanitarian of the Year Award' for the College of Arts and Sciences, I realized my

alma mater saw the work I did for my community and felt I was a great representative of what a Georgia College graduate can accomplish,” Cummings said. “I want to be a part of a college organization that encourages other young African American students to do more for their community, and the AAAC felt like a perfect fit for me.”

Her main objective will be to help AAAC achieve its goals by using her public relations skills to spread the word in the community about the organization. Cummings will encourage others to join through promotional videos, social media and other creative marketing tools.

She feels that Georgia College offers a wide array of educational programs to automatically bring in a diverse student population.

“You are introduced to other cultures just by being a part of the Georgia College community,” Cummings said. “It’s that camaraderie aspect of the educational institution that hooked me from day one and still exists for me today. You are not just a number or a statistic at Georgia College; you are a member of a large family. It only seems right to give back to the university that gave so much to me.”

Timberly Spikes, '21, co-event coordinator of AAAC, is in the Leadership Development Program at GEICO Insurance Company. She also works as a general assignment writer for The Baldwin Bulletin. Once Spikes obtains her master’s degree, she plans to work in the media industry.

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“We want to create more events to allow everyone to safely reconnect with their fellow alumni. We hope to help AAAC meet its 2022 goals by organizing successful get togethers as a way to honor the legacy of those who paved the way for us.”

- Timberly Spikes

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She looks forward to using her creativity to bring alumni closer together through AAAC events.

“We want to create more events to allow everyone to safely reconnect with their fellow alumni,” Spikes said. “We hope to help AAAC meet its 2022 goals by organizing successful get togethers as a way to honor the legacy of those who paved the way for us.”

Spikes is grateful for her Georgia College experience. The university is close to

home for her, so she loved having the option of staying connected to her family while earning her degree.

“When I came back to Georgia College as an alumna, I wanted to work to ensure I left the campus being a more inclusive place than when I started,” Spikes said. “Georgia College is important to me, because it’s in my hometown and makes a tremendous impact on my community.”

Jemeria Smith Cummings, '18, co-event coordinator of AAAC, is the owner and CEO of Building Readers First LLC—a tutoring company in Milledgeville, Georgia. She is also a children’s book author.

Cummings has served as co-event coordinator for nearly a year.

“I would like to continue creating events to bring AAAC together with the community,” she said. “I also want to create positive partnerships with other affinity groups on campus.”

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“It’s important to host AAAC events to bring light to the sacrifices and accomplishments for those who have passed through Georgia College and students. I want to bridge the gap for future generations.”

- Jemeria Cummings

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Cummings’ is tasked with bringing awareness to the educational needs of African American students and individuals who are of other diverse backgrounds. She also knows the value of scholarships.

“I like that Georgia College allows for students of different socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnic groups to gain scholarships that will help them to achieve higher education,” Cummings said.

She feels it’s imperative that AAAC hosts events to honor diverse generations.

“It’s important to host AAAC events to bring light to the sacrifices and accomplishments for those who have passed through Georgia College and students,” Cummings said. “I want to bridge the gap for future generations.”

Learn how you can contribute to the AAAC Giving Project “The Promises We Keep,” offering scholarships to African American students. Visit:
<https://crowdthunder.gcsu.edu/project/30071>.



National Pan-Hellenic Council Plaza is a beacon for education and change

[Fraternity & Sorority Life](#) : Thursday February 10, 2022

The creation of the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC) Historical Preservation Plaza at Georgia College, honoring the nine historically African American international fraternities and sororities—the “Divine Nine” stemmed from Fraternity and Sorority Life looking into honoring the heritage of these organizations on campus.



One of the many markers displayed at the NPHC Historical Preservation Plaza at Georgia College.

The collective efforts of Stacey Milner, '11, '15, director of Fraternity and Sorority Life, African American Alumni Council (AAAC) founding members, donors, students and staff contributed to its existence.

“What students and alumni wanted was something to really connect them to the institution,” Milner said. “We noticed other campuses have plots and monuments, so we wanted to have something similar at Georgia College.”

She researched institutions comparable to Georgia College like Wake Forest University, which had a Divine Nine site. Milner then created a mockup of the NPHC Plaza for former Georgia College President Dr. Steve Dorman, and developed the concept from there.

Milner credits the founding African American Alumni Council (AAAC) members including Debra White Minor, '88, and Pamela Trawick, '91, as well as students like Jazmin Hunt, '21, and donors, including Milner, and Retired Brigadier General Jonathan McColumn, '86, with helping to push for the plaza to exist.



Stacey Milner

Hunt was a liaison between NPHC, alumni, contractors and school officials, who helped facilitate the identity NPHC strived to share with the campus and community.

"It was a great experience to see the alumni and even chartering chapter members during the unveiling of the plaza," she said.

McColumn envisions the NPHC Historical Preservation Plaza as a place that will build unity and cohesion.

"My donation to the NPHC Plaza represents my commitment to join others in building a permanent shrine for students to inquire about its purpose and motivation," he said. "For alumni, to include Divine Nine members, it represents Homecoming on campus—a place to reflect and provide well wishes to a curious bystander or a familiar face."

The NPHC Plaza is historically significant to McColumn in his reflection upon the unique friendships made with his fraternity brothers while balancing the rigors of academics.

"It highlights the cherished brotherhood experience I enjoyed with the young men of Kappa Alpha Psi," McCollumn said. "Even more, the experience was broadened through the collective camaraderie now etched in my memory by, with and through the shared joys and struggles with the Divine Nine at GC."

