

Front Page News Story Archive

June 2023



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News Stories Posted Thursday June 1, 2023



Two GCSU students selected to participate in Fulbright Summer Institute

[National Scholarships Office at Georgia College](#) : Thursday June 1, 2023



Two Georgia College & State University honors students were chosen to participate in the prestigious 2023 [Fulbright UK Summer Institute](#).

Sophomores Alexis Keeney of Athens and Peyton Rodgers of Marietta are the first Georgia College students to receive this highly-selective scholarship.

This year, more than 700 students applied for less than 50 spots.

Keeney, a [sociology](#) major with a minor in [public health](#), will study at [Queen's University Belfast](#) for the "Understanding Northern Ireland" summer institute. Rodgers—a [management](#) major planning to minor in management information systems or public health—will do a joint study at [Glasgow School of Art and University of Strathclyde](#) for the "Technology, Innovation and Creativity" summer institute in Scotland.

“The Fulbright UK Summer Institutes are going to provide both Peyton and Alexis, who are already strong leaders on our campus, great opportunities to further develop their leadership skills through a global lens,” said Anna Whiteside, coordinator of the [National Scholarships Office](#) and assistant director of the [Honors College](#).



Peyton Rodgers will attend the Glasgow School of Art and University of Strathclyde in Scotland.

“

This is a competitive program with an interdisciplinary nature that naturally lends itself to the kind of students a strong liberal arts education can produce.

- Anna Whiteside

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The [Fulbright UK Summer Institutes](#) are available in five locations in the United Kingdom. The program covers the cost of travel, tuition and fees, accommodations and some meals.

Administered by the [Fulbright UK-US Commission](#), the programs are for undergraduate students with little or no travel experience outside North America. Participants get to explore the history, culture and heritage of the UK, while experiencing higher education in another country.

To apply, students must have a minimum GPA of 3.7 and at least two more undergraduate years left before earning a degree. They should also have ambassadorial skills, be sensitive to other cultures and have a genuine interest to learn more about the United Kingdom. Students who participate are also asked to further the Fulbright mission in some way upon returning to the United States.

“Cultural exchange is a truly transformative experience,” said Maria Balinska, executive director of the US-UK Fulbright Commission, “and I am excited to see this year’s UK Summer Institutes participants embark on this journey of immersing themselves in British academia and culture. I’m confident this experience will leave a lasting impression on both the participants and on those they meet and connect with during their time here.”

Keeney was nominated by faculty members to apply for the Belfast program in Northern Ireland, which runs three weeks mid-June to early July. She was surprised

to hear she got the scholarship and wished she could share the news with her father, who passed away in April. He was a strong supporter of her school work. She said he would be proud she was chosen for the interview process.



Alexis Keeney will attend Queen's University Belfast in Northern Ireland. (Photo by Sophis Schieve.)

“He didn't get to hear the news that I was awarded the scholarship,” Keeney said, “but I know he would be just as excited as I am. I’m really looking forward to meeting people and exploring the natural parts of the country of Ireland. The photos I’ve seen have really peaked my interest.”

Besides a short service trip to Belize, Keeney has not traveled much. At Queen’s University Belfast, she’ll study the culture, identity, history and politics of Belfast; lasting solutions for local challenges in communities and place; and political extremism and polarization in the 21st Century. She’s excited these topics align with her sociology major. The summer institute will help her reach the goal of becoming a medical social worker.

“

A big part of social work is interacting with diverse groups and being open to hearing new perspectives and experiences. Studying abroad is a great way to do that and to work on those skills.

- Alexis Keeney

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She’s also looking forward to seeing the Titanic exhibit where the historic ship was built.

“As a sociology student, it is my goal to study and learn about all different types of people,” Keeney said. “A big part of social work is interacting with diverse groups and being open to hearing new perspectives and experiences. Studying abroad is a great way to do that and to work on those skills.”

Rodgers was also nominated by faculty to apply for the Fulbright UK Summer Institute. Her Scotland trip will last three weeks during late July to August. This will be her first trip abroad.

She encourages other students to apply for the program.

“

I never in a million years would've guessed I would actually be selected for the program. It takes a lot of hard work, dedication and writing to apply. But you never know what could happen when you set your mind to something. Even if you aren't selected, you'll learn so much about yourself in the process and grow as both a writer and communicator.

- Peyton Rogers

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The Glasgow School of Art and University of Strathclyde program is designed to help participants learn how Scotland developed into a technological and innovative society. Rodgers will attend lectures and seminars and go on study visits that focus on health, well-being and creative approaches for future cities.

Rodgers is particularly looking forward to exploring business programs at the university and its Human Centre for Entrepreneurship. Beyond school, she hopes to see Edinburg Castle and marvel at Scottish architecture.

