

Front Page News Story Archive

July 2023



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News Stories Posted Friday July 7, 2023



GCSU students and young scientists mentor even-younger science campers

[Academic Outreach](#) : Friday July 7, 2023

Summer camp season has just wrapped up at Georgia College & State University. Students from across Georgia were here to participate in sports, band, academic and other summer activities.

For Science Camp this year, students had a mystery to solve. Students picked “mysteries” for the theme. Before it concluded, rising sixth through ninth graders investigated and forensically analyzed a mock crime scene.

They didn’t work alone. High schoolers in the university’s Young Scientist Academy and student volunteers in Georgia College’s Science Education Center supervised and supported pupils from local middle schools.

Christopher Townsend, a seventh grader at Georgia College’s Early College, is excited by marine biology and anatomy. He jumped at the chance to attend Science Camp.

"I feel grateful for this opportunity and to be mentored here," Townsend said. "I just like science. It's always been my dream, and this event is really memorable."

His mentor, Ayesha Patel, is a rising junior in Early College and a veteran of the Young Scientist Academy.

"It's an interesting thing, because I've never mentored before," Patel said. "But teaching them is really fun and it's making me more interested in chemistry, as well. It's a good opportunity for both of us to learn."

"I might want to go into forensics one day, or maybe one of the science campers may want to pursue chemistry just because of what we're learning," she said.

Georgia College Science Education Center volunteers organized the event. They supervised and assisted both groups of students, as well.



Ayesha (center) helps Christopher (right) take fingerprints at his station as Dr. Catrena Lisse (left) looks on.



Cole Smith (center) is a rising senior at Georgia College and avid volunteer.

"We fake-murdered people at the crime scene, flung fake blood everywhere, set up all the evidence and then arranged the evidence so people could be rolled out one-by-one to each station," said rising Georgia College senior and chemistry major, Cole Smith.

"We're always doing stuff like this," he said. "The Science Education Center does a lot of

outreach, spreading the love of science. We're always running around volunteering with Dr. Catrena Lisse."

Academically-focused Science Camp is the collaborative effort of Academic Outreach and the Science Education Center at Georgia College. Last week concluded the two-week camp, making 2023 their 20th year engaging local students excited by the subject.

“It’s important to give everybody the opportunity to get hands-on science, because they may or may not have those opportunities in the classroom,” said Ruth Eilers, director of Academic Outreach.

“They’re already curious, and any opportunity to foster that and keep it going—get that analytical mind working on those critical thinking skills regardless of what they end up doing—is super important.”



Fingerprinting was just one station students experienced.

News Stories Posted Monday July 10, 2023



Student's respectful fortitude earns her a place in Bobcat history

[Student Life, Office of](#) : Monday July 10, 2023

When rising senior Sydni Adams stood up for herself, Cindy Trusty noticed.

Trusty, the community director of Foundation Hall and advisor to the Resident Student Association (RSA), nominated Adams for Georgia College & State University's 2023 Leadership in Moral Courage Bobcat Award. It includes a \$1,000 academic scholarship for her diplomatic response to a situation regarding RSA. Adams won the award.

The organization faced several hardships early spring semester with the loss of nearly all executive board members. Only three students were left on the executive board, and they had to compensate by sharing the remaining tasks. So, Adams, as the national coordinating chair, took on additional duties.

As new members were recruited, the RSA president placed them into new positions to lighten the load on the original, hardworking board members. However, this resulted in delegating some of Adams' positions. Adams wasn't present when another student was assigned her preferred roles.

She discussed the position changes with the RSA president. Then, Adams met with the RSA president and an advisor to consider the reasons her duties were delegated. Although Adams understood, she expressed concern over a decision that should've been made in her presence and with her approval.

Despite her concern, Adams remained professional throughout the transition, mentoring a newly delegated RSA member.

"Sydni maintained a sweet disposition through it all," Trusty said. "She gracefully communicated her dissatisfaction with the action and was understanding and forgiving. It was truly impressive and something I rarely witness—even in people twice her age."



Sydni Adams



Left to right: GCSU President Cathy Cox, Sydni Adams and Interim VP for Student Life Dr. Dan Nadler

Adams was surprised when she won the 2023 Leadership in Moral Courage Bobcat

Award.

"I was honored to receive this award, because everything I do is out of the kindness of my heart," she said. "I never expect anything in return."

Adams felt it was important to speak up, because she wanted to ensure decisions were discussed before becoming final. She's pleased with the results. This experience taught her there's a right way to speak to others.

"Everyone apologized, and we moved forward," she said. "There was more communication among everyone in RSA."

"Confrontation doesn't have to be negative—it can always be positive," Adams said. "I love learning from other people. And I've learned that not everyone communicates how I might want them to. So, it's about being respectful of that."

When Adams graduates with her criminal justice degree in May 2024, she will pursue her master's degree in sports management and as a juris doctor. She'd like to be an attorney for MLB, NBA or NFL players or other professional athletes.

In her career, she plans on using the leadership skills that landed this award.

"It can be a very vulnerable time for clients," Adams said. "So, it's important to have open communication in a respectful tone between both parties."

Although Adams didn't have anything to lose by speaking up for herself, she gained self-confidence.

"Always go with your gut feeling, even if you're afraid of the consequences," Adams said.

“

Confrontation doesn't have to be negative—it can always be positive. I love learning from other people. And I've learned that not everyone communicates how I might want them to. So, it's about being respectful of that.

- Sydni Adams

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"No matter how big or small the action seemed in the moment, she showed moral courage with a pleasant disposition, by advocating for herself and being a team player," Trusty said.

Adams continues to have a profound presence in her community. In addition to holding leadership positions with RSA and Student Government Association (SGA), she recently pledged to Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and will become a community advisor on West Campus beginning fall semester.

Trusty wants Adams to continue being confident for years to come.

"I encourage you to continue exercising your strength to say no, setting boundaries and sharing your perspective with compassion, patience and understanding for those around you, which you have succeeded in doing," Trusty said. "People, like you, who voice their concerns and confront issues head-on are the ones who change the world for the better."



Recent public health alumna leads sales for The Hershey Company

[Health & Human Performance, School of](#): Monday July 10, 2023

In mid-June, Alyssa Daniel, '23, started working for The Hershey Company as a territory sales lead. She's responsible for 25 stores, including Kroger, Publix and Walmart—all located west of Atlanta.

Most weekdays, she builds and maintains business relationships with key decision makers, analyzes store data and develops action plans to help maximize sales.

"Through those relationships," Daniel said, "we can get the best placement of products in the store so our sales and the store's sales will increase."

The former public health and marketing student discovered her passion for retail when she was a summer sales associate for Carter's and Oshkosh apparel company. Daniel was pleased with the



Alyssa Daniel

process when she applied to The Hershey Company.

Everyone was supportive, and the company was team oriented. She got a company car and moving expenses paid.

Georgia College & State University propelled Daniel into this career by helping her develop teamwork and professional skills. She majored in public health and minored in marketing. Dr. Damian Francis, assistant professor of public health and director of the Center for Health and Social Issues, was her favorite professor. Daniel participated in many of his community outreach events such as the Breast Cancer Awareness Walk.

She was a member of the Public Health Student Club, Cru Ministry and Alpha Omicron Pi Sorority. Belonging to these organizations helped her grow.