"When I was a nontraditional student, the plaza was something we wanted," Milner said. "We had painted benches on campus. Alumni loved those, because it symbolized their time at GC."

However, alumni and students wanted something more.

"Everyone who belongs to a NPHC organization always wanted a historical preservation plaza of this magnitude," she said. "They got excited about the idea of being connected to the institution and wanted to leave a legacy."



Jazmin Hunt



Retired Brigadier
General Jonathan
McColumn

Milner believes NPHC organizations are that legacy, given the work its members put into establishing them, including recruiting members and being catalysts in

serving others.

"I was blessed and fortunate to be in a great position and have the right connections to pull everybody together to make it happen," Milner said. "Once everything got going, it was a team effort."

The NPHC Plaza became official with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held during Homecoming 2019.

"To me, that was the best Homecoming ever," Milner said. "It was great, because we welcomed alumni home, who hadn't stepped foot on campus in 30 to 40 years."

Today, some students use the plaza as a backdrop for graduation photos. It'll also be used for events like when students are introduced to Georgia College.

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"My hope is that the NPHC Plaza serves to tell the story of our history, and that it functions as a place where people who visit Georgia College see it as a symbol of change—the university's embrace and appreciation of culture. And that it allows individuals to ask questions of who we are, and what is special about our organizations."

- Stacey Milner

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"As we transition into a new phase, I hope our Admissions Office can work the plaza into campus tours," she said. "It will serve as a beacon of education, because there's so much long-standing history with African American sororities and fraternities."

Many of the organizations have existed for over 100 years. And, many of the world's most iconic individuals are affiliated with these organizations, including Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King, who was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

His wife, Coretta Scott King and United States Vice President Kamala Harris are members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. In addition, the Father of Black History Month, Carter G. Woodson, was a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

"It's just been unfortunate that we haven't been able to utilize the plaza in great capacities lately due to COVID," Milner said. "But now students are excited about using it. There are all types of events, like luncheons and new member presentations, that they're looking forward to hosting at the plaza."

Like many students and alumni, Hunt, McColumn and Milner are excited to see what the future holds for the NPHC Historical Preservation Plaza.

“It is amazing to see the NPHC Plaza,” Hunt said. “It gives my sisters, alumni and other organizations a place to call their own. It’s something that will always be there for me to return to, even if campus changes. The plaza captures Black History on campus, encapsulating and protecting it. I am very happy this landmark was established to give a home to those who’ve served GC and the community for over 50 years.”

“My desire is that the plaza will continue to blossom into a place for all students to build campus esprit,” McColumn said. “From those curious engagements and inquiries, students can build friendships with fellow students while addressing local issues in an open and professional manner.”

“My hope is that the NPHC Plaza serves our to tell the story of our history, and that it functions as a place where people who visit Georgia College see it as a symbol of change—the university’s embrace and appreciation of culture,” Milner said. “And that it allows individuals to ask questions of who we are, and what is special about our organizations.”

News Stories Posted Friday February 11, 2022



Integrated Science Complex promotes transparency and teamwork

[Biology & Environmental Sciences, Department of](#): Friday February 11, 2022

Georgia College's Integrated Science Complex (ISC) is not your grandfather's idea of a traditional lab—where doors are shut, and people isolate in their own workspaces guarding projects from prying eyes.

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This building was designed to be science on display.

- Dr. Indiren Pillay

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The university's new science building is about openness. Light. Transparency. Shared lab spaces. Collaboration.

And glass. Lots of glass.

“This building was designed to be science on display,” said Dr. Indiren Pillay, chair of Biological and Environmental Sciences. “There is a paradigm shift in people’s schools of thought. I grew up in the era when everybody had their own lab with the doors closed, and they seldom shared resources. But that’s not the way science really works. Shared resources make a lot of sense. It creates a collaborative nature and, if nothing else, science should be collaborative.”

“The efficiency will be unmatched,” he said. “The building epitomizes a sea-change in the way we think as scientists at Georgia College. This building is a monument to that.”



Alternate Text

As dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Eric Tenbus said he discourages territoriality. The science complex promotes an environment for shared ideas—perfectly aligning, he said, with Georgia College’s liberal arts mission and spotlight on undergraduate research.

As much as science will be on display in the new building, art will be too. The first exhibit is part of the collection of Jim and Karen Fleece.

“With the art that hangs on the walls and the science activity that’ll be on display,

the ISC is the perfect embodiment of the College of Arts and Sciences' mission, scope and collaborative spirit. We cannot wait to move in and get started," Tenbus said.

A ribbon cutting ceremony was held last fall. Full occupancy began January 2022. Not just for science faculty and students—the ISC is accessible to the entire campus and surrounding community.

Visitors first notice the ISC's architectural design—striking for its wide expanse of floor-to-ceiling glass. This glass is throughout the inside, as well. 'On display' means exactly that: a continuous exhibition and demonstration of science.

Everywhere guests look—they see directly into the heart of academia and witness science-in-action.

A wall of windows wraps around laboratories on each floor, allowing people to walk the hallway perimeters and peer in. They see experiments in-progress, professors working alongside students, problems being solved, labs being cleaned. They see flasks bubbling in chemistry, beakers of liquid, petri dishes of bacteria, students at microscopes, groups gathered around dry erase boards filled with equations, botanists sifting soils and seeds.



Alternate Text

"People are not going to look in the windows and see white coats all starched and clean," Pillay said. "It's going to be messy. It's going to be real. It's going to be science."

