

Front Page News Story Archive

August 2023



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News Stories Posted Tuesday August 1, 2023



GC Journeys wins AASCU's 2023 Excellence & Innovation Award

[GC Journeys](#) : Tuesday August 1, 2023

GC Journeys—a widely-acclaimed program at Georgia College & State University that ensures all students graduate with high-impact experiences in-and-outside the classroom—won the [American Association of State Colleges and Universities'](#) prestigious 2023 AASCU [Excellence & Innovation Award for Student Success and College Completion](#).

The AASCU awards committee selected [GC Journeys](#) “for its outstanding results and potential to influence and serve as a model for other institutions,” according to association President and CEO Mildred García. She congratulated Georgia College on its “noteworthy achievements and contribution to the higher education community.”

“We are thrilled that the GC Journeys program has been recognized for excellence and innovation,” said Georgia College President Cathy Cox. “This supportive program provides a roadmap, putting transformative practices in which students learn-by-doing at the center of every student’s campus experience. It prepares

them for today's workforce or graduate school in ways that traditional classroom experiences alone cannot."

"The AASCU award confirms our commitment to student success," Cox said, "and shows GC Journeys continues to be an effective catalyst for students to explore career pathways, engage with the local and global community, cultivate their critical thinking skills and develop into tomorrow's leaders."



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GC Journeys specifies five paths students can take for transformative outcomes. Three are required for all students to graduate: [First-year Experience](#), a yearlong debut of seminar-style classes, information literacy and activities to help students navigate college; [career planning](#) to guarantee early job exploration; and Senior Capstone, a faculty-mentored culminating project during senior year.

Students must also select at least two more transformative experiences: [mentored undergraduate research](#), [study abroad](#), [internship](#), [community-based engaged learning](#) or the [leadership](#) program.

When students undertake multiple high-impact practices, research shows they're more likely to graduate on time, get a job or go to graduate school. Top business leaders often say they're looking for the kind of skills gained in a liberal arts education.



Alternate Text

"Providing students with a well-rounded, highly engaged learning experience is the pillar of a Georgia College education," said Dr. Jordan Cofer, associate provost of Transformative Learning Experiences. "Our students graduate with authentic experience in solving complex problems and leadership. They enter the workforce having already participated in real-world settings. They know how to put ideas into action."

In 2020, the [National Survey of Student Engagement](#) (NSSE) showed Georgia

College first-year students entering college on the same level as their national peers. But by graduation, they exceeded their national peers in a variety of categories including collaborative learning; student-faculty interaction; supportive environment; reflective and integrated learning; and discussions with diverse others.

“

Our students graduate with authentic experience in solving complex problems and leadership. They enter the workforce having already participated in real-world settings. They know how to put ideas into action.