Daniel also served as director of Alumni Relations for Alpha Omicron Pi, where she maintained the sorority's alumni database and kept them apprised of upcoming events. She even planned a family event with more than 200 guests.



One of the superhero palettes at the front action alley at one of Alyssa Daniel's Walmart stores.

"That was a huge step in developing my leadership skills, because I can be a bit

reserved,” Daniel said. “These organizations helped push me outside of my comfort zone and become the person I am today.”

Her group projects in public health developed her teamwork skills and passion to serve others. For her community health class, she contributed 58 service hours to Communities in Schools, a nonprofit organization that provides tutors and academic support to students. She tutored first- and third-grade students at Midway Hills Academy and Lake View Primary School in Milledgeville.

“I loved being able to work with the students and give back to an organization that is further educating and impacting future generations,” Daniel said.

“

Every day is different. I really enjoy this, because I look at each day as a new opportunity to make a difference and represent The Hershey Company well. I'm always looking for ways to better meet the needs of my customers and to be a consultative business partner.

- Alyssa Daniel

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“Dr. Francis always made class very engaging and pushed me to grow personally and professionally,” she said. “He also opened the door to get me an internship with Community Health Care Systems, Inc.”

Daniel plans to model her professional approach after Francis with his unwavering smile, positive attitude and willingness to put others before himself.

“He encouraged us to ask questions if we needed help or were confused with something,” Daniel said. “Asking questions helps you understand the problem, so you can come up with a solution.”

At Hershey’s, Daniel enjoys the challenge each workday brings. She works independently but still as part of a team. Daniel had no idea what to expect when starting her new position—but the supportive environment helped ease her into her daily duties.

“Every day is different,” she said. I really enjoy this, because I look at each day as a new opportunity to make a difference and represent The Hershey Company well. I'm always looking for ways to better meet the needs of my customers and to be a consultative business partner.”

Starting a new job can be scary. She advises fellow recent graduates to take a

breath and have confidence in their abilities.

“You're not going to know everything going in,” Daniel said. “Just learn a lot from your teammates and get to know them, because they're always there to help and push you to become a better employee.”



Alyssa Daniel, second from right in the second row, at a baseball-themed regional team meeting.



Renowned photographer and alumnus knows the secret behind compelling photos

[Art, Department of](#) : Monday July 10, 2023

In May 2022, the town of Uvalde, Texas, became known for a tragic mass school shooting. A year later, [Rolling Stone covered the Mariachi team](#)—comprised of high school students and their instructor—who used music to help alter the unsettled feeling of the residents.

José Ibarra Rizo, '14, captured it all through the lens of his camera.



Photo credit: José Ibarra Rizo

Uvalde High School's Mariachi Band and their music director, Albert Martinez, who's pictured in back-left.

His photos affirmed the pride people felt for their town and touched individuals worldwide. What makes his pictures so compelling are the people he connects with.

"I see my portraits as collaborations," Ibarra Rizo said. "So, having the subjects' trust for this article, I had to get to know them and understand their perspectives and interests, like performing Mariachi."

"We have that relationship and understanding of what we're doing by showing the world that they're uplifting themselves through their music—their strength and willingness to persevere shows through in the photos," he said.

Photo journalism is Ibarra Rizo's passion. In October 2022, he asked a photo editor at Rolling Stone for a portfolio review and how he could get people-oriented opportunities. The editor responded in April 2023 by asking if Ibarra Rizo was available for the photo project in Uvalde.



José Ibarra Rizo

Ibarra Rizo jumped at the chance. More opportunities followed. His work has been published in The Guardian and will appear in Time Magazine in August.

“

It's important in my profession and my other career as an artist to always learn new things and push for excellence. Creating images is about storytelling. It's about using photos to share with a wider audience what someone else's reality looks like—essentially to see the humanity in ourselves.

- José Ibarra Rizo

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This fall, his creative works will be exhibited at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta in collaboration with Aperture magazine, as part of a larger exhibition called “Picturing the South.” Ibarra Rizo’s work is also part of the museum’s permanent collection.

He also applies his artistic talents as a social media and digital content manager for a law firm.

“I love using creative skills in my job,” Ibarra Rizo said. “I also collaborate with the photographer and videographer to create content that speaks to our audience. Having that creative freedom is important to me.”

He’s always had a creative side to him. His talent was nurtured at Georgia College & State University, where he majored in art.

Javier Francisco, interim executive director of Admissions and former photography instructor, was instrumental in Ibarra Rizo’s decision to attend Georgia College. He also became his mentor. They spoke about photography often.

“The attention I received from Javier convinced me that I was going to a place to help me get on the right track,” Ibarra Rizo said. “I’m the first in my family to ever leave for college, so I felt like I had someone to be that guy I needed at that time.”

One of his professors, Valerie Aranda, taught most of his drawing and painting classes. Ibarra Rizo was a studio assistant in Aranda’s classes and participated in her study abroad program in Argentina.

“She gave me the opportunity to experiment and learn freely,” Ibarra Rizo said. “All my professors were devoted to their students. That really made a difference. She really opened the world for me and provided insight on what it means to be a professional artist.”



A Mariachi Band member

"I spent a lot of time with her thinking about painting, composition and color," he said. "The basics of composition would be one of the key things that I learned from her."

Composition considers the background, middle and foreground of a picture and how a subject occupies space. It plays a big role in making a picture captivating and successful.

Ibarra Rizo picked up photography in 2017 using composition and color concepts he learned at Georgia College.

"I used to paint a lot of portraits, but now I'm photographing

portraits," Ibarra Rizo said. "I'm still using those same skills I learned. Some people have described my photographs to look as though they're painted."

Anything worth having takes a lot of work, especially in the creative field. Ibarra Rizo knows this and applies the diligence and problem-solving skills he learned at Georgia College daily. Capturing special moments is about the integrity of his pictures. He works hard, so individuals can cherish special moments-in-time from his pictures.

"It's important in my profession and my other career as an artist to always learn new things and push for excellence," Ibarra Rizo



A Mariachi Band member

said. “Creating images is about storytelling. It's about using photos to share with a wider audience what someone else’s reality looks like—essentially to see the humanity in ourselves.”

News Stories Posted Tuesday July 11, 2023



New director of Alumni Relations is ready to bring Bobcats together

[University Advancement](#) : Tuesday July 11, 2023

Nadirah Ross Mayweather, '08, '10, loves making connections with fellow Bobcats. It's something she thrives at.

In her new role as director of Alumni Relations for Georgia College & State University—she'll mix her prior knowledge and new experiences to continue connecting alumni with campus and each other.

"I love Georgia College," she said. "I've worked in different areas on campus and learned how this institution is fashioned over the years. One of the things I love about this place is it has this special way of drawing people here."

Mayweather was director of the Cultural Center for nearly four years. During that time, she built



relationships with students, faculty, staff and alumni.

Nadirah Mayweather

She started “Tupperware Tuesday,” which gave students a place to gather and have a meal among friends. Oftentimes, they had a speaker or did onboarding activities, so the event grew.

“We had to make sure our underrepresented students were doing well, and they felt heard and seen,” Mayweather said. “That became a huge part of my role—to make sure our students knew Georgia College supported them and understood what was happening in the world.”