"We want to inspire our students to look differently at science. We want to inspire our community to look differently at science," he said. "We want to encourage more kids to get into science for the right reasons."

“

It's going to be messy. It's going to be real. It's going to be science.

- Pillay

Dr. Kenneth Saladin, distinguished professor emeritus of biology, was instrumental in moving the sciences in this direction. Years ago, Saladin devised a premed program at Georgia College. Using his own resources, he mentored biology students with an interest in medicine. Recently, Saladin donated \$1 million to further support mentored student research in biology and environmental sciences. He created a matching scholarship program for biology majors. His donations go beyond science to impact honors students, as well.

“Dr. Saladin's amazing generosity will support both undergraduate and graduate research within the department,” Pillay said. “This consistent means of support helps us purchase research supplies and instrumentation for students, as well as provide travel support for professional journal publications and conferences, so students can disseminate their work.”

Other major milestones also contributed to the construction of the ISC.

A recent grant from the National Science Foundation helps underrepresented and disadvantaged students pursue majors in chemistry and physics. The purchase of important advanced equipment, like the scanning electron microscope, was another breakthrough.



Alternate Text

The \$22.1 million complex is the product of forward thinking. University President Dr. Steve Dorman noticed congestion at Herty Hall and pushed for new construction. Johnny Grant, former director of Economic Development & External Relations, put together a proposal for the University System Board of Regents in 2016, calling for the construction of 43,000 new square feet where the ISC is today, across from Herty Hall on Montgomery Street.

Herty was built in 1954 and underwent several renovations, the last one in 2011. But the sciences continued to flourish, rapidly outgrowing improvements. Bio-science majors had increased 107 percent in 12 years, Grant reported, and 86 percent of all students took courses in Herty. By 2016, the number of nursing students being taught at Herty was at an all-time high. Lack of storage space was a concern. Halls were used for class presentations and as study space for students.

In short, Herty was bursting at the seams.

Most chemistry and biology teaching and research labs will now be at ISC. Both departments will remain at Herty for class lectures and a few teaching labs. Physics and astronomy have moved to Beeson Hall.

This immediately frees up space.

But the ISC was also developed for the future.

Everywhere, there are signs of originality, creativity and flexibility. Project Manager Mark Bowen said planners kept some aspects of the new building—like certain moveable lab tables—flexible to accommodate new visions and projects. He's excited about innovative touches like sliding dry erase boards that move to reveal touchscreen TV monitors and hidden shelves.

Another resourceful space is the Linear Equipment Room (LER). It's a wide hallway in the middle of each floor that opens to multiple labs along both sides. All scientific equipment will be stored in these LERs: refrigerators, freezers, equipment to identify the structure of organic molecules, imaging and microscopy suites, water purification systems, incubators, sterilization equipment and spinning centrifuges.

No longer will chemistry be on one floor and biology another. The sciences will be across the hall and next door to each other—sharing tools and ideas and problem-solving together.

Not many universities have this concept of a linear inside hall and windows that let people see the science within. It's different from the old academic approach—but exactly like real-world work spaces students will encounter in graduate school. Authentic scientific laboratories are like this, as well.

The new science complex seems to have it all.

In addition to spiffy new labs and equipment halls, students lounge on comfy couches in spacious, windowed alcoves. Faculty have their first break room with an amazing view. Even landscaping is utilized. There'll be a pollinator garden for butterflies and bees; an ecosystem of shrubs and trees used in experimentation; and a cement bio-swale that retains water and becomes a manmade pond in the rain. On a third-floor balcony, flats will be used for botanic research.

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We know employers want students who've had high-impact experiences in their educational journeys, and undergraduate research activities with faculty are some of the most impactful experiences a student can get.