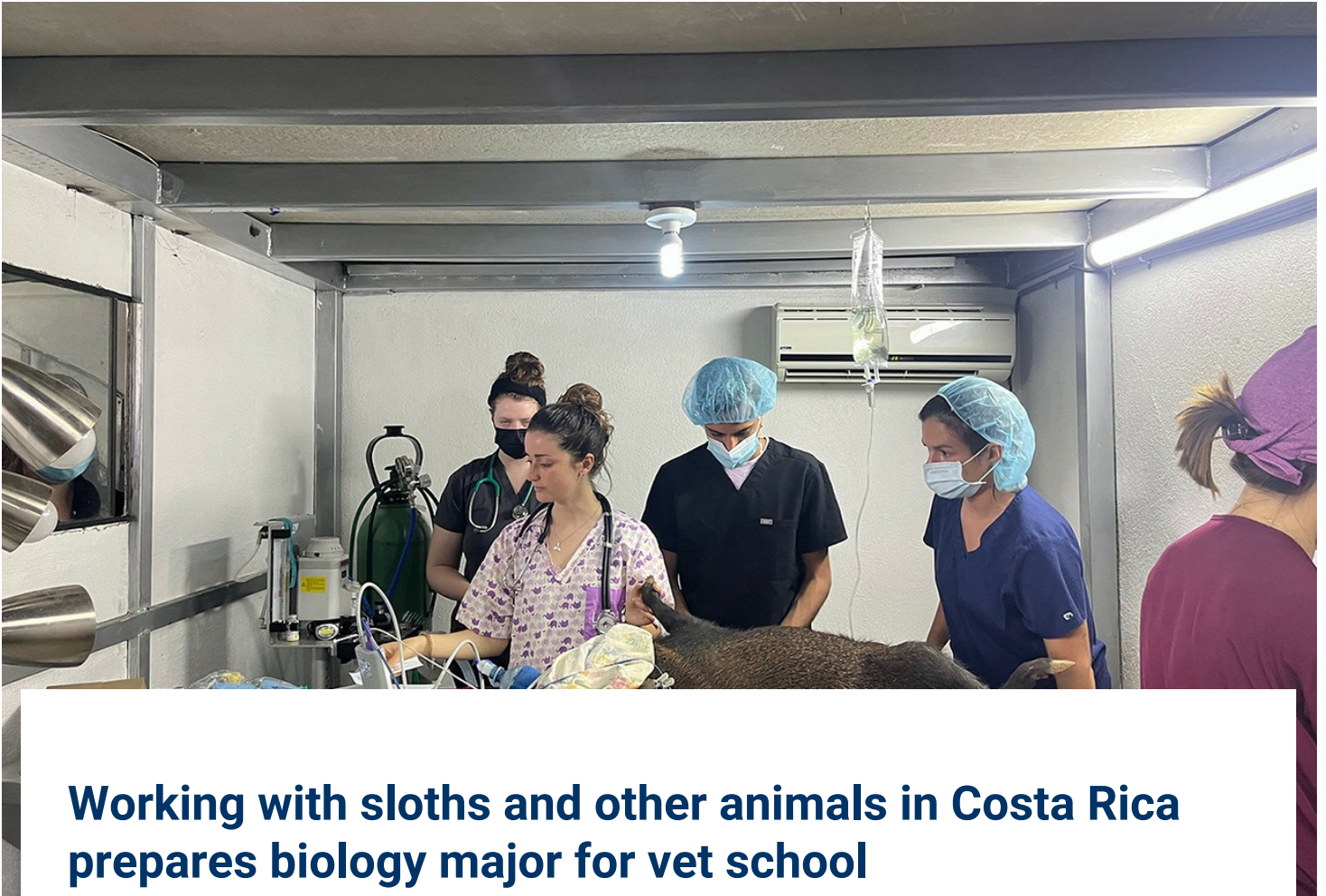
- Dr. Jordan Cofer

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Georgia College and GC Journeys also earned the [Campus-Wide Award for Undergraduate Research Accomplishments](#) (AURA) in 2020 and was named the nation’s top undergraduate research program by the Council for Undergraduate Research (CUR). In 2021, the University System of Georgia (USG) awarded the program its “[Regents’ Momentum Year Award](#) for Excellence in Teaching and Curricular Innovation.”

The latest AASCU award will be given at the association’s annual conference Nov. 4-7 in Chicago, Illinois. Award recipients will be acknowledged in the AASCU “Advantage” newsletter and social media and on its website.

News Stories Posted Thursday August 3, 2023



Working with sloths and other animals in Costa Rica prepares biology major for vet school

[Biology & Environmental Sciences, Department of](#): Thursday August 3, 2023

Imagine being up-close and personal with Costa Rican rainforest wildlife.

Georgia College & State University senior [biology](#) major Amelia Pound of Savannah did just that. For two weeks, she worked alongside veterinarians in Costa Rica, helping its native creatures stay healthy.

Pound was selected as part of a small team of students who volunteered to care for sloths, peccaries (pigs), kinkajous (squirrel-like creatures), capuchin and spider monkeys, macaws and other colorful parrots, parakeets and more.