In the future, Rodgers plans to get a master's in healthcare administration.

“This experience,” she said, “will help me gain the skills and knowledge I need to effectively serve my team and patients and provide them with the best experience possible.”

News Stories Posted Monday June 5, 2023



Bobcat Athletics wins GCSU's third PBC Sportsmanship Honor

[Athletics](#) : Monday June 5, 2023

The Georgia College & State University Athletics Department is putting together a sportsmanship dynasty in the Peach Belt Conference.

The PBC announced its year-end awards last week in Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, with GCSU taking the PBC Institution of the Year Sportsmanship Award for the third time in the last six years. The annual honor is given to the institution displaying the best overall sportsmanship for the 2022-23 season.



GCSU officials pictured from left to right are: Director of Athletics Wendell Staton, Faculty Athletics Representative Dr. J.J. Arias, Assistant Athletic Director Jamie Grodecki, President Cathy Cox and Interim Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Daniel Nadler.

"Our sportsmanship all starts with our coaches recruiting outstanding student-athletes," said Bobcat Director of Athletics Wendell Staton. "Our entire organization collectively understands the responsibility of representing the university, our families and ourselves. I am very proud of the commitment we have to fair play, as well as honoring our competitors and the games that we play."

This honor is voted on each year by the other 10 members of the Peach Belt Conference and goes to the school that best exemplifies the spirit of sportsmanship, a high degree of integrity, character and class.

With a history beginning in 2008-09, the Bobcats won the trophy for the first time in 2016-17, ending a six-year run for Flagler College. GCSU took the award again in 2020-21. The Bobcats rank second in PBC history by taking the honor three times.

News Stories Posted Tuesday June 6, 2023



Students anticipate getting connected in first orientation

Orientation : Tuesday June 6, 2023

There was excitement in the air as students and parents gathered on Front Campus for Georgia College & State University's first Orientation of 2023. Guests were welcomed to campus by Senior Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Joel Robinson before heading off to various sessions grouped by students and parents.

Students learned more about student success and how to get involved on campus during their breakout sessions. Additionally, students got the opportunity to meet the orientation leaders and learn about bobcat spirit before rejoining their parents.

“

Georgia College and the campus is just absolutely beautiful. We are really impressed.

- JR Wilson, parent

Parents, meanwhile, got an overview of all the various services Georgia College provides to ensure student success such as Academic Advising, Counseling, Disability Services and more. Once the breakout sessions concluded, parents rejoined their students for college and department-level meetings where they learned more about the various majors offered at the university.

After lunch, both students and parents were able to check off those final “to-do” items before coming to campus in August such as getting a Bobcat Card, ordering textbooks for the fall semester or checking out the residence halls. Additionally, student organizations and other campus departments were onsite at the Bobcat Marketplace to greet our newest bobcats with information about student life coupled with a warm smile.

Sam Wilson, an incoming student from Johns Creek, Georgia, looks on all the activity on Front Campus with excitement and anticipation. She is looking forward to getting involved with students and professors especially within the Biology program.

“There are a lot of unknowns. And there's like butterflies that come along with leaving my environment at home,” said Wilson. “So I’m looking forward to just getting acquainted with the students and professors.”

Sam’s father, JR, is equally excited.

“We think Sam will be here for all four years and hope that she has four great years. And we're looking forward to coming down to visit her,” said JR. “We think it's a great little town. Georgia College and the campus is just absolutely beautiful. We are really impressed.”

Orientation is a rite of passage as students are officially one step closer to attending college in the fall. Georgia College is looking forward to seeing our newest bobcats throughout the summer leading up to Move-in Day in August.



Incoming student Sam Wilson with her parents Kate and JR Wilson

News Stories Posted Wednesday June 7, 2023



Bobcat born and raised

Orientation : Wednesday June 7, 2023

You'd be hard-pressed to find an incoming freshman more familiar with the Georgia College & State University campus than Riley Barsby.

As the daughter of Steve Barsby, a 23-year GCSU veteran assistant athletic director and head men's and women's tennis coach, Riley has spent her life connected to the university.

Riley has countless experiences and memories attached to GCSU, like joining teams on road trips, participating in summer camps or hanging out with her dad at sporting events. All while she attended Georgia Military College Prep School in Milledgeville.

Despite logging all those hours on campus, Riley originally had no plans of

attending Georgia College. The change came when Riley was recruited as a Bobcat student-athlete, but she won't be playing tennis. Instead, the Bobcat lifer will join the GCSU softball team as a versatile utility infielder.