- Dr. Eric Tenbus

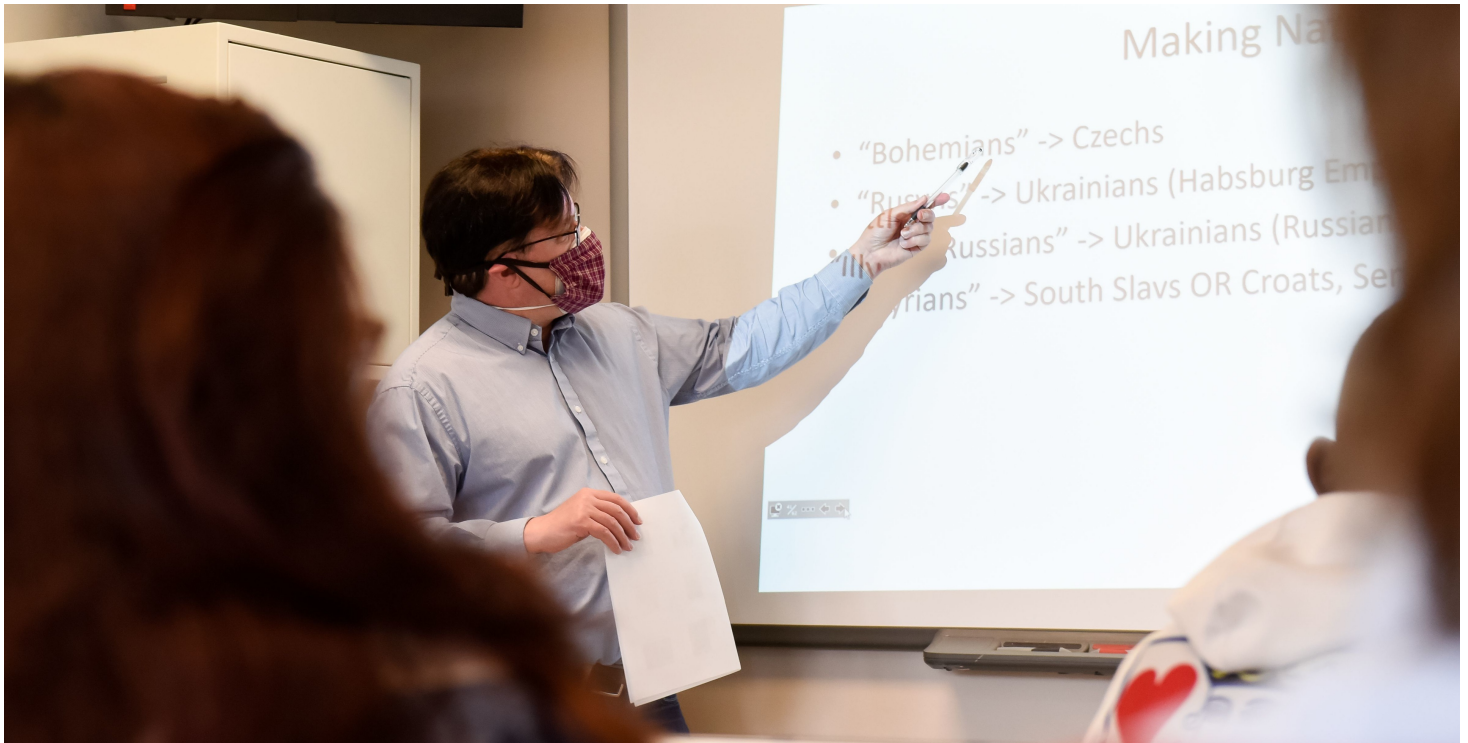
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Ultimately, the new Integrated Science Complex shouts the university's brand to “Think Independently. Lead Creatively.”

“We know employers want students who've had high-impact experiences in their educational journeys,” Tenbus said, “and undergraduate research activities with faculty are some of the most impactful experiences a student can get. We are hiring the best professors we can recruit, and they come here with the expectation to continue their research and work with excellent students.”

“Thus, we embrace the teacher-scholar model at Georgia College, which,” he said, “the new science center puts on full display.”

News Stories Posted Monday February 14, 2022



Students learn about Ukrainian strife in real time

[History & Geography, Department of](#): Monday February 14, 2022

If rising tensions in Eastern Europe don't abate—Dr. William Risch's students will learn history as it unfolds.

The Ukraine has endured more than its share of war, dominance and struggle for identity. Lately, it's been in the news with a build-up of more than 100,000 Russian troops at its border. A spar of words between superpowers is fueling fears of confrontation and a third world war.

"I wish things had taken a different path, because war exhausts people. They become embittered," Risch said. "Some want a military solution to drive out the Russians. But the reality is—the Russians could smash the Ukrainian military with its might because of their sheer numbers and kind of weaponry."

"There've been some war scenarios," he said, "where Russia takes out the Ukrainian infrastructure in an hour."



Dr. William Risch teaching about Eastern Europe.

Students in Risch's Modern Eastern European class couldn't be in a better position to learn about this crisis. Their professor is an expert on the often-rocky relationship between Ukraine and Russia. In 2011, Risch published a book on the Western Ukrainian city of Lviv after the death of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin. He recently received a fellowship from George Washington University to finish a second book on events leading to the

Donbas War in 2014.

Risch also taught for a year at Omsk State University in Russia. He spent two years working on his dissertation in Lviv, Ukraine, and another two years teaching at Lviv National University.

Junior history major Sean Fulmer of Oxford, Georgia, signed up for Risch's class to learn about Eastern Europe—a "new frontier" for him. It piqued his interest because he has friends living there.

"If I was some modern philosopher king—I would suggest that the current situation is nothing more than saber-rattling between major powers to justify boosting their defense budgets," Fulmer said.

"This is not to say the corrupt, autocrat in Russia is an angel either," he said, "but it's rather eerie to witness such wide-scale manufacture of consent to what could potentially be a major conflict costing millions of lives."

Still, Fulmer's excited to study these centuries-old struggles at a time when the Ukraine's security is again in the crosshairs.

“

... it's rather eerie to witness such wide-scale manufacture of consent to what could potentially be a major conflict costing millions of lives.

- Senior Sean Fulmer

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With a population of about 40 million, Ukraine plays an important role in Eastern Europe. Many citizens want the Ukraine to retain its sovereignty, Risch said. Others

are reluctant to upset Russian President Vladimir Putin. Like much of Europe, Ukraine now depends on Russian gas to heat their homes, although the gas is shipped through a third-party country. The Russian pipeline transports natural gas to Europe through Ukraine. Metallurgy, mining, machine building and other Russian industries provide jobs for Ukrainians, stabilizing their economy.

Russia is concerned about Western interference and the possibility of Ukraine joining NATO.

Risch's new book covers these issues, focusing on protests in 2013 that led to Russian intervention. Spurts of violence, shelling and skirmishes continue to this day, despite an accord signed between the two nations in September 2014.

This is nothing new for Ukraine—a region continually dominated in a tug-of-war by other nations. Russia, Poland, Lithuania, Austria, Romania, Turkey and the old Czechoslovakia have all claimed Ukrainian territory as their own since the 800s. The nation has endured centuries of suffering, including the Soviet-induced famine in the early 1930s that led to the starvation of 4 million people.