Pound traveled with the Loop Abroad Pre-Veterinary Wildlife Medicine program—the largest pre-veterinary study abroad program for animal rescue and release in the U.S. She worked at the Costa Rica Rescue Center.

Amelia Pound's favorite baby sloth that she cared for.

There, Pound helped an opossum with physiotherapy and taught baby sloths how to climb trees once they're released.



Amelia Pound (center) at the Costa Rica Rescue Center.

She observed various sloth ultrasounds, monitored vital signs during a peccary surgery, restrained a macaw to receive nutritional supplements and medication, calculated sedative dosage for a horse getting dental work and performed a necropsy on a paca (like a groundhog) to determine cause of death.

Pound spent the most time with the peccaries, observing their behavior and activity.

"I sat by their enclosure logging behaviors and performing extensive research on the species to see what type of enrichment would best benefit them," she said. "After implementing my enrichment activities including puzzle feeders, toys or grooming apparatuses—anything that mentally stimulates animals or their senses—I did more timed observations. During my free-time, I visited them for several hours just to watch them play and interact."

Pound enjoyed bonding with her patients, who only understood Spanish.

“As with most domesticated, non-releasable animals I work with, I found that speaking to them in a calming voice aids with bonding,” she said. “Most of the non-releasable animals within the rescue center were imprinted from hearing the voices of their prior owners, and all of them understood Spanish. I spoke to them in casual Spanish greetings by saying, ‘¡Hola! ¿como estas bebé?’”

Since releasable animals should receive as little human contact as possible, Pound worked silently and quickly so they wouldn’t get used to human touch.

Her favorite animals to care for were the opossums and sloths.

“Our group was tasked with providing physiotherapy to rehabilitate an opossum for it to be eligible for release,” Pound said. “I witnessed remarkable improvement over the course of its treatment. I also enjoyed working with the sloths, because I witnessed an incredible medical breakthrough regarding juvenile stomach malabsorption in which a new trial for treatment was successful.”

“The veterinarians I worked closely with shared stories of their own encounters and encouraged critical thinking when faced with hypothetical emergency situations,” she said.



Amelia Pound (back-left) monitors vital signs during a peccary surgery.



Amelia Pound with a rescued macaw.

Her own critical thinking skills—she learned from her Georgia College professors—came in handy during her time abroad. Pound wasn't afraid to speak up and ask questions.

She plans to use these transferrable skills in her career as a veterinarian.

"I would like to teach aspiring veterinarians and encourage curiosity," Pound said. "My professors inspired me to ask as many questions as possible, because it helps increase knowledge and understanding. One of the most important skills I learned in biology is being able to ask 'why' and then learn from the response."

Her biology classes at Georgia College also prepared her for this wildlife-medicine study abroad program. Knowing cellular and molecular processes helped her understand the functions of various medications. Her lab work helped her during examinations of animals and deciding which underlying issues may be responsible.

Pound especially appreciated an animal behavior class taught by Dr. Katie Stumpf, associate professor of biological science. It taught animal social hierarchy, physiology, evolution and involved a multitude of case studies.

“

After many years of working with animals and knowing the joy I experience with them, being able to help those in need gives me an unparalleled sense of satisfaction. There's something exciting about the idea of learning and honing my skills for an entire career.

- Amelia Pound

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"This information was incredibly important, because it's applicable in any setting when working with animals everywhere," Pound said. "As I've begun working hands-on with more species, I found myself applying the knowledge learned from this course in Costa Rica."

She learned about this amazing opportunity through members of the Pre-veterinary Club at Georgia College. It provided her with experience that will stand out when applying to veterinary schools.

During her final semester at Georgia College, Pound will apply to veterinary schools within the Southeastern United States and branch out to other states and islands like St. Kitts and Nevis. If she experiences delays, she'd like to rehabilitate animals or work in conservation and gain more experience with exotic animals.

Pound grew up with a family well versed in the medical field, so medicine was always a topic of discussion. She was unaware of the variety of opportunities within the field until she became involved with animals—and they touched her soul.