Mayweather was also on the Office of Inclusive Excellence Planning Committee for the Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast, held every January. In addition, she assisted with the Life Mentorship Program that matches incoming students with upperclassmen and a faculty or staff member. Last fall, she added alumni to the mix as professional mentors, which strengthened the program.



Nadirah Mayweather speaks at the Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast.

Mentoring students was Mayweather’s most meaningful accomplishment. She had mentors as a Georgia College student, and she appreciated their guidance.

“We have some phenomenal students here,” she said. “I was blessed to serve in that capacity. To help connect them to resources and watch them grow as they went through Georgia College was rewarding. These

experiences came full circle.”

As an undergraduate, Mayweather majored in mass communication with a public relations focus and earned her Master of Arts in teaching with a concentration in English for sixth through 12 grades.

Although Mayweather loved serving in her most recent role, she’s excited to transition into her new position.

“If you join the Bobcat family, you are a special part of what makes this place great,” she said. “I see my new position as an opportunity to keep people connected to the institution. I’ve been able to do that with students, faculty, staff and community members. Now, I’d like an opportunity to do that in a greater capacity with alumni.”

“

It's important to make sure that the Bobcat family feels important, seen and heard. We must nurture one of our biggest assets—our Bobcat family—to make sure they're connected and engaged.

- Nadirah Mayweather

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Mayweather wants alumni to have the resources they need to stay connected. She'd also like to tap into their resources, as well. She sees this as a win for both alumni and Georgia College.

“We don't just woo students from recruitment and end it at graduation,” she said. “They need to feel like they're Bobcats for life.”

For starters, Mayweather plans to listen and learn from University Advancement staff and alumni. She wants to keep alumni coming back to the university.

“I want to figure out how we can do that in a larger capacity, so alumni always feel, when they return to this institution—even if it is changed, they'll have a genuine connection to it,” Mayweather said. “I want to find out what's worked well and what their wishes are so we can help fulfill those needs.”

Mayweather also plans to explore new events to grow engagement. Building connections is key to keeping alumni excited about returning and engaging with Georgia College. She's also excited to learn more about alumni experiences from their campus days until now, so her team can highlight their accomplishments.



Nadirah Mayweather

“It's important to make sure that the Bobcat family feels important, seen and heard,” she said. “We must nurture one of our biggest assets—our Bobcat family—to make sure they're connected and engaged.”

Mayweather plans to keep focus on the people who helped make Georgia College what it is today. That includes faculty, staff, students and alumni—all who understand what it is to be a Bobcat—and help them build connections with fresh

waves of students.

“Part of creating a Bobcat nation is to have all the generations connected,” she said. “I think there's room for growth and an opportunity for us to do that.”

For fun, Mayweather enjoys spending time with her three boys: Jacob—eight months old, Josiah—age 3 and Jeremiah—age 6 and her husband, Jeremy. She also loves to garden, read, do arts and crafts and create planners.

News Stories Posted Thursday July 13, 2023



Class of 2027: New education major created a book exchange in his hometown

[Orientation](#) : Thursday July 13, 2023

Clayton Exum

From: Adel, Georgia.

Why Georgia College & State University: I chose Georgia College because of the environment. Georgia College felt perfect from the moment I first visited campus. You truly feel welcomed by everyone as soon as you arrive! I also appreciate the excellent teaching programs offered here. Georgia College values learning through experience which will best prepare me for a career in teaching.

Major: I'll be majoring in Middle Grades Education with a focus on English and social studies. Education has always been a major passion of mine. I have been blessed with so many inspiring teachers, and I hope to continue down the path my

teachers laid out for me. Working with kids in the Cook County Schools has strengthened my passion for helping others learn. It's very fulfilling to be able to observe the changes you made in someone's education and development.

Being the rare male in education:

Being one of the few men entering the field of education has taught me how to fit in with any crowd. I recognize the significance of my role, as I will be one of the few male figures that students can look up to and rely on. We need more men to

join the education career field, particularly in younger grades, because this provides positive male role models for students to look up to and trust.

High school activities: At Cook High School, I was Key Club president my junior and senior years. I was also a part of the Anchor and BETA clubs. Through these clubs I was able to participate in community service projects in my community. In Key Club, I also had the privilege of leading these projects. I was chosen to be a member of our local Chamber of Commerce Jr. Board, which allowed me to collaborate with community leaders and contribute to the

development of our community. Through the Work-Based Learning Program, I worked at Cook Primary School as an assistant teacher in our Early Learning Center and as a teacher in the Extended Day program.

What he enjoyed most: Out of all my activities, I probably enjoyed Key Club the most. It allowed me the opportunity to lead my fellow members to serve the public and become better community members. This club helped me break out of my shell and understand the importance of contributing to the community I belong to.



Alternate Text



Alternate Text

Biggest high school achievement: I consider the creation of three separate “Take-One, Leave-One” libraries in my hometown as my greatest accomplishment in high school. I managed this project as president of the Key Club, and I take great pride in successfully completing it. Access to books is important for a community’s success, and I’m honored to have made a contribution in my hometown. These Take-One, Leave-One libraries provide opportunities for everyone in my community to engage with literature. Being able to make a positive impact on literacy and access to books is something I hold in high regard and consider a significant achievement.

“

Once I was employed with the school system, this made me really realize how much I love education. It allowed me to experience how amazing it feels to watch students achieve goals for themselves. I’m so proud of how much the students I’ve worked with have grown over a year. Witnessing that growth shows how important a teacher’s job is. I will forever be grateful for my job at the primary school and for the amazing students I was able to help teach.

- Clay Exum

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An experience that made him grow as a person: Once I was employed with the school system, this made me really realize how much I love education. It allowed me to experience how amazing it feels to watch students achieve goals for themselves. I’m so proud of how much the students I’ve worked with have grown over a year. Witnessing that growth shows how important a teacher’s job is. I will forever be grateful for my job at the primary school and for the amazing students I was able to help teach.

Activities he plans to pursue in college: I plan to join the College Middle Level Association (CMLA) at Georgia College to continue my passion for education. I’m excited to become part of a community of individuals who share a similar passion for education and are dedicated to making a positive impact in the field.

I also plan to participate in study abroad. This will allow me to observe the way education works in places outside America. Teaching has no set method; it’s ever-evolving. Being able to witness other methods will be very beneficial in developing my personal teaching style.

What he most looking forward to in college: I look forward to having new experiences and meeting new people. I hope to form long-lasting connections with people who share my passions. College is about growth, not only academically, but also socially and mentally. I am eager to embrace the challenges and experiences that will contribute to my overall growth as an individual.

What he brings as an individual to college: What will make me stand out the most is my work ethic. I'm always ready to get to work and finish a project. This—mixed with my love for community service—is something I hope to use to benefit Georgia College.



Alternate Text

His future: After college, I plan to go back and teach in my hometown of Adel, most likely as a high school English teacher. This way, I can work alongside teachers who have guided me for the past two years. Eventually, I plan to get my master's in Secondary Education at Georgia College. A big hope of mine is to give back to the community and people who've helped me so much.

News Stories Posted Monday July 17, 2023



Design Thinking in International Teams: business students beyond the classroom

[Information Systems & Computer Science, Department of](#): Monday July 17, 2023

Global expansion and technology advances have increased the need for individuals who can solve business problems effectively in international teams.