Riley was like many high school students, wanting to blaze her own path and get out of their hometown for college. But a recruitment visit with the softball coaching staff in fall 2022 changed all of that.

"They reached out to me and convinced me to come on a tour," she said. "Even though I'm here all the time with my dad, and I've been on campus all my life, the tour gave me another perspective of it all, allowing me to see more detail of the school, and I loved it.



Riley Barsby tries on the Bobcat mascot head.



Riley Barsby watches a tennis match with her dad Steve Barsby.

Assistant Coach Kenneth Bellamy and Head Coach Jamie Grodecki were great in the recruiting process, making it about just me the softball player and student, not about my family."

It didn't take long for her father to be convinced GCSU was the right choice.

"She came on the campus visit, met the players and did the tour," he said. "We went to dinner as a family that night, and I said, 'what do you got?'" "She replied, 'it's perfect'. That response blew me away."

“

At the start, I was nervous about staying in my hometown, because I always wanted to go somewhere out of state to experience something new. But after my tour and everything here I feel like Georgia College is really the place for me.

- Riley Barsby

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"I want her to feel like she's part of a community and team that's striving to do well in all aspects," Steve said. "Because I have in-depth knowledge of the program, I think she's going to have that. I want her to be a part of the program as I see it—a great program, with a competitive environment. As soon as she told me she wanted to come to GCSU, I knew that here I won't have any worries. I know she's going to

have a great experience.”

Coach Grodecki intentionally made the recruiting process no different than it is for any other incoming student-athlete.

“We treat all recruits the same, no special treatment or stops along the way,” Grodecki said, “We like to show full transparency of what it means to be a part of the program. We look for a kid who is versatile, who can play multiple positions, can run, can throw and can hit. Riley is a kid who can play the game and be versatile and a team player. She’s a good student and good kid.”

Riley will major in exercise science with eventual plans of being a chiropractor. She also owes that interest to her prior GCSU experience.

“One of my dad’s former players [Tyler Franks, ‘13] was a chiropractor and I got to shadow him. I just thought it was awesome,” Riley said. “I love going to the chiropractor myself, and I enjoyed the fast pace he had for his day. I thought ‘I could see myself doing that one day.’”

“At the start, I was nervous about staying in my hometown, because I always wanted to go somewhere out of state to experience something new,” she said. “But after my tour and everything here I feel like Georgia College is really the place for me.”



Riley Barsby (left) with Marisa Boyette, '16, an All-American pitcher.

News Stories Posted Tuesday June 13, 2023



Orientation leader deems GCSU "life changing"

Orientation : Tuesday June 13, 2023

[youtube embedcode="iRdlJ2Ji4Zk" style="right small"]Ivan Chu, GCSU orientation leader[/youtube]

Sophomore biology and chemistry major Ivan Chu is all things Georgia College & State University.

He serves on the Council of Student Ambassadors as a tour guide and orientation leader, where he enjoys being a liaison between the students and parents. From chatting with prospective students, helping them apply and meeting them at orientation, he's been at every step of their journey.

"Some parents are apprehensive about sending their students off to college," Chu said. "I just love being there for their kids—I'm someone students can count on to help them find connections with other students—that's the most rewarding part."



Ivan Chu and fellow student ambassadors prepare for orientation.

As a “face” of Georgia College, Chu feels he has a responsibility to be accessible, putting both parents and students at ease with their college transition.

“To have walked in their shoes and knowing what it’s like as a new student can be scary,” he said.

“I’m there to help reassure parents and students they’re going to be okay, since Georgia College has measures in place to keep students safe,” Chu said.

Ultimately, Chu aims to make students feel at home at Georgia College, just like he’s connected to the campus community. He’s the founder of the Asian Student Union, coordinator of diversity initiatives for the Council of Student Ambassadors and a member of the International Club.

“In getting to know the students, I’ve learned so much about their backgrounds,” Chu said. “Being an orientation leader and tour guide teaches you a lot about people. I think sometimes we get caught up in our everyday lives that we forget that the world outside is so different. We can learn so much from others.”

“

I’m a big advocate for Georgia College. It changes lives.

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As a first-generation immigrant from China, Chu gained enrichment value of learning about other cultures as a member of the International Club.

“It's fun to connect with the students and learn about different cultures and contrast them to your own,” he said. “Plus, I get to share my culture with others. You learn a lot through these experiences. Everyone has a story. We oftentimes forget that.”

Chu is grateful to have the opportunity to immerse himself in so many different things at Georgia College—so he's jumped in with both feet.

For fun, Chu and his friends have a radio show every Friday from 4 to 5 p.m. on WGUR 95.3—a student led radio station called “Speak Now.” It's about Taylor Swift. He will also be a supplemental instruction leader for the upcoming school year.