“After many years of working with animals and knowing the joy I experience with them, being able to help those in need gives me an unparalleled sense of satisfaction,” Pound said. “There’s something exciting about the idea of learning and honing my skills for an entire career.”

News Stories Posted Friday August 4, 2023



GCSU Junior Axel Hawkins named a 2023 Newman Civic Fellow

[History & Geography, Department of](#): Friday August 4, 2023



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Junior Axel Hawkins has been named a 2023 Newman Civic Fellow due to her outstanding leadership at Georgia College & State University and in the Milledgeville community.

The McDonough resident is majoring in history with a minor in political science.

"I feel truly honored to be recognized for my commitment to public service. Of course," Hawkins said, "I don't take on the work I do for the recognition. You go into public service knowing it's often a thankless job."

"But I'm very glad to know that my work stood out and that people have been able to see how much I value leadership for the public

good,” she said. “I am very, very thankful to have been given such a unique opportunity.”

Campus Compact is a non-profit coalition of colleges and universities dedicated to public purpose in higher education. It selected 154 student leaders nationwide as Newman Civic Fellows for its 2023 cohort. The program “recognizes students who stand out for their commitment to creating positive change in communities locally and around the world.”

Hawkins was one of two students in Georgia to be chosen—the other is a student at Mercer University.

Colleges and universities can submit one exceptional student candidate for the fellowship per year. Georgia College students are appointed through the university’s Leadership Program, then personally nominated by President Cox.

Right from the start as a first-year student, Hawkins “distinguished herself as a leader,” Cox wrote in her nomination. Hawkins served as chair of the Student Emergency Fund in the Student Government Association (SGA). In her sophomore year, she was elected SGA treasurer.

This year, Hawkins is the SGA vice president.

She's currently working to create an organization for first-generation college students. It'll serve as a support system for current students—but also as a way to generate more first-generation students by holding application workshops in local high schools.

Hawkins has also canvassed for political candidates and served as a community organizer for Working America, which addresses workers' rights, housing shortage issues and inequality.

“

Axel’s commitment to civic leadership and improving our communities and world are a source of inspiration.

- Dr. Harold Mock

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“Axel’s commitment to civic leadership and improving our communities and world are a source of inspiration,” said Dr. Harold Mock, director of Georgia College’s Leadership Programs. “The Newman Civic Fellowship will empower Axel to learn and to provide leadership for the public good.”

The program is named after one of Campus Compact founders, the late Frank Newman, who advocated for civic engagement in higher education. Fellows have access to exclusive scholarships and post-graduate opportunities. They participate in virtual training to learn skills and make connections for future “large-scale positive changes.”

An annual convention of Newman Civic Fellows involves two days of “intensive in-person skill-building and networking.” These interactions are what Hawkins most looks forward to.

“It will allow me to connect with other civic-minded young leaders across the nation. I have a decent-sized network throughout Georgia, but the fellowship will allow me to meet people across the country who I otherwise might never have come into contact with,” Hawkins said.

“The fellowship will provide the opportunity for me to learn more about the ways people are addressing various contemporary issues across the country—that I might be able to apply at home,” she said.

Hawkins plans to pursue a master’s degree in Public Administration, then work in the public sector focusing on rural economic development and prosperity. She credits Georgia College as the primary reason for getting actively involved in public service.



Axel Hawkins with other members of the GCSU Student Government Association.

“It has been our unique commitment to a modern liberal arts education, civic involvement and learning beyond-the-classroom that has provided me the opportunities to step up and get involved, both on campus and within the broader regional community,” Hawkins said.

“The world of public service can be quite difficult to navigate, especially as a college student,” she said. “Words cannot express how thankful I am that my peers and our staff, faculty and administration have been there to help me along every step of the way.”

News Stories Posted Monday August 7, 2023



Rising sophomore completes nuclear physics training at Duke University

[Chemistry, Physics, & Astronomy, Department of](#): Monday August 7, 2023

Joel Saucedo's head is full of nuclear fusion, clean energy, fractional calculus, radioactive particles—and *all that jazz*.