[Discover more about how students collaborated to use Design Thinking and international teamwork in solving a real organizational problem.](#)

Georgia College & State University students had a unique opportunity to work in an international team this summer, virtually and in person, to solve a real business problem for an organization using Design Thinking.

"This summer is the fourth year we have offered the Work Practicum in Design Thinking course and the first time that the German students and faculty traveled to work with us in Georgia," said Associate Professor of Information Systems, Dr. Joy

Godin. “This course is always full of excitement and learning for our students. It is one of my favorite courses to teach because the growth achieved by the students’ professionally, academically and personally is truly extraordinary.”

Students were trained in Design Thinking, a human-centered approach to creative problem solving, by Georgia College faculty and executives from SAP—a multinational software company.

They were given a strategic Design Thinking project from an organization. This year’s project was provided by Southwire, one of the largest wire and cable producers in the world. Southwire worked with Celonis, a global leader in execution management, to develop their project problem statements.

“Participating in the process mining workshop at Celonis with Southwire was a highlight, because I learned so much about the industry and about the possibility of a career in process mining,” said management information systems major Ryley Cole.

Students traveled to New York City to meet and work with Southwire and Celonis business process leads and attended a lunch with Infosys—an information technology company—to learn about consulting in information systems as a career.

“

We really got a taste of what it’s like to work and problem solve for an organization.

- Aaliyah Turman

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“We really got a taste of what it’s like to work and problem solve for an organization,” said junior MIS major, Aaliyah Turman. “Working on this project has opened my eyes to all the opportunities there are in the field.”

In June, Georgia College students partnered with students from the University of West Georgia and the University of Münster in Germany to complete the project and present their solutions to Southwire and Celonis.

“Working in an international team has been a valuable experience for me because it offered unique challenges,” said MIS major Christian Davies. “This project helped me improve my communication skills, my willingness to adapt and my acceptance of other ideas. I will continue to use design thinking when trying to solve problems.”

Discover more about how students collaborated to use Design Thinking and international teamwork in solving a real organizational problem in the video.

“Working in a global team can be intimidating, especially for someone who hasn’t had the opportunity to travel a lot or experience different cultures,” said MIS Savannah Parris. “It was an exciting project...I loved how all of our different thinking styles came together when using Design Thinking and how it helped us solve the problems that Southwire is having.”



For physics major, GCSU is a family experience

Orientation : Monday July 17, 2023

Incoming physics major Pouriya Mosayebi of Milledgeville and his parents are originally from Iran. Since his family moved to the United States about seven years ago, he's learned a lot about Georgia College & State University.

It helps that his mother, Dr. Mehrnaz Khalaj Hedayati, and father, Dr. Mohsen Mosayebi, both are assistant professors of management here.

Over the course of 12 years, Pouriya's attended seven different schools in five counties, two states and two countries. Because of this, moving to a new environment comes naturally—but so does excelling.

He won the Baldwin County Blaze Award—a \$500 scholarship given to graduating seniors with the highest ACT scores from three local high schools.



Pouriya Mosayebi

“Among the most valuable things I’ve learned in these seven years—whether it be from friends, family, achievements or memories—the most common factor has always been education,” Pouriya said. “I would not be where I am today if it wasn’t for my education.”

While attending Georgia Military College Preparatory School, Pouriya’s biology teacher told him about universities that provide independent research opportunities to high school students.

This sparked his curiosity. He asked his mother to talk to her colleagues and see if any opportunities were available for him. A few weeks later, she learned about the Young Scientists’ Academy (YSA) at Georgia College.

YSA is led by Dr. Catrena Lisse, professor of chemistry and director of the Science Education Center. The academy familiarizes rising high school seniors with chemistry and hands-on research.

“

I chose GCSU, because the faculty met with me and showed me around even if I showed up unannounced. When I went to speak with professors in the science department, they immediately treated me as a member of their community and graciously showed me the labs I’d have access to throughout my time at Georgia College.

- Pouriya Mosayebi

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“We learned the basics of lab safety and how to read papers from professional scientific journals, Pouriya said. “It also boosted our confidence, as Dr. Lisse mentored us through making and presenting a slideshow about our work.”

“These skills and many others will put us a step ahead of the rest of the incoming class, and in turn, ease our transition into college life,” he said.

Pouriya had plenty of mentors at GMC Prep and is excited to learn even more from his future mentors at Georgia College. He looks forward to participating in organizations on campus.

Although he applied to different universities, Georgia College was the best choice for him, because it offered an extensive and affordable education in a familiar environment.

"I chose GCSU, because the faculty met with me and showed me around even if I

showed up unannounced," he said. "When I went to speak with professors in the science department, they immediately treated me as a member of their community and graciously showed me the labs I'd have access to throughout my time at Georgia College."

He decided to major in physics because of Dr. Ken McGill, professor of chemistry and physics. McGill gave him a tour of the physics classrooms and labs and talked about the opportunities Pouriya would have as a physics major, which includes the dual-degree engineering program with Georgia Tech.

Pouriya's hobbies include working with electronic components and cars. But he realizes that may change tomorrow.

"Whatever the future holds for me, I hope that it has something to do with building and creating new things," Pouriya said, "because that is what I find most fascinating in life."

News Stories Posted Tuesday July 18, 2023



Class of 2027: Leadership-skilled business major is already career oriented

Orientation : Tuesday July 18, 2023

Max Mayers

Where are you from? I live in Atlanta.

What's your major? I'm majoring in business and am undecided.

Why did you choose this major? I chose business, because both my parents are in real estate. I've grown up around that business, and I may want to follow in their footsteps.

What are your plans once you graduate? I may get my MBA in business. Or maybe I'll live in Jupiter, Florida, and go into sales or something similar.

Why do you want to live in Jupiter, Florida? It has a lot of golf courses. I just got into golf this summer.

Why do you want to pursue a career in real estate? I feel like I'd be good at it, and it's interesting.

At what age did you decide this would be your career goal? I was in my freshman or sophomore year of high school when I decided on getting into real estate.



Max Mayers

How long were you in France and Spain this summer? I was in France and Spain for nine days. Before that, I took a trip to Turkey and Switzerland for 17 days with my dad.

What are a few highlights of your trip? I enjoyed spending time with my family, seeing all the different culture and the food.

What was your favorite cuisine? My favorite food was the pizza in France.

How long were you captain of the nationally ranked [Concorde Fire Soccer Club](#)? I was captain for one season.

What did serving as captain of the team teach you? It was a lot of work to get and keep our players motivated. I learned to stay positive in any situation.

Which Georgia College & State University organization or sport do you want to participate in? I want to join GCSU's Wakeboarding Club.

What are you most looking forward to at Georgia College? I'm excited to meet new people and build a bond with them.



Class of 2027: New nursing major follows in sister's footsteps

Orientation : Tuesday July 18, 2023



Alternate Text

Izabella Niedzialek of Cumming, Georgia, chose Georgia College & State University because she heard it had the best nursing program in the state.

She heard it from a reliable source too—her sister, who recently graduated from Georgia College and will be working at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

Like her sister, Niedzialek is good at science and math. But the nursing field was also attractive because she likes helping people and working with children. She thinks she'll work in pediatrics someday.

"I'd like to do something with kids. I love kids," Niedzialek said. "This past school year, I worked at an elementary school in their afterschool program every day. I supervised kids playing outside and helped them with their homework—just making sure they were having fun and being safe."