“Being at Georgia College is one of the best decisions I've ever made in my life,” he said.

When Chu came to Georgia College for the first time, he felt at home. Now, he often shares that experience with incoming students.

“I tell them don't let the fact that we're a medium-sized school detract you from coming to Georgia College,” Chu said. “We have so many opportunities to get involved. Because of this, GCSU students are much more employable and marketable because of that liberal arts education. So, students are well-versed in so many different things.”

He got involved with undergraduate research and developed a passion for it. He researches intracellular trafficking—a study of how things move in and out of the human body.

Chu plans to pursue a Ph.D. program in cellular or molecular biology. Then, he would like to teach at a liberal arts institution and research while mentoring students.



Ivan Chu works to gather College of Business and Technology majors.

“Coming to a liberal arts college, you get well versed in everything,” he said. “I think that the greatest thing about Georgia College is that it prepares you for life.”

His brother, Kun Hsi Chu, graduated from GCSU in 2020. Now, he’s in medical school.

“My parents never went to college, and they worked every single day of their life,” Chu said. “For me, to have this opportunity and for my brother to go to medical school—I don’t think we could’ve done this without Georgia College.”

“I’m a big advocate for Georgia College,” he said. “It changes lives.”



Young Scientist opts for chemistry at GCSU

Orientation : Tuesday June 13, 2023

The pandemic shut down lab experiments and science exploration for students across the nation and at schools like Putnam County High School in Eatonton, Georgia.

For incoming student Morgan Collins, that meant potentially missing a chance at finding his passion in chemistry. Luckily, Georgia College & State University's Science Education Center came to the rescue.

Directed by chemistry Professor Dr. Catrena Lisse, the center offers a program for high school students in local, rural areas to explore university-level research in a sophisticated lab setting.

“

I was in the Young Scientists Academy this summer, and that's what really got me into chemistry. I hadn't ever been in a lab experiencing actual chemistry at the college level.

- Morgan Collins

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“I was in the Young Scientists Academy this summer, and that’s what really got me into chemistry,” Collins said. “I hadn’t ever been in a lab experiencing actual chemistry at the college level.”

And he’ll get that chance again—Collins will join the academy again this summer, as he prepares to become a first-year student at Georgia College in the fall.

Q: What are you looking forward to at Georgia College?

A: Continue researching and being able to experience college life, take higher-level classes and further my education.

Q: What is most exciting to you about science?

A: Just anything—being able to research and discover new things, new possibilities and solve problems.

Q: What are you hoping to experience or get involved with on campus?

A: I want to meet new people, discover new things and involve myself in different activities. That means possibly sports, some extracurricular activities, and I’ll do a lot of stuff with the Honors College too.

News Stories Posted Wednesday June 14, 2023



Georgia College & State University earns A+ for prepping teachers in science of reading

[Professional Learning & Innovation, Department of](#): Wednesday June 14, 2023

The latest [report](#) from the [National Council on Teacher Quality](#) (NCTQ) ranks Georgia College & State University's [Early Childhood Education](#) program among the top 48 schools in the nation—and the only program in Georgia to go above and beyond standards set by literacy experts.

Georgia College earned an exemplary score for prepping teachers with the most-effective, scientifically based instructions for reading.

NCTQ's 2023 ratings were published in "Teacher Prep Review: Strengthening Elementary Reading Instruction." Its grading system gave Georgia College an A+ for "exemplary coverage" when preparing candidates for Bachelor of Science in Early Education degrees.

"We're delighted the Council has confirmed our consistent efforts to provide



Alternate Text

exceptional reading instruction for the teacher education program,” said Dr. Linda Bradley, program coordinator for Reading, Literacy and Language in the [John H. Lounsbury College of Education](#) at Georgia College. “We have revised our three-course sequence for teaching reading over the past four years in ways that incorporate the science of reading through evidence-based practices.”

“This national recognition verifies our strong focus on high-level teaching, the dedication of our faculty and the sense of community that’s fostered here for student success,” Bradley said.

“

We’re delighted the Council confirmed our consistent efforts to provide exceptional reading instruction for the teacher education program. We have revised our three-course sequence for teaching reading over the past four years in ways that incorporate the science of reading through evidence-based practices.

- Dr. Linda Bradley

”

In addition to Georgia College’s highly acclaimed early childhood education training, the university also contributes to child literacy through its [Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy](#). The Deal Center is the state’s designated research and training facility for advancing early language and literacy skills in children from birth to age 8.

The center’s key focus is to ensure all third-grade students read proficiently before entering fourth grade. Currently, only two of every five 8-year-olds are capable readers by the end of third grade, according to statistics at the center’s website.