The jazz part?

When he's not studying physics, he plays saxophone in Georgia College & State University's Jazz Band.

These elements all weave together into a liberal arts education at Georgia College that Saucedo credits for helping him win a prestigious nuclear physics traineeship at Duke University this summer.

“

Georgia College is a hidden gem for hungry undergraduates like me. It's a small university that welcomes students with big ideas. The liberal arts equip students with new lenses to view the world. But what's special about Georgia College is the focus on leadership through the liberal arts.

- Joel Saucedo

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Joel playing the saxophone.

“This is an environment that's ripe for cultivating new heights of passionate, multidisciplinary practitioners and future leaders in the world,” Saucedo said, “aligned with values our society is in desperate need of.”

Now, Saucedo's working to expand the Student Research Circle through MURACE (Mentored Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors). Saucedo wants the group to be a pipeline for students who want big-impact experiences in college.

He wants to share the professional connections he's made, emboldening others to travel to conferences and share their research too. He wants to encourage experienced undergraduates and faculty “to take new students under their wings.” Saucedo would like all students to “walk in and learn something new about themselves.”

He believes he can be a campus leader, because he understands how transformational his educational opportunities have been. Research done freshman year with Dr. Hasitha Mahabaduge was enough to make him feel an equal among other trainees and Ph.D. students at Triangle Universities Nuclear Laboratory (TUNL) in North Carolina.

Mahabaduge met Saucedo through the National Science Foundation (NSF) S-STEM Scholars program. Saucedo worked on two different research projects with Mahabaduge, meeting twice a week, even through winter break.

“Joel is the poster child for a self-driven student,” Mahabaduge said. “By the end of his freshmen year, he has presented his research at local, national and international conferences. It sure is a very rare feat for a freshmen undergraduate student.”

Saucedo was stunned and elated to learn he'd been accepted into Duke's traineeship. Funded through the U.S. Department of Energy, the program is highly

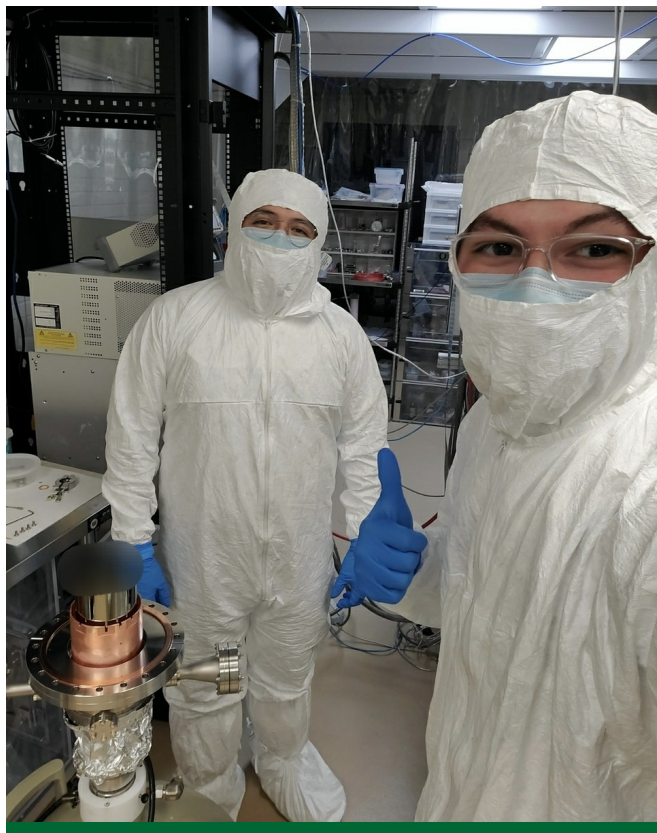
competitive with as many as 300 applications for eight spots.

When he got the acceptance letter, Saucedo said he went “running out of the learning center screaming and about to have a heart attack.”