At West Forsyth High School, Niedzialek also did a lot of community service work

with Meals by Grace. She helped with food drives and donated canned goods. She enjoyed going to sports games, doing crafts and attending dances, as well.

At Georgia College, she's thinking of joining a sorority and maybe studying abroad. Her parents, Kasia and Jurek Niedzialek both immigrated to the United States from Poland in their 20s, looking for better work opportunities.

Her mother is from Katowice and her father from Kraków, Poland. The family goes back to their homeland often to see relatives. Niedzialek attended her cousin's wedding there this summer.

This travel experience makes Niedzialek want to see more of the world.

Until then, she looks forward to transitioning into college, learning about the nursing profession and meeting new people.

She thinks she'll bring a lot of "positivity" to campus.

News Stories Posted Wednesday July 19, 2023



Bobcats bound beyond: comparative economics in Berlin

[International Education Center](#) : Wednesday July 19, 2023

Few places exemplify the differences between communism and capitalism better than Berlin, Germany—where the East and West sides of the city were split along these ideological lines for 41 years.

So, what better place for Georgia College & State University students to examine those economic principles up close and personal?

Those were the thoughts of Dr. Cullen Wallace, assistant professor of economics, and Dr. Alex Scarcioffolo, who formerly taught economics at Georgia College. Together, they crafted “Comparative Economic Systems,” a 15-day study abroad program in Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany.

"The students were really able to take the theories and ideas we talked about and apply them with on-the-ground experiences," Wallace said. "For me, the biggest part of the experience was driving home the economic points they were learning by seeing it in real life, museums and memorials."



Josh Wilson, fourth from the right in the back row, inside the Reichstag building, where Germany's main legislative body is housed.

In addition to seeing museums, touring German Parliament and exploring the city, students of all academic backgrounds engaged in copious educational opportunities. They heard a first-hand account of life and economy in the separated German city by Dr. Michael Tolksdorf, professor of economics and law at HWR Berlin. Tolksdorf's been a resident of West Berlin since before the Berlin Wall fell.

"On one side of a city, not only are you in different countries, but you have different ways of life because of how the government and economies are set up," Wallace said. "It was almost too good to be true, and the students went through an experience that is still a little bit mind-boggling to me."

Before the trip, rising junior economics major Josh Wilson had never been on an airplane. After a scant, nine-hour trip, his entire worldview opened to entirely new possibilities.

"It was incredible," he said. "I can't envision myself staying in Georgia my whole life after just two weeks abroad. Everything was so different, and it's really crazy how everybody was so inviting. They wanted to teach us, help us learn and share their culture."

The group walked city tours with an emphasis on economic history, met representatives of the Federal Ministry of Finance and visited monuments from the Topography of Terror to burning of books memorial.

"When we went to the money bank in Frankfurt, we got to hold 100 trillion Deutsche Marks—little pieces of paper currency because of hyperinflation," Wilson said. "People in pre-war Germany sometimes burned it."

Wallace and Scarcioffolo want the trip to more than facts and figures, though. This trip hit the mark, they said.

“With study abroad, the experience is everything,” Wallace said. “It’s riding the subway, eating the food and seeing the museums. But, it’s also coming away with a more holistic learning experience that enables you to go back and have perhaps a better dialogue or approach when discussing polarizing economic concepts.”

When they weren’t immersed in the economic history of Germany, Wilson and other students on the trip rode trains to shops, dined in restaurants, sampled diverse cuisine and explored activities in the heart of Berlin.

“You’re not just learning economics,” Scarcioffolo said, “you’re learning culture, how people behave and a wide range of things just by being there. When you experience this idea that there are opportunities outside your country it broadens your idea of what you can do.”

In the future, Wilson wants to help people manage their money. After this experience, he’s ready to take on whatever comes his way—including visiting somewhere abroad again.

“I wanted to do something that was a big risk—a big reward type thing—and I’m really glad I did,” he said. “It’s shown me there’s so much more. And it’s given me a much deeper understanding, not only of overseas politics, but also that I need to do more here, like shadowing at other banks.”

Many forms of financial assistance are available for students wanting to experience study abroad programs at Georgia College. The GCSU Study Abroad Program Scholarship and New Horizons Scholarship are designed to help students travel to their preferred destinations.

In addition, study abroad program advisors help match interested students to



The group of multidisciplinary students toured Berlin and then Frankfurt, Germany over the course of 15 days.

Georgia College partners for scholarships or grants to fund the program costs.

This and more can be found on [the International Education Center's scholarships and funding page](#), by reaching out to studyabroadinfo@gcsu.edu or visiting financial aid staff in Parks Hall 103.

"If you have the opportunity to go, whether it's Berlin for economics or any other program, any of them will change your perspective," Wallace said. "It's a mile marker in your educational experience."

News Stories Posted Thursday July 20, 2023



Class of 2027: Emily Agi blazes her own trail

Orientation : Thursday July 20, 2023

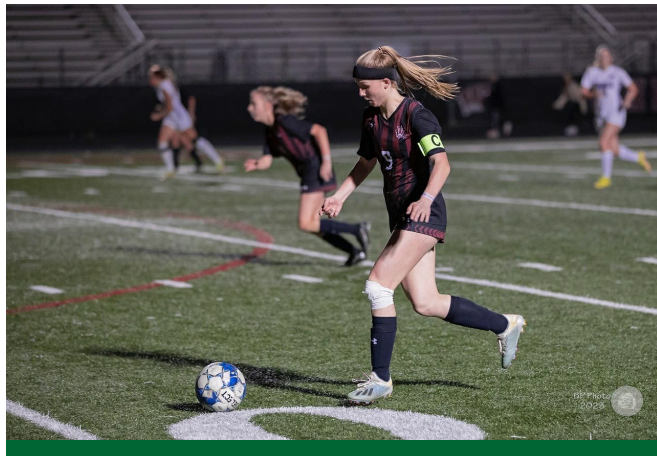
When first-year student Emily Agi attends Georgia College & State University, she will be the third of three Agi siblings to be a Bobcat.

The Brooks, Georgia family sent both her brother, Ben, and sister, Anna, to Milledgeville. Completing this clean sweep of Agi siblings, Emily is looking for a different kind of hat-trick this fall—as a member of the GCSU Soccer team.

“When I first started looking for schools, it felt so overwhelming,” Agi said. “You don’t really know what your options are. Having Anna and Ben both go to Georgia College made it easier.”

“Once I started the recruitment process for soccer, I went to a bunch of schools. When I finally came to GCSU for an ID camp, it felt way more welcoming than any other college camp I had done.”

Brother Ben began at GCSU in fall 2021 in the pre-engineering track and transferred to the University of Georgia last semester to finish that degree. Sister Anna came to GCSU in the fall of 2019 and completed her biology undergrad in spring 2023. She's now pursuing a master's in biology at Georgia College, while wrapping up her final year as a Bobcat Cross Country runner.



Emily Agi drives down the field in a high school match

"Anna has made all of these connections in the athletic department and on campus," Agi said. "To have immediate connections with the coaches and to (director of athletics) Wendell Staton was great. It was also helpful to have Ben and Anna show me around the town and campus, as well as telling me about the best restaurants and spots to go in Milledgeville."

"Anna is so protective, she's like a second mom sometimes," Agi said. "I know she's doing it to look out for me, but it's funny how she can make rules and Ben and I just will abide by them."