If students aren’t reading proficiently by the end of third grade—a pivotal year—they’re four times more likely to drop out of high school, as shown by an Annie E. Casey Foundation [study](#).

The [Nation’s Report Card](#)—issued by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in 2022—showed 37 percent of fourth graders in the United States

scoring below basic reading levels—a substantial decline since the pandemic.

“An estimated 36 million adults in the U.S. continue to find reading difficult and may never reach proficiency,” Bradley said. “The way to influence change is through stronger reading programs and exceptional teachers throughout a child’s development.”

Literacy faculty at Georgia College are working with educators, administrators and policy makers to contribute to these improvements at local, state and national levels.



Dr. Linda Bradley

The NCTQ evaluated five components of scientifically-based reading instruction: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension. To get the coveted A+, a program must “go above and beyond a standard of adequate coverage.” A program must also avoid practices known to inhibit student reading progress.

The goal of NCTQ’s Teacher Prep Review is to ensure all K-12 students learn from qualified teachers. The organization consults with literacy experts, researchers and educators to redefine how teacher preparation programs are evaluated and ensure they align with the most recent evidence-backed research.

For most children to become successful readers, NCTQ research confirms a need for clear, step-by-step instructions grounded in the science of sound interpretation and comprehension. If all students had access to properly trained teachers, a literacy rate of 90% could be achieved, NCTQ reported.

About 27,000 programs in 2,000 institutions are responsible for training the nation’s 3 million teachers.

Being among the top 48 best programs in the nation “means our field-based cohort model—where preservice teachers spend a significant amount of time in classrooms practicing what they learned under the guidance of mentor leaders and literacy faculty—is working,” Bradley said.

“

Georgia College has a long history of excellence in preparing teachers, dating back to the late 1800s. This exemplary rating confirms our programs continue to meet the needs of future educators, helping them to provide the best reading instruction possible. Our graduates continue to be in high demand across the

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Alternate Text



New Bobcat: gunning for pre-law and running cross-country

Orientation : Wednesday June 14, 2023

From Students Raising Awareness, to Honor Society and running cross-country, it'd be an understatement to say Emily Wright was involved at Lakeside High School in Evans, Georgia.

She's ready to continue that streak when she attends Georgia College & State University in the fall and plans to run for the Bobcats and score at mock trial.

Q: What are you excited to do when you come back in the fall?

A: I'm honestly most excited for the classes. I've always had pretty specific interests, so I'll be studying political science and philosophy while doing the pre-law pathway. I'm excited to be in classes that are more personalized and tailored more to my interests.

With Georgia College being small, I'll be able to have those relationships with my professors outside of academics. I'm most excited for some of the clubs I plan to do, like the mock trial team, and get involved with public policy and politically-based clubs and organizations, as well.

Q: Tell me about cross-country—have you met the team?

A: Running is one of my biggest passions, so I'm glad I was able to continue it through my college career. On my official visits, I got to meet with the team and the coach who helped recruit me—it was a really awesome experience.

I am excited to learn about the new coaching staff who's going to be taking over. In high school I was between a lot of coaches, and I had five or six coaches over the course of four years, which is hard for personal training and progress. I'm excited to start fresh here and see what new coaching staff, teammates and experiences will bring to my running experience.



Emily Wright will join Georgia College in the fall.

Q: How did you decide on Georgia College?

A: Looking at colleges, I was very indecisive. I went to Athens to look at UGA. I went to Atlanta to look at Georgia Tech. But when I came to Milledgeville, I just fell in love with the campus—it's really pretty here. It's a lot smaller, and I feel like it was more manageable. I love the downtown area, and honestly, the campus is what I really fell in love with.

News Stories Posted Wednesday June 21, 2023



Hancock County Bobcat will bring his skills back home

Orientation : Wednesday June 21, 2023

Incoming Bobcat Ce'Darius Ingram is from Sparta, Georgia, where he graduated from Hancock Central High School as salutatorian—and his grandfather has to travel all over creation to get his medication.

That fact, alongside his passion for helping people and small communities, led Ingram to Georgia College & State University—where he'll study exercise science in the fall.

"I've always had a passion for being the person that people come to for help and advice," he said. "There are so many jobs that offer that, but I feel like a pharmacist offers the best."

Not only is the field expected to boom in the next decade, he said, but his hometown is one of many communities with a pharmacy that does not accept all insurance providers.

“I don’t like to see my grandparent travel to get his medicine,” Ingram said. “Why not travel in his hometown? This really inspired me to open my own pharmacy in a rural town.”

“I just want to help people out in a small community, because I feel like small communities are overlooked, but there’s a lot of jewels within these small communities and they need to shine and be seen,” he said.