“The magnitude of competition for these programs is nuts,” Saucedo said. “This was so unexpected and so validating to me to keep doing what I’m doing and trusting myself and my own capabilities.”

“I’d been rejected by prestigious institutions many times before,” he said. “So, it felt unreal at first. I’m so glad I kept putting my name out there. Now I’m hungry to give back and share my experiences.”

Saucedo spent 10 weeks at Duke, housed in an apartment with a Ph.D. student. His days were filled with self-paced reading, meetings and seminars on nuclear physics. The research portion was self-motivated. Trainees were expected to work at their own pace, doing what interested them.



Joel Saucedo (front) all suited up for lab safety at Duke.



Saucedo at a presentation of his work on the LEGEND Collaboration project.

A project advisor guided Saucedo through his chosen project, the “LEGEND Collaboration.” It’s an international effort by 270 scientists and about 55 institutions worldwide. The experiment operates in the Laboratori Nazionali del Gran Sasso located about a mile underground in Italy.

“My work involved programming a model to help understand the effect of radioactivity on the surface of enriched germanium detectors,” Saucedo said. “Being in one of the most shielded, radiation-sensitive facilities in the world, the caliber of experiments being done here under a normal-looking mountain in Italy have the potential to win the Nobel Prize.”

This experience is a stepping stone to other research opportunities Saucedo hopes

to gain in the future.

In September, he'll present his Duke research at the NSF S-STEM Scholar initiative in Washington D.C. He also plans to present in Maui, Hawaii in October at the joint Nuclear Physics Conference hosted by the Japanese and U.S. Governments, where they'll vote on funding the next generation of nuclear experiments.

Next summer, Saucedo would like to get a Dept. of Energy internship researching nuclear fusion at Princeton University's Plasma Physics Laboratory. He'd also like to research thin film photovoltaics for solar panels at the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado. He wouldn't mind doing a cooperate internship with Goldman Sacs or SpaceX either to better understand the business side of things.

“

Physics inspires me to dream big for humanity.

- Saucedo

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For a career, he'd like to work in renewable energy as an employee, researcher and, eventually, entrepreneur.

“I'm open to any opportunities that are presented to me, Saucedo said. “I chose to major in physics, because I watched one too many YouTube videos on space as a kid, and I've been hooked on science ever since.”

“Physics inspires me to dream big for humanity,” he said. “I find it fulfilling, and I want to leave a rememberable mark in the field. From solar cells to nuclear fusion—there is a need for leaders. This experience definitely changed my career path to think bigger and broader.”

News Stories Posted Tuesday August 8, 2023



GCSU's first medical physics student lands full-tuition graduate program

[Chemistry, Physics, & Astronomy, Department of](#): Tuesday August 8, 2023



Kaylee Kallam

Thanks to Georgia College & State University's new medical physics program, this graduate's future is off to a healthy start.

Kaylee Kallam of Cumming was Georgia College's first student to complete its new medical physics pathway. Now, she's been accepted into the University of Tennessee's Medical Physics master's program with a full assistantship teaching position, tuition waived and a monthly stipend.

"I feel very prepared based on the classes I took and the resources I was given at Georgia College," Kallam

said. “The physics course requirements enabled me to move forward with everything I needed.”

“All the required upper-level coursework was already in the curriculum,” she said. “So, I have no undergraduate requirements to fulfill upon entry into the program. It was all completed at GCSU.”

Kallam “absolutely loved” her years at Georgia College and the “charming” city of Milledgeville. At first, she planned to pursue engineering. But after career exploration junior year, she decided on the university’s new medical physics pathway.

It was a good decision.

After graduating in May, Kallam fielded offers from four out of the five graduate programs she applied to.

“

I feel very prepared based on the classes I took and the resources I was given at Georgia College.

- Kaylee Kallam

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The concentration in medical physics started last fall at Georgia College. It prepares students to get a master’s degree for careers in radiation therapy. After getting a master’s and working in a residency training program, students must pass an exam to become certified as medical physicists.