But her sister knows the path to success as a GCSU student-athlete. A two-time All-Peach Belt Conference (PBC) runner that has positions all over the school record books, Anna is extremely driven and a high academic achiever. Anna is doing an internship this summer with SePRO in Whitakers, North Carolina doing algae identification for water quality.



Anna Agi

"Once my brother came down to Georgia College, we got a little closer, and I hope the same thing happens with Emily," Anna said. "Being a part of the athletic department will help her out a ton. When I joined the cross country team it felt like I found my long-lost friends. I hear she's already making friends with the other members of the team, and it will only get better from here."

As a criminal justice major, Emily is ready to explore.

She's not sure if she wants to go into field work or perhaps add a mass communication minor to go into the broadcast journalism side of the field but she knows she can seize an opportunity, just like she does on the soccer field.

"I have always been a very eager, excited—my parents would say crazy—enthusiastic person, full of energy," Agi said. "The position I play, right wing, features lots of running and full-force action. It amplifies the intensity of soccer for me. It energizes my personality and interest in soccer, because it's so driven and fast-paced. Knowing I'm part of the success in goal scoring is a confidence boost as well."

Emily's GCSU connections go beyond family.

"Head coach Jack Marchant and graduate assistant Lindsey Bolas kept great communication with me," Emily said. "They were enthusiastic and welcoming, appreciative of my efforts in soccer and the hard work I put in. I wanted to go somewhere where I felt wanted, and that made GCSU that much more desirable. It made me feel like I had a place."



Coffee for a Cause: GCSU students support adults with disabilities to serve 'common ground'

[Health & Human Performance, School of](#): Thursday July 20, 2023



Alternate Text

Millions of people use coffee every day to jump start their morning.

Adults with disabilities at the Life Enrichment Center (LEC) in Milledgeville are using it to jump start their careers and futures.

"It's given our individuals a renewed purpose and sense of pride and acknowledgement. It's something that they've accomplished, and so the world sees them in a different role," said LEC Executive Director Barbara Coleman.

"To be able to go to college and say I am a barista, I am a coffee truck worker—anything but I'm a person with a disability—this has enabled us to show the world we're more alike than different," she said. "If it wasn't for this campus and the commitment of faculty, staff and students—I'd hate to see what the lives of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in this community would look like. Georgia College has truly helped us rewrite the narrative."

“

Georgia College has truly helped us rewrite the narrative.

- Barbara Coleman, executive director of the Life Enrichment Center

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LEC participants worked hard to get to this milestone. First, they took classes at one of Georgia College & State University's food safety courses through the School of Continuing and Professional Studies (SCPS). Then, with help from students in the university's non-profit leadership course, they formed a partnership with Morning Grind, recently voted Best Coffee Shop in Milledgeville.

Through community sponsors, LEC purchased an air-conditioned coffee truck. Now it's mobile business, "Coffee for a Cause," is open Friday mornings at New City Church at the Mill on North Jefferson Street and will go where needed. They sell a variety of coffees, smoothies, muffins and sweetbreads. Its drip coffee, "Common Ground," is sold by the bag, as well.

Through coffee, the group is bringing people together and promoting tolerance.

They were at Ennis Hall recently, serving a steady crowd of people attending the Governor's Summit on Language and Childhood Literacy, hosted by the Sandra Dunagan Deal Center.

"The blend that we use, which we call 'Common Ground' is our brand, because we

believe everybody should be on common ground,” Coleman said. “We are so excited to be on campus where the dream started and let everybody see what happens when you work with college students and different departments—how you have your big idea, and they help make it a reality.”

Senior exercise science major Ariana Bridgett of Ellenwood, Georgia, started volunteering at LEC as a learning service for her practicum class. She went with LEC on an alternative spring break trip last semester to St. Simons Island, and she’ll be doing an internship with the organization this fall.



Alternate Text



Senior exercise major Ariana Bridgett helps out at Coffee for a Cause.

In the coffee truck, Bridgett supports LEC adults by overseeing their orders and helping where needed. They start the morning with good hygiene, washing their hands, and each day they incorporate a new lesson—like how to interact with customers and provide better service.

Working at the truck has given Bridgett a new appreciation for coffee. Iced caramel is her

favorite.

The experience is also helping Bridgett prepare for a career in Occupational Therapy (OT). She wants to work with adults who have special needs.

“I really wanted to get my foot into different populations with OT,” Bridgett said. “This has just opened up my eyes to a whole other world. With LEC, there's so many opportunities, and you get to work with so many different people.”

“They give me a huge hug when they're excited to see me,” she said. “They scream when anybody walks into the room. They're so excited that I showed up this morning, even though it's my job. They get really excited that I'm there every single day, even though they know I'm gonna be there the next day too. It's really, really cool, and it puts a big smile on my face every morning.”

Another Georgia College student working at “Coffee for a Cause” is Josie Cothram of Milledgeville. She’ll join GCSU Thrive this fall. It’s a two-year certificate program that gives adults with disabilities a chance to take amended college courses, get jobs and find a place in the community.

Josie wants to be a veterinary assistant, helping animals. Her job as a barista teaches her job skills, like getting to work on time. She likes serving people and especially enjoys preparing the business best seller: mocha coffee.

Her mother, Lisa Cothram, said Josie didn’t have friends before joining LEC. Working at the coffee truck gives her a sense of belonging and purpose. At night, she helps her mother make goodies, like blueberry pound cake and banana bread, to sell the next day.

“This is a stepping stone to her future and allows her to be part of the community,” Cothram said. “Five years ago, I wouldn’t have thought this would be a possibility for her. But it’s opened up so many doors and gives her a chance to do something and be active and feel like she’s a part of things.”

“To see that happiness in her—I can’t explain it,” she said. “There are no words.”



GCSU Thrive student Josie Cothram readies a smoothie for a customer.



Josie's mother, Lisa Cothram, hands out muffins and sweetbreads recently at Coffee for a Cause.

News Stories Posted Monday July 24, 2023



JROTC captain turned nursing scholar at GCSU

Orientation : Monday July 24, 2023

Priscilla Sepulveda is entering Georgia College & State University in the fall. But she wasn't just selected as a nursing student. She's was admitted as a Lettie Pate Whitehead Nursing Scholar.

She'll be a part of the Lettie Pate Whitehead Nursing Scholarship program, which provides a full scholarship including tuition, housing, meals and one study abroad program.

The program targets students from Central Georgia with financial need, so Georgia College can help close the gap of healthcare professionals in rural areas.

This is perfect for the Eatonton, Georgia, native, since Sepulveda has dreamed of becoming a nurse for as long as she can remember. Her mother, Evelin Tirado, said Sepulveda has loved helping others since kindergarten.

"Since I was young, I always liked babysitting—whether it was my little cousins or just daycare," she said. "I've always been attached to kids, and I want to be a

postpartum nurse.”

She’s prepared for the rigor of Georgia College’s nursing program, and she has her experience in JROTC to thank for that. The Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps, or JROTC, gives high school cadets leadership training in an effort to build responsible citizens.

“

I hope my education here will give me a foundation for when I leave. It'll help me in life.

- Priscilla Sepulveda

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During the four years she was in Putnam County High School’s JROTC program, Priscilla reached the rank of captain.