Students in Dr. Steven Elliott-Gower's National Security Policy class are also learning about Eastern Europe but from a different perspective. They're drawing upon the Ukrainian crisis to play a simulation game called "Russia, NATO and the Baltic States." It involves a hypothetical buildup of 100,000 Russian troops on the border of Latvia, a NATO country neighboring Russia.



Dr. Steven Elliott-Gower in one of his role-playing simulation classes.

In the game, Russia claims to be concerned about the rights of ethnic Russians living in Latvia. But its real motives are similar to what's currently happening in the Ukraine, Elliott-Gower said.

Students act as various U.S. officials to avert invasion and reduce tensions. They're drawing up economic and financial sanctions and reviewing possible deployment of NATO troops.

“

This is a very teachable moment.

- Elliott-Gower

“This is a very teachable moment,” Elliott-Gower said. “The Russia-Latvia simulation the students are playing has many similarities to the real-world Russia-Ukraine crisis.”

“Students are weighing the pros and cons of a series of diplomatic, economic and military measures to deter Russian aggression. In the process,” he said, “they’re learning valuable leadership lessons about the complexity of foreign policy decision making.”

Both professors are guiding students to make sense of the current escalation in threats, the maneuvering of weapons and failed attempts at diplomacy.

By the time Risch's students learn Ukraine’s long, tumultuous history—watching a film on the Donbas War at the end of this semester—there could be war.

“It will be of interest to them, because we don’t know what this will do to our military or what will happen with our security,” Risch said. “The other thing too for all of us, not just the students, we sort of assumed with the end of the Cold War in 1991 there’d be no more major problems from this part of the world.”

“But there are,” he said, “and they’re getting worse.”

News Stories Posted Tuesday February 15, 2022



Rethinking and adapting: All things supply chain with the Georgia College Logistics Association (GCLA)

[Management, Marketing, & Logistics, Department of](#): Tuesday February 15, 2022

Almost every American is now familiar with the term 'supply chain.' "On the Dock with the GCLA," a new webinar, will address what it takes to understand supply chains, their challenges and how to innovate the industry.

The first live episode will air online Feb. 16 from 2 – 3 p.m., will feature Dr. Scott Cox, assistant professor of logistics, as host to a panel of experts. They will discuss the transportation network in Georgia, and how they've navigated recent challenges.

"There is a perfect storm of issues facing us in management," said Dr. Karl Manrodt, professor of logistics. "The most important thing in any industry is staying current with how things are changing, and understanding new challenges."

Speakers include Sandy Lake, director of the Georgia Center of Innovation; Jason

Moss, CEO and founder of the Georgia Manufacturing Alliance; Janine Miller, director of planning at the Georgia Department of Transportation and John Wheeler, former vice president of carrier sales for South Carolina Ports and former director of trade development at the Georgia Ports Authority.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how quickly changes can occur in customer behavior and demand. Companies need to redesign their transportation and logistics innovatively to empower themselves to respond to quick changes in the future.

- Dr. Mehrnaz Khalaj Hedayati

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“The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how quickly changes can occur in customer behavior and demand, as a result,” said Dr. Mehrnaz Khalaj Hedayati, assistant professor of management. “Companies need to redesign their transportation and logistics innovatively to empower themselves to respond to quick changes in the future.”

These issues aren’t new, Hedayati said. Extreme weather, demand shock and natural disasters have caused similar issues in the past, and will continue.

“Just like in our logistics and supply chain management program, students and professionals will learn strategies to manage supply chain operations smoothly, even in times of crises,” she said.

Recent challenges are highlighting what makes efficient supply chains so important. This, Hedayati said, is why the field is growing rapidly. In fact, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that employment of logisticians will grow 30% from 2020 to 2030.

To register for the webinar, sign up at <https://smc3.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0qdeCgqDgoHNPOwodzQj3rKXHedh2cxE-R>.

To learn more about Georgia College’s online Logistics and Supply Chain Management (MLSCM) master’s, visit <https://www.gcsu.edu/business/gradbusiness/mlscm>.



New Visiting Scholars Program enriches learning experiences for students

[Health & Human Performance, School of](#): Tuesday February 15, 2022

A new initiative through the Office of the Provost aims to bring world-class scholars to campus.

The Provost's Visiting Scholar program launched during the spring 2022 semester and will bring three guest scholars to campus.

"The goal of the Visiting Scholars program is to enrich the learning experiences of our students by giving both our faculty and students the opportunity to engage with outside experts for a week," said Dr. Jordan Cofer, associate provost for Transformative Learning Experiences.

Former Olympian Butch Reynolds was the first scholar to visit campus. In early February, he worked directly with students and faculty.

"I've known Butch for a while, and his story transcends a lot," said Dr. Daniel Czech, associate dean in the College of Health Sciences. "I think students really related to Butch growing up in Akron, Ohio, and overcoming a lot of obstacles to become the fastest man in the world."



Former Olympian Butch Reynolds teaches a class to exercise science students.

A former track and field star, Reynolds set the world record in 1988 for the 400-meter dash. He's an Olympic medalist who also won a lawsuit after being falsely accused of using illegal drugs. His experiences at the Ohio State University as their football speed coach and assistant track coach at Ohio Dominican University has created a knowledge base to help exercise science student.

"He spoke not only about exercise science but also about substance abuse in sports, as well as ethical decision making," Czech said. "We had an inter-departmental experience scheduled, so he worked with philosophy ethics classes and exercise science classes."