Q: Tell me about your journey to salutatorian.

A: As a young kid, my auntie always prepped me for the next level. She always made me read or do multiplication before I went out to play. She knew I loved to go outside and play, so she used that to motivate me to learn.



Ce'Darius Ingram will begin pursuing a bachelor's of exercise science in the fall.

It eventually paid off over the years, and I started to make all A's. That led me to salutatorian.

Q: Why did you choose Georgia College?

A: What motivated me to go to college was to get a higher education. Higher education—and not just college education—but whether it's a trade school or something else, higher education leads to much more success.

What stood out to me about Georgia College was the atmosphere and the culture. Everyone here is so nice, especially my Admissions counselor, Ms. Rachel Belcher. She helped me throughout the process, and answered almost all my questions. She made Georgia College seem like it was home.

Q: What booths are you beelining for at orientation?

A: The Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity booth and overall leadership and community involvement booths, because I'd really like to get involved with the community.

Along with being a pharmacist, I plan on being a health advocate—so I want to get my name out there and let people know I'm here to help everybody.

And when I come in the fall, I definitely look forward to getting in a bunch of intramural sports, because I love the environment. I see the posts on social media all the time, and I really love everyone smiling and having a great time—it makes me excited to come.

News Stories Posted Thursday June 22, 2023



High schoolers hone leadership skills and environmental awareness

[School of Continuing and Professional Studies](#) : Thursday June 22, 2023

In June, Georgia College & State University hosted high schoolers from across Georgia for “EarthCare—The Leadership Challenge for the 21st Century.” The program provided a foundation of leadership development, with an emphasis on career exploration, STEM and sustainability.

“GCSU is pleased to partner with Georgia Power and 21st Century Leaders to host its 21st Century Leadership Challenge because Georgia College also places a great emphasis on leadership training among its students,” said Georgia College President Cathy Cox. “We know that the strength of our state depends on cultivating the next generation of leaders, and it’s exciting to see these high school leaders hone their skills on our campus through this program.”

Ninety-five rising high school sophomores, juniors and seniors with an interest in STEM and leadership were selected to participate in this challenge. They came from 65 public and private high schools within 30 counties across Georgia,

representing the state in diverse ethnicity and geographic location. Some were home schooled.

“Students were exposed to others they're not usually exposed to,” said Kate Hewitt, executive director, 21st Century Leaders. “They were taught how to work together and tasked to work on projects with other students from rural to urban parts of the state.”



Kate Hewitt, executive director, 21st Century Leaders and Greg Tyson, area manager, Georgia Power

“The more you put students together from diverse backgrounds at an early age, the better their success,” she said. “They're learning how to work with others who may not think like them.”

Greg Tyson, area manager for Georgia Power said the EarthCare Leadership Challenge is a chance to invest in future state leaders and promote workforce development.

During the six-day leadership institute, students lived on campus and strengthened their communication skills, a crucial aspect of leadership.



Lindsay McNeal (third from left) gets pointers on leadership.

Participants also worked on a challenge—a capstone project that week. They learned how to solve problems together, come up with solutions to energy justice issues and collaborate effectively. At the end of the week, they presented their solutions to Georgia Power and other leaders, hoping to make a positive impact on the environment.

Students explored environmental issues affecting Georgia and the world. Air quality and polluted water stood out to Lindsay McNeal of Kennesaw.

“I see where Georgia Power and other electricity providers reduce emissions in the air,” she said. “But there's also water pollution. And it's not only from people throwing things in our lakes and rivers, like the Chattahoochee River or Lake Lanier, but they're polluted by exhaust and other things I haven't thought of before. This is pulling me closer to why I'm here.”

McNeal is passionate about doing what it takes to clean the environment.

“This has been put on our generation,” she said. “We need the federal government to help fix pollution or give us responsibilities. I feel that passion of the younger generation, but we want permission to give us funding. We all really want to help in an effective way and do it now.”

“

It's special that we get to meet people. Then, bring our own innovations to the table and feel like we're able to start what we want now. I feel like our generation sees everything through a screen. They don't really understand how disconnected we are from reality. It's special to be here for a week, meeting new people and to be seen and heard.

- Lindsay McNeal

”

The EarthCare Leadership Challenge excites McNeal because of the opportunity she has to meet professionals in the field, discover her passion through shadowing and share her voice with those in power.

“It's special that we get to meet people. Then, bring our own innovations to the table and feel like we're able to start what we want now,” McNeal said. “I feel like our generation sees everything through a screen. They don't really understand how disconnected we are from reality. It's special to be here for a week, meeting new people and to be seen and heard.”