“I really fell in love with it, because it teaches you leadership, life and learning skills,” she said. “I helped the cadets fall in line—made sure their uniforms were right and everything they’re doing was right—so at inspection, they didn’t get in trouble.”

For now, Priscilla plans to explore her options at orientation and find what fits—while keeping in mind her studies in Georgia College’s nursing program come first. And, she said she’ll be joining the Leadership Academy.

“I hope my education here will give me a foundation for when I leave,” she said. “It’ll help me in life.”



Presidential scholar to pursue the law

[Economics & Finance, Department of](#) : Monday July 24, 2023

Finance major Sofia Legoff Flores is ready to jump with both feet into life at Georgia College & State University. The Columbus High School graduate is already familiar with campus.

Legoff attended the first Multicultural Student Leadership Conference at Georgia College last year, and she was awarded a presidential scholarship at the President's Scholarship Competition.

The MSLC is a program that introduces students to leadership through interactive sessions, student panels and collaborative projects. They stay in residence halls, work with current students and dine at the Maxwell Student Union.

Legoff intends to use her scholarship for a study abroad program in France or London. In the meantime, she'll try out, well, everything.

Q: Why Georgia College?

A: I did an orientation here, and I just loved it. I love the campus. I fell in love with all the facilities. And the environment was just so good.

Q: What did you do at the first MSLC?

A: We worked on our leadership skills, and we went to classes about leadership. At the end of it, we did a presentation about what leadership means to us and what a good leader is.

Q: What got you into finance?

A: I want to go to law school, and I feel like finance is the best degree that I have to sort of push me towards there. I want to try out everything. I got into making pottery last year, so I'm really interested in that too.

Q: Tell me about getting your presidential scholarship.

A: I did an interview, and then we did a mock class, and we argued about different sorts of topics. I really enjoyed it. It also really made me want to go to Georgia College, because of the small class sizes and the individual time that you would have with the professors.



Incoming finance major, Sofia Legoff Flores.

News Stories Posted Tuesday July 25, 2023



Students explore impact of cuisine on Italian and Greek culture

Twelve Georgia College & State University students got a close-up of the cultures in Italy and Greece this summer. They experienced new places, tastes and broadened their thinking by learning how local food is produced and processed. The students returned with skills they can use, and a new understanding of how foods help define culture.

"I structured the program to allow students to interact with local people, so they could get a truer picture of the culture and traditions of the places they visited," said Dr. Craig Pascoe, a history professor at Georgia College. "It opened a new world of knowledge for these students, seeing how cuisine reflects culture."

Students spent the first 10 days in Florence, Italy. They stayed in apartments in the historic district near the Mercato Ambrosia—the oldest market in the city. They toured historic sites and museums like the Uffizi Gallery, Accademia Museum, the Duomo (Florence Cathedral) and the Roman amphitheater in Fiesole, located in the hills above Florence.



Sydney Ryder with Florence, Italy in the background.



Sydney Ryder makes phyllo dough.

Their classrooms included farms, industries and businesses. They learned in kitchens, butcher shops and cooking schools.

Florence was Georgia College senior biology major Sydney Ryder's favorite place.

"I loved walking around in Florence, because we had about a five-minute walk to the Duomo and ate breakfast, lunch and dinner right next to it," Ryder said. "Just being able to walk to mostly anywhere was nice. Only some parts required a bus or train."

“

Meeting the chefs and taking cooking classes were such great experiences. I didn't just learn how to cook. I talked with chefs about their love for food and learned more about the chefs on a deeper level.

- Sydney Ryder

”

Students spent a few days at the Poggio Etrusco, an agriturismo located near Montepulciano in the Tuscan countryside. While there, they visited a hog farm that raises Cinta Senese pigs—pigs indigenous to the region. The group also went to Podere il Casale, a working goat farm where pecorino cheese is made, as well as La Foce, an estate dating back to the late 15th century.

They savored local Tuscan fare, hiked along the Via Francigena Road. During the Middle Ages, this road connected countries beyond the Western Alps to Rome. Rome was the main destination—along with Jerusalem and Santiago di Compostela—for European pilgrims.

Students also traveled to Panzano in Chianti to visit Antica Macelleria Cecchini, a 300-year-old butcher shop owned by the world-famous butcher Dario Cecchini. They got a demonstration and lecture and paid a visit to the farm where Chianina beef cattle—the world's largest domesticated cattle—are raised. The experience was capped off with a nine-course meal featuring Chianina beef.



Students take a break in the hot springs from their hike along the Via Francigena Road to San Quirico d'Orcia, Tuscany.

Several students had no real experience cooking, according to Pascoe. It was a challenge, but they learned to prepare dishes like Italian pici pasta to Greek flat breads.

Students experienced authentic cuisine through “learning dinners” at traditional Italian and Greek restaurants. They even had their first class at a local cooking school in Italy—which, for many, was the best part of their study abroad program.

This was true for Ryder. Learning from chefs was her favorite part.

“Meeting the chefs and taking cooking classes were such great experiences,” she said. “I didn’t just learn how to cook. I talked with chefs about their love for food and learned more about the chefs on a deeper level.”

The owner of Poggio Etrusco—a 350-year-old sharecropper home converted into a bed and breakfast and working farm with olive trees and a grape vineyard—is Pamela Sheldon Johns. She’s a well-known chef who has written over 15 cookbooks about Italian cooking and history. Students spent a day making Tuscan cucina povera (kitchen of the poor)—simple cooking comprised of a few local ingredients.

In Athens, Greece, students dined at a variety of restaurants and toured the Parthenon—a former temple on the Athenian Acropolis. Most students spent their free time at pristine beaches near Athens.

On the island of Kea, Greece, the group hiked in the hills to the ancient Lion of Kea, Greece, created almost 3,000 years ago. They traveled in fast boats to the site of Ancient Karthea, the greatest of four city-states in Kea during antiquity. The region is difficult to access, being on the southeastern side of the island, right above the Bay of Poles.

Students enjoyed two day-long cooking classes with Aglaia Kremezi, a well-known author of books on Greek Mediterranean island cooking. They also ate at local Greek tavernas where traditional dishes on Kea were served.



Students learn how to make picci pasta from chef and author Pamela Sheldon Johns.

“A 19th century writer wrote, ‘Show me what you eat, and I will show you who you are,’” Pascoe said. “This is what we do. What people eat reflects their traditions, history, surroundings—what foods they have access to—and environment—how the weather and their location impacts what they can produce.”

Ryder enjoyed learning all these aspects of food and culture. She plans to become a dentist. This study abroad program gave her insight into daily diets in different cultures. She wants to use this knowledge in her profession.

“It gave me more in-depth knowledge of how a dish that I’ve eaten and loved since childhood was created and how it influenced into what it is today,” Ryder said.

“Food can have such a great impact on your teeth. Knowing the cultural influence of different foods helped me to better understand oral health.”

Pascoe said all his students came away with memories and experiences they’ll carry with them for the rest of their lives.

“They have a better understanding and appreciation for different cultures and traditions, and most importantly,” he said, “what they learned during this experience is something they will never forget.”

Learn more about Georgia College & State University's [History](#) and [Study Abroad programs](#).