Reynolds discussed with students running injuries, running form and the best way to teach it, as well as proper strength and conditioning for speed training. He also highlighted the illegal drugs used to increase speed and endurance and cheating in sports.

Faculty know the benefits that come from students working with scholars in their area of study. It's not only about building knowledge in a subject, but also making personal connections.

"They were able to make some contacts, which I think is very important in the world of exercise science," Czech said. "They also heard his story of resilience. He brought his gold medal and silver medal, and he talked about his experience and his training."

Along with working with students and faculty on campus, Reynolds also made a presentation at Reynolds Plantation in Greensboro to older adults about fear and presented a talk to at-risk youth in Savannah.

To apply to host a scholar, academic departments described how a visiting scholar would contribute to strengthening the mission of the program, and then also proposed activities. Priority was given to applications with an interdisciplinary component, like Reynolds.



Dr. Daniel Czech



Reynolds works with students.

“The interdisciplinary nature of the program means that the entire community benefits from these scholars' extended engagement.”

- Dr. Jordan Cofer

“The interdisciplinary nature of the program means that the entire community benefits from these scholars' extended engagement,” Cofer said. “With a low-residency format, it means they are spending more than one day in our community—they are getting time to really engage. We feel it embodies our liberal arts nature.

In March, Dr. Peter Cardon, professor of Clinical Business Communication at the University of Southern California, will serve as a visiting scholar for the Department of Information Systems and Computer Science. Cardon's specialty is in international business communication, which is both international business and international communication. These are topics applicable to students across disciplines. Cardon will also interact with students in the Honors College and the Office of International Education.

The Department of Economics will host Dr. Douglas Walker, economist at the College of Charleston with a specialty in gambling, in April. Walker is a former Distinguished Research Award Winner and was a visiting professor at Harvard Medical School. His visit will give the GC community more insight into gambling research, while also helping economics and finance students learn more about graduate school.

More information on the Provost's Visiting Scholar Program is available [here](#).

News Stories Posted Monday February 21, 2022



Leadership of first-year program recognized for outstanding work

First-Year Experience : Monday February 21, 2022

Transitioning from high school to college can be tough. Everything about life changes—from where you live to who you live with, what you eat and how you spend your time.

To help make that transition a bit smoother, Georgia College created dedicated programming, courses and support through the Office of First-Year Experience.

At the helm as director since its inception in 2019 is Dr. Erin Weston. She was recently recognized by the National Resource Center and Cengage as one of 10 Outstanding First-Year Student Advocates. She received the award at the 41st Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience in Orlando in February.

“It was very surprising,” Weston said. “It’s sometimes hard to see the impact of what you’re doing. To be recognized, especially on a national level, for a lot of the

changes that we've made these last couple of years, it was exciting.”

The award recognizes and rewards individuals across the nation who are advocates involved in high-impact practices for first-year student success.

“The rich tradition of this award includes more than three decades of recognizing the outstanding work that takes place making immeasurable impact on the lives of first-year students,” said Jennifer Keup, executive director of the National Resource Center, in a press release. “It’s an absolute honor to add ten more names to the list of esteemed colleagues who have previously received this honor.”



Dr. Erin Weston

At Georgia College, various components of the first-year experience have been in place for years. When the office was created, it brought all the pieces under one umbrella, allowing for more collaboration and the expansion of programming.



Students in a freshman seminar class.

“We do have some pieces of our first-year experience that are unique to us, particularly in the state of Georgia,” said Weston. “We have the advantage that all of our students are living on campus, so we have this co-curricular learning environment where we can partner with Student Life to make sure there are lessons and experiences that our students are taught that may not fit within the classroom.”

The summer reading program for incoming students, called GC Reads, is also unique. Instead of students reading a common book, at Georgia College students choose from a list of essays and take part in micro-seminar sessions where they discuss the essay with faculty and fellow students. The university is one of the few in the nation to do this.

“We really reflected on what the purpose of that experience was, and it was to help students feel what a classroom experience is going to be like, take some of the stress out of that first week of class and let them connect with a faculty member,” Weston said.

“When we changed it to an essay, the students had some control of their topic, and it created an environment in the classroom where faculty could really engage the students rather than students may be feeling overwhelmed by having to have read or comprehend the whole book,” she said.



Group shot from Welcome Really.

The feedback on GC Reads has been overwhelmingly positive. That helped lay the groundwork for more innovation in the first-year programming.

First-year guides were recently introduced into the seminar course. These upperclassmen serve as peer resources and mentors to help in the transition to college.

“We’ve gotten a lot of feedback from students about the impact their first-year guides have had in making them more comfortable in the classroom,” said Weston. “We survey all the students and just ask ‘Would you be comfortable reaching out to your first-year guide for help? Have you contacted your first-year guide?’ The responses to that have been highly positive.”

Georgia College also offers a first-year seminar one-credit-hour college transition course.

“It’s taught by either a faculty member within their department or an academic advisor and paired with that person is a first-year guide,” Weston said. “From what I can tell, there aren’t any other institutions that have both a three-credit-hour course all their first-year students take like our GC1Y and the one-credit-hour course for all first-year students like our seminar.”

With the primary goal of connecting new students with resources on campus, the entire first-year experience is both intentional and always developing.

“We are trying to better tailor the first-year guide program to provide more major-based support for students to match up students with mentors within their program,” Weston said.