Gambler Dollar of Bainbridge sees himself as a potential leader too. He plans to work on his skills and improve. He chose the EarthCare Leadership Challenge because of his interest in the technology side of STEM.

“I came to this workshop because it's powerful,” Dollar said. “It's a great campus, and the program is personalized. The leaders take time to explain things to you.”



Gambler Dollar collaborates with others on a project.

“It's cool to look into the future and see what we could become, what we can make out of what we have and how we can improve,” he said.

On the topic of energy justice in Georgia, Dollar wants rural areas to have access to renewable sources.

“People in those areas don't really have any other choice but fossil fuels,” he said. “Rural residents have recently benefited from federal and other programs.”

“

It's cool to look into the future and see what we could become, what we can make out of what we have and how we can improve.

- Gambler Dollar

”

Through the leadership challenge, Dollar is excited to meet other leaders and feels empowered to help make a difference.

This is why Georgia College hosts great programs such as the EarthCare

Leadership Challenge that kickstart ideas and form leaders.

“I enjoyed meeting the students who participated in the program and was impressed with the many ways they were already planning to put their newly enhanced leadership skills to work when they return to school,” Cox said.

“These students not only gained a great deal of knowledge about sustainability,” she said, “but they also had top-notch training in public speaking, networking and working in groups—all of which are skills that will contribute to their success in high school and far beyond.”

News Stories Posted Friday June 23, 2023



Nursing scholar aims to serve others

Orientation : Friday June 23, 2023

Come fall semester, Paige Coleman of Mansfield will be a first-generation college student.

Her background as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) fueled her passion for helping people. Ultimately, she wants to become a registered nurse.

She'll begin her journey in Georgia College & State University's Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. Coleman will do so as a Lettie Pate Whitehead Nursing Scholar, which provides her with a full, four-year nursing scholarship.

The scholarship is named for Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans, a notable philanthropist and businesswoman, and Coleman will now follow her footsteps. She plans to serve her community by partnering with GCSU's [Center for Health and Social Issues](#) and the [Simulation and Translational Research Center](#). Plus, she'll participate in activities and events that encourage personal and professional development.

Q: Why did you choose Georgia College & State University?

A: I chose Georgia College because it has a good nursing program. The classes are hands on. It's also not too big of a school for me. I learn better in a smaller class than a larger class. Georgia College is also close to where I live.

Q: Why do you want to major in nursing?

A: I love helping people. I also like learning about medicine.

Q: When did you develop a passion to become a nurse?

A: I've known that I wanted to be a nurse from a young age. I've always liked going to doctors because they make me feel better. Since then, I've wondered how I can help people.

Q: What do you want to specialize in and why?

A: I want to specialize in pediatrics because I love working with kids.

Q: What are you most looking forward to as a Lettie Pate Whitehead Nursing Scholar?

A: I'm excited to participate in the events Georgia College offers and getting more involved in the community.

Q: Why is this important to you?

A: Since I'm going to live somewhere new, it's important to me to make new connections, so that I feel more comfortable.

Q: Why and when did you become a CNA?



Paige Coleman

A: I wanted to get some experience in before nursing school. I was 17 years old when I became a CNA. I work around 20 hours per week as a CNA. I have at least nine patients to take care of every night. Patient care includes feeding and changing them, making sure they're in their proper clothes at bed time, getting them up and putting them back into bed. I tend to their basic needs.

Q: How will this experience help you in your studies and career?

A: Being a CNA helped me learn how some nursing homes work and what to expect when I go into the healthcare field.