Class of 2027: Culinary artist aspires to use talents worldwide

[Philosophy Religion & Liberal Studies, Department of](#): Tuesday July 25, 2023

Certified ServSafe® manager Blair Henninger of Suwanee, Georgia, discovered her passion for cooking fine cuisine at age 14. She has been on the culinary career track in high school since that time and traveled on culinary study abroad programs to France in 2022 and Spain in 2023.

Henninger discovered the culinary arts when she experienced the world outside of the United States, traveling to Paris and London with her family when she was 14 years old.

Ultimately, she aims to pursue a career in culinary arts overseas.

She'll begin her journey majoring in liberal studies with a concentration in global studies at Georgia College & State University. She hopes to earn a certificate in Global Foodways Studies.



Blair Henninger makes paella in Valencia, Spain.

“

I want to see the world, find the connections between culture and cuisine and become involved with a food-related NGO where I can make a difference in food access and sustainability.

- Blair Henninger

”

Henninger can't wait to meet new people and find new interests on campus. She'd like to participate in the animal shelter club and the gardening club. She also wants to be a student ambassador.

She chose Georgia College because of the approachability of its people and its small size.

“I love how personal and friendly the people at GCSU were when I visited,” Henninger said. “I want to have a closer relationship with professors that I can only get at a smaller, liberal arts school.”

She aspires for a career that allows her to explore the world. She'd like to work with the state department or a non-governmental organization (NGO) on food access.

“I want to see the world, find the connections between culture and cuisine and become involved with a food-related, NGO,” Henninger said, “where I can make a difference in food access and sustainability.”

After her high school's Spain Global Foodways Study Abroad Program, she traveled to Greece to visit with her best friend who is from there and returns home in the summers.

“I was nervous—not just flying by myself from Madrid to Greece but flying back to Madrid and staying alone in a hotel,” Henninger said. “Then I flew from Greece to London then back home where I lost my luggage with the authentic Manchego cheese I bought for my family.”

As she looks back on traveling abroad alone, it was a challenge that she quickly overcame.

“I just did it,” Henninger said. “I realized I could travel alone, which was a huge



Blair Henninger in Greece.

boost in my feeling of independence.”

Learn more about Georgia College & State University's [Global Foodways Program](#), [Liberal Studies Major](#), or [Study Abroad opportunities](#).

News Stories Posted Wednesday July 26, 2023



Netflix actor, soccer player joins class of 2027 as exercise science major

[Health & Human Performance, School of](#): Wednesday July 26, 2023

Maybe you've seen Daniel Abi-Sarkis on Netflix's season four karate series, "Cobra Kai." He played Max. Or on season two of "DC's Stargirl" as Devin Dupree. Or in various other independent films and an anti-bully commercial.

Soon, you'll see him around campus too.

He looks forward to majoring in exercise science, having a good time, playing on the soccer team or in intramural sports with his friends and—oh yeah—keeping up his grades.

He likes pickleball too.

"I love the campus, and a lot of my friends are going here," Abi-Sarkis said.

He and his two brothers were first in their family to be born in America. His parents immigrated to the Atlanta area from Lebanon—his father, Habib, about 30 years ago and his mother, Jinny, in 1994. One brother graduated from Georgia Tech and is an industrial engineer. The other goes to Kennesaw State University and wants to do cybersecurity.

Abi-Sarkis, the youngest, is “the wild one.” He plans to move in a different direction—someday following his mother into physical therapy or, perhaps, sports medicine.



Alternate Text

[Exercise science](#) will prepare him for those fields. He looks forward to helping people and learning more about how the body functions.

But Abi-Sarkis also plans to continue acting and auditioning for roles in motion pictures.

He began his journey into acting in seventh grade. By 2019, he had performed roles in the junior version of “A Chorus Line” for the Chambers Performing Arts School in Dacula, Georgia and was cast in several independent movies like “Summer of Charlie” and “By the Campfire,” which won the Tampa Bay Underground Film Festival (TBUFF) award for Best Short Film.

In addition to some theatre performances—which included a lead role in “Les Misérables”—Abi-Sarkis did community service in the Rotary club and played sports in high school. He played soccer since age 3, mostly in the right-wing position but also midfield.

The Milton, Georgia resident has an agent and a private acting coach. His bio at [IMDb](#) says he’s skilled in stunt performance and excels at improvisation. He prefers the energy and realness of film to acting on stage. It’s exciting for him to work on set and in front of a camera.

Abi-Sarkis is especially interested in Georgia College & State University’s partnership with the [Georgia Film Academy](#), which offers courses toward a certificate in film, television, digital entertainment, Esports and video game development.

He hopes to weave all his interests together, while “having a good college experience.”



Political science major gains government experience as congressional intern

[Government & Sociology, Department of](#): Wednesday July 26, 2023

Junior Emily Lanham pinpoints the 2016 U.S. Presidential election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton as the pivotal moment in life that led her to politics.

Little did she know she'd soon be a Georgia College & State University intern in the nation's capital, working in U.S. Rep. Rick Allen's (R-GA) office and rubbing elbows with congressmen in the U.S. House of Representatives.

Allen oversees District 12 in Georgia—which includes Lanham's hometown, Augusta.

"I was ecstatic when I found out the news I got the internship and immediately called my dad, as he's the one who got me interested in politics," Lanham said. "It was at this moment I knew I was doing something I really loved."

Lanham applied to the "GC in DC" program, guided by Christine Amezquita, assistant director of the university's Pre-professional and Graduate School Planning program. The internship runs through Georgia College's Career Center, which helped more than 160 students—with majors like mass communication, public health, criminal justice, management and marketing—find internships this



summer.

They were located throughout Georgia and in other states, like Pennsylvania, to the capital region of Denmark, København.

More than 90% of employers say they'd hire Georgia College interns full time if given the opportunity, according to Chelsey Scoggins, an internship

coordinator at the Career Center. Employers value internship experience, because it demonstrates a student's practical application of skills, industry knowledge and readiness for the demands of the job market.

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Internships serve as an invaluable extension of the classroom, offering students the opportunity to explore potential career paths, while applying their academic knowledge and transferable skills in real-world settings.

- Chelsey Scoggins

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“I strongly encourage students to engage in these opportunities as early as possible,” Scoggins said. “Internships provide students the unique opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of different career paths—empowering them to explore their interests and make more informed decisions about their future careers.”

During her six-week placement, Lanham lived at Catholic University of America in the heart of Washington D.C. She attended hearings and briefings; wrote constituent letters; answered phones; and did research and other administrative tasks.

“I truly wanted to experience the legislative process hands on,” Lanham said. “I learned how to implement diplomatic language when dealing with differing opinions and enhanced my ability to articulate my thoughts into a formal document for others to read and understand.”

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This internship has been nothing short of proof that I'm on the right path for my future, and I am beyond satisfied with my area of study

- Emily Lanham

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The most challenging part was being alone in an unknown city. Going to a new place away from familiarity and learning city routines, like the metro system, was a little scary at first. But Lanham said she grew tremendously by stepping outside her comfort zone.

She felt able to do it with support from her political science professors, who encouraged her. They wrote recommendation letters and helped her practice for interviews. She feels ready to pursue her next step: law school and a possible run for office.

“This internship has been nothing short of proof that I'm on the right path for my future,” Laham said, “and I am beyond satisfied with my area of study.”

“I met some amazing fellow interns, staffers and members of Congress,” she said. “This internship has given me the confidence I needed to get involved in what interests me, and it showed me I'm capable of doing more.