They’re also looking to build connections for first-year students with faculty in their



Photo from the Welcome Party for new first-year students.

major. Typically, during the first two years of college students primarily take core classes. Weston hopes to encourage students to get involved with things like student organizations or research in their major earlier.

“We've been exploring different opportunities for students to feel like they're involved in their major early on communicating different opportunities they have,” she

said. “We are trying to let them know that maybe some of those experiences they assume are just for upperclassmen—like undergraduate research— they can do as a first-year student and continue throughout their four years.”

Weston’s recognition with this national award shows her work and innovation are getting noticed.

“I think what’s nice about it is that it shows that some of the risks and some of the new ideas that we've tried are being recognized by our national organization as being good practice,” Weston said.

For more information about Georgia College’s First-Year Experience Programs, visit <https://www.gcsu.edu/first-year-experience>.



Dr. Erin Weston with her award.

News Stories Posted Thursday February 24, 2022



Andalusia Farm is America's newest National Historic Landmark

[Andalusia](#) : Thursday February 24, 2022

Georgia College celebrates its second National Historic Landmark (NHL)—Andalusia Farm in Milledgeville, Georgia—home of American famed Author Mary “Flannery” O’Connor, ’45, a designation just announced this week by the National Park Service. Georgia’s Old Governor’s Mansion was the campus’ first NHL, receiving this recognition in 1973. This designation has been awarded to a small number of campuses in the U.S., and is carried by less than three percent of America’s historic sites.

“There are campuses across the country that have National Historic Landmarks, but this is a rarity in Georgia to have two in a town of our size and capacity,” said Matt Davis, director of Historic Museums at Georgia College. “It’s an accomplishment we can all be very proud of.”

O’Connor and her family moved to Milledgeville when she was 15 years old. Within a year of moving from Savannah to her new home, O’Connor lost her father to

systemic lupus erythematosus.

She graduated from Peabody High School in Milledgeville in 1942, and enrolled thereafter in Georgia State College for Women (GSCW), now known as Georgia College. O'Connor was the art director and cartoonist of Georgia College's school newspaper—the Colonnade. One year after she graduated from GSCW, O'Connor participated in the Iowa Writers' Workshop and later studied journalism at the University of Iowa. From 1946 to 1964, she was a novelist, essayist and short-story writer. She also wrote journals and letters, as well as conducted some notable interviews.



Flannery O'Connor

In 1950, O'Connor would be stricken with lupus, which resulted in her moving back to Milledgeville to reside with her mother at Andalusia. From 1951 until her death in 1964, O'Connor would complete the bulk of her work, which ultimately totaled two novels, 32 short stories and over 100 literary critiques. Many of the personalities and environs in and around Andalusia would serve as the inspiration for the places or characters within her works.



Andalusia Farm: Home to famed Author Flannery O'Connor is designated as a National Historic Landmark.

The farm remained in the O'Connor family from 1964 until 2003 when it was given to a private foundation for use as a museum. In August 2017, the site was gifted to O'Connor's alma mater, Georgia College.

Andalusia is open for public tours and became listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980. In 2019, it was named a "Distinctive Destination" by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

After more than 12 years of preparation work, the initial step toward Andalusia becoming a National Historic Landmark took place Sept. 2, 2020, when Georgia College addressed the National Historic Landmark Advisory Committee.

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“It’s so important that the places we deem nationally significant represent the diversity of the American experience. O’Connor’s contributions represent a unique space in American literature, and her works continue to inspire new generations.”

- Chuck Sams, director of the National Park Service

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"We had up to 30 minutes to state our case," said Davis. "Representatives from the National Park Service, Dr. Evelyn Causey, who worked with the former foundation to submit the nomination form, and I were allowed to present on the historical significance of the site. Based on the unanimous vote of the committee to approve our nomination, I think everyone agreed that Andalusia was worthy of this designation."

Following the National Historic Landmarks Committee's approval, the consideration of Andalusia Farm as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) went before the National Park System Advisory Board on Sept. 17, 2020, for consideration and approval. The Board recommended the designation of Andalusia Farm as an NHL. It was then sent to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, who designated it as an NHL on Jan. 27, 2022.

"It's so important that the places we deem nationally significant represent the diversity of the American experience," said National Park Service Director Chuck Sams. "O'Connor's contributions represent a unique space in American literature, and her works continue to inspire new generations."

Davis recognizes the staff and the board of trustees of the previous Andalusia Foundation, who did much of the initial work on this.

"We appreciate the family of Flannery O'Connor, because they were very instrumental in working on that process, as well," Davis said. "I also recognize my current staff, who've helped complete this process."

O'Connor's home serves as a reminder of who she was and the lives she touched with her writing.

"We are so pleased that Flannery O'Connor's home has gained national attention through this distinction," said Cathy Cox, president of Georgia College. "A notable figure in the literary world, her creative works continue to impact many of our students and aspiring authors throughout the world. We are honored to be able to preserve this pivotal part of Flannery's legacy here at Georgia College."

News Stories Posted Monday February 28, 2022



Georgia College joins international alliance of research teams

[Transformative Learning Experiences](#) : Monday February 28, 2022

Georgia College has joined a prestigious international consortium of VIPs.

By its acronym, you might think its members are 'very important people.'

And, well, they are.



They're faculty and students who formed research teams across all disciplines. Now, they've been united in an organization and website called Vertically Integrated Projects (VIP) Program—a model for experiential learning.

Joining the consortium puts Georgia College's name on the world stage. It adds new emphasis on undergraduate and graduate research

and helps students improve their communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

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This is about making a bridge and enabling collaborations among departments and disciplines. This makes sense at a liberal arts university.