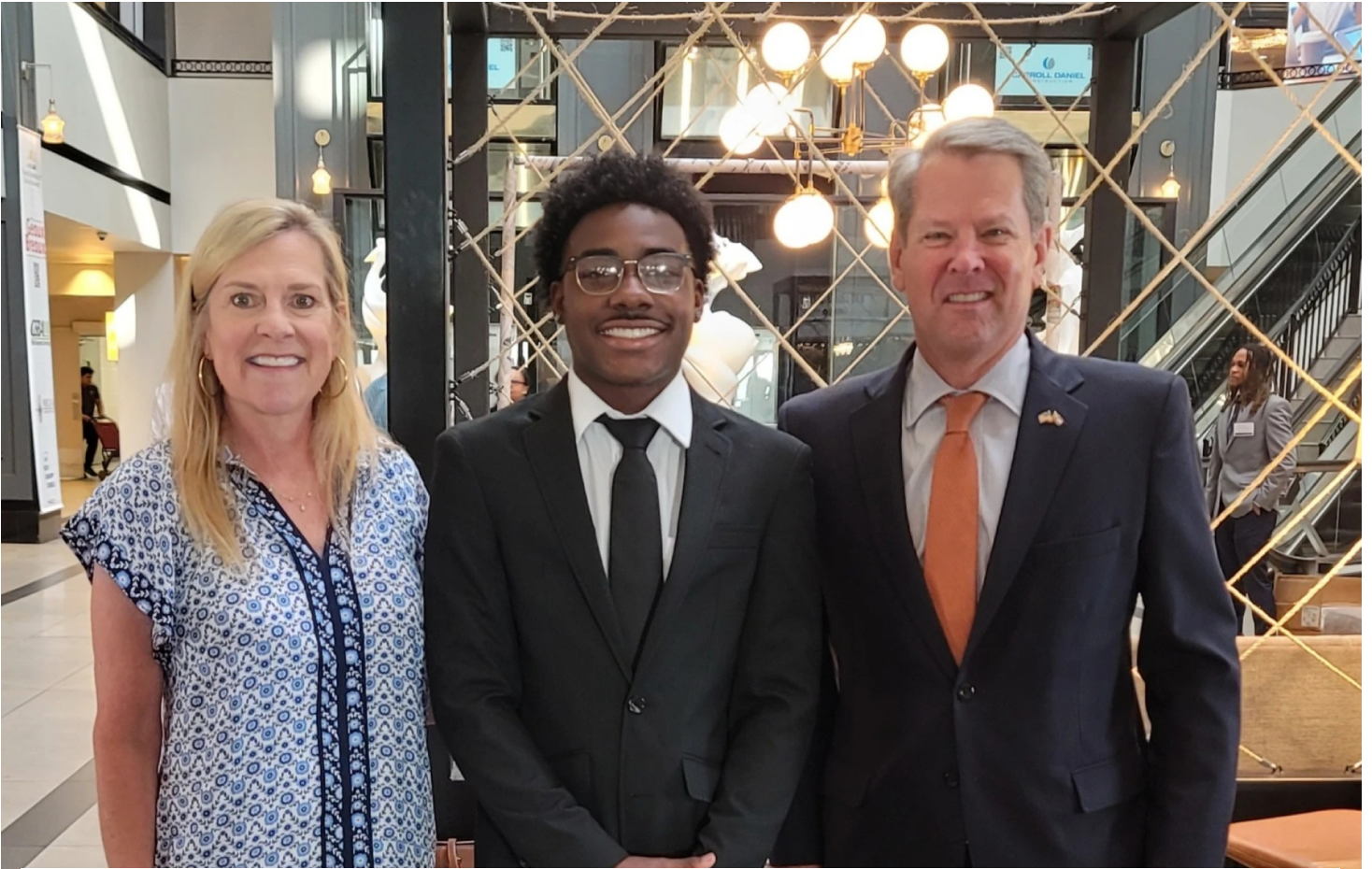
Q: Which clubs, organizations and/or sports do you want to participate in at GCSU?

A: I plan on joining a sorority and youth group. Joining these organizations will allow me to meet new people and get involved in school.

Q: What's one way you can make a difference in nursing?

A: I feel I can make a difference by being nice to people.

News Stories Posted Tuesday June 27, 2023



Georgia College Early College Student Inspires Others at GSBA Conference

[Early College](#) : Tuesday June 27, 2023

Story and photos provided courtesy of Baldwin County Schools.

Braylen K. Howell, a Georgia College Early College Student and a recent honors graduate from Baldwin High School, captivated the audience at the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) Conference with his inspiring presentation. As a student speaker, Howell shared his personal story of the transformative power of public education with conference attendees. His remarkable journey from Atlanta to Wilkinson County and ultimately to Baldwin County showcases the resilience and dedication of both himself and his mother.

Howell was chosen to speak because of the number of accolades he has accrued during his educational journey, including earning an Associate Degree of Applied

Science in Banking and Finance from Central Georgia Technical College, as well as an Associate of Science in General Studies, serving on the Milledgeville Main Street Board of Directors and the 4-H Board, and being a part of the 2023 Youth Leadership Baldwin cohort.

Throughout his speech, Howell reflected on the various stages of his educational journey. He highlighted the pivotal role educators and administrators played in his life. The Georgia College Early College (GCEC) program became a turning point, enabling Howell to explore new opportunities and experiences that defined his path. Howell's accomplishments speak volumes about the impact of public education on students' lives. He attributed a lot of his success to the culture and expectations instilled in him by the GCEC program. Howell's motivational speech left a lasting impact on the conference attendees and set the stage for his upcoming presentation at the Baldwin County School District Convocation.



**Braylen Howell with
Baldwin County
Schools
Superintendent Dr.
Noris Price**