- Dr. Hasitha Mahabaduge

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Research will be far encompassing to include design, entrepreneurship and community service.

“This is about making a bridge and enabling collaborations among departments and disciplines. This makes sense at a liberal arts university,” said Dr. Hasitha Mahabaduge, associate professor of physics and director of the new VIP program.

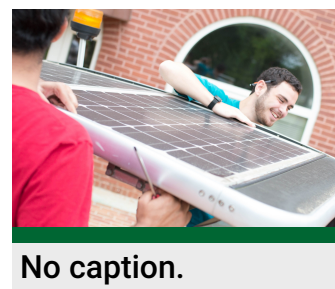
So far, six departments have registered research teams to be part of VIP: biology; English; music; chemistry, physics and astronomy; psychological science; and economics and finance.

The original VIP program started in 2001 at Perdue University, then centralized at Georgia Institute of Technology (GA Tech) in 2009. More than 45 universities worldwide are part of the consortium, which won the 2019 ABET Innovation Award for spreading this approach to ‘engineering’ education—recognized as transformational.

Most universities involved with VIP do engineering research. Georgia College is among the first to join as a liberal arts institution—and therein lies a chance to “shine,” Mahabaduge said.

“We as a designated liberal arts institution bring our own flavor,” he said. “Now, let’s bring it together and give it more purpose and intention. Be something new, but not necessarily entirely new. Let’s take advantage of what’s already happening, give it more structure and do things in a more uniform way.”

Like GC Journeys—which brought successful concepts already being done together in a new form—VIP takes ongoing projects and brings it together into one program. This makes it easier for students from all majors to find and participate in ongoing research. For example, a communication student who’s interested in renewable energy can work with the GC Solar VIP team to create a



No caption.

marketing plan for their products.

Much of the research in Georgia College's VIP program is ongoing. For example, Dr. Tsu-Ming Chiang's social emotional learning project in local elementary schools has been around more than 20 years. Another is Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak's Trax on the Trail, a website for studying presidential campaign music since 2015. Her team is gearing up for the 2024 election season and will unveil a new website in November.

"One of the most difficult parts of conducting a research project with students is that they come and go each semester," Gorzelany-Mostak said.

"The VIP structure makes it possible for students to work on a project over a sustained period of time. Tracking a campaign soundscape across various web-based platforms," she said, "is detailed and time-consuming work. I welcome the opportunity to train students who can stay on the project for an entire electoral cycle and develop their own research projects on this topic."

As these research projects show—liberal arts topics bring diversity to research.



Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak.



Students take samples from a local river to study water quality.

English is another example. Dr. Jennifer Flaherty is partnering with a professor at Weber State University with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Their research delves into Shakespearean adaptations in education. Students will organize findings onto a website for teachers to access.

“The VIP program is a great opportunity for students of all levels to collaborate on research projects with faculty and other students in different areas of study,” Flaherty said. “Because English is a flexible major that allows students to be successful in a number of different professions and areas of study, I hope more English students and faculty will be involved in the VIP program going forward.”

VIP has received strong support from administrators, something that impresses Mahabaduge’s colleagues at other universities. Dr. Costas Spirou, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, Dr. Jordan Cofer, associate provost of Transformative Learning Experiences, Dr. Eric Tenbus, dean of the College of Arts and



Sciences, and Mahabaduge's own interim chair of chemistry, physics and astronomy, Dr. Donovan Domingue, have all pledged support.

A student studies a new species of amphipod.

Georgia College's VIP program also received a \$25,000 grant from Georgia Research Alliance. It helped get the website up and running and provides seed funds for VIP teams.

This fall, students will be able to earn academic credit by joining VIP and participating in a long-term, project-based learning course. Teams may include 15 to 20 students. Faculty may not be able to give one-on-one guidance to all members of a research group, Mahabaduge said. But upperclassmen will give personal attention and training to younger students who, in turn, will train and mentor others. Being able to interpret and teach complex material is a valuable skill.

VIP is a chance for different disciplines to research together—a hallmark opportunity for Georgia College as the state's designated public liberal arts institution.

For example, Dr. Christopher Clark, professor of economics, and Dr. Diana Young, associate professor of psychology, teamed up for a VIP team called "GC Nudge Unit."



Students learning about GC Nudge.

Nudge research began at Georgia College in 2018 with about 24 students taking part. It's a student-driven organization that applies behavioral economic principles to solve problems for local businesses and organizations like Sodexo, the Office of Sustainability, the Learning Center, University Retention Committee and University Housing.

"Behavioral economics has become an important field over the last few decades," Clark said. "This gives students an opportunity to develop their skills and apply what they are learning outside the classroom."

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We feel anything that helps students engage with one another, with passionate faculty and the campus community is a good idea. The VIP webpage can help students and potential clients find out about fantastic opportunities like the GC Nudge Unit.

- Dr. Christopher Clark

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Graduating with VIP research experience makes students more competitive in the job market, according to statistics. VIP also eliminates inequality with gains for all races, ethnicities and underrepresented minorities, Mahabaduge said.

It's a win-win situation for all.

It puts Georgia College on the path President Cathy Cox recently outlined in her State of Campus address: reaching the next level of excellence.

“It's time for us to come together and learn from each other and to learn different perspectives,” Mahabaduge said. “That's something employers are looking for.”

Georgia College's new VIP webpage can be found here: <https://www.gcsu.edu/vip>.