Medical physicists work in hospitals checking radiation equipment. They work side-by-side with doctors controlling the dose of radiation for cancer therapy and working with radiation imaging. They often travel between hospitals, checking and certifying operation of radiation equipment and safely disposing radioactive materials. They read CT-scans, help diagnose illnesses and perform research for better radiation detection.

During her coursework at Georgia College, Kallam shadowed a medical physicist in Atlanta. She took Dr. Ralph France’s nuclear physics class that focuses on medical physics and a second semester of physical chemistry as an elective. She also did undergraduate research in France’s nuclear physics lab and presented her research at the 2022 Southeastern conference of the American Physical Society in Oxford,

Mississippi.

Her favorite class was physical chemistry with Dr. Ken McGill, who she said can explain even the most difficult concepts. He'd bring snacks to class, and student loved his "off topic" stories. That class became like family.

"It was probably one of my favorite classes to go to every day. It was always a mood booster and enjoyable to be a part of," Kallam said. "All the physics faculty were amazing to work with. They're all very knowledgeable in their fields and understanding with students. They're easy to reach and always willing to help with whatever problems that arise."

McGill said Kallam took advantage of the opportunities Georgia College offers—both in and outside the classroom.

"She was a joy to have in class," he said, "and involved in many organizations. I expect her Georgia College experience will serve her well throughout her career."

In Tennessee, Kallam will take four semesters of graduate courses with clinical rotations. Her biggest challenge will be moving from a university with small class sizes to a much larger campus and city.

It'll take a while to get her bearings, but Kallam knows the time-management skills and knowledge she learned at Georgia College will pull her through.

After her master's and completion of a residency program, she plans to get board certified and work as a medical physicist at multiple hospitals and medical offices through a third-party company.

"This will give me the opportunity to travel," Kallam said, "and work with many different people in different professions."



Kallam (left) during a tour of the Delta hangars in Atlanta with a member of the Physics Club.

News Stories Posted Friday August 11, 2023



GCSU makes \$303 million impact on local economy generating 3,000+ jobs

Finance & Administration : Friday August 11, 2023

Georgia College & State University's impact on the regional economy grew more than \$18 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022. That is up 6.4% to \$303 million from \$285 million in FY 2021.

Numbers come from a new study commissioned by the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents.

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This report highlights the vital contribution Georgia College & State University brings to Baldwin County and our surrounding counties. As the largest employer in the county, our nearly \$65 million payroll of course contributes to the local economy. But the spending power of the university, combined with the dollars our students, faculty and staff spend in local shops and restaurants also generates jobs, higher incomes and greater production of goods and services in central Georgia.

- President Cathy Cox

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“In addition to the economic impact of GCSU, we aim to provide cultural resources for all ages, educational and sports camps for kids, and continuing learning opportunities for life,” Cox continued. “The thousands of volunteer hours our students contribute to the community also enhances the quality of life here. Having a state university in our area is a win-win situation for everyone.”

“

In addition to the economic impact of GCSU, we aim to provide cultural resources for all ages, educational and sports camps for kids, and continuing learning opportunities for life. The thousands of volunteer hours our students contribute to the community also enhances the quality of life here. Having a state university in our area is a win-win situation for everyone.

- Cathy Cox

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For every job on campus, twice as many were created off campus.

In FY 2022, Georgia College generated 973 jobs on campus, while another 2,050 off-campus positions existed due to institution-related spending.

This economic impact extends to Baldwin, Bibb, Hancock, Jones, Putnam, Washington and Wilkinson counties.

The report was released by the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia’s Terry College of Business. Its companion study showed graduates can expect to earn \$1 million more in their lifetimes than they would without a bachelor’s degree.



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Data was collected between July 1, 2021, and June 30, 2022, to determine economic impact. During that period, USG’s 26 colleges and universities contributed more than \$20 billion to the state economy—an increase of 4.14% or \$800 million. USG institutions generated more than 159,000 full- and part-time jobs across the state—about 32% on campuses and 68% off.

USG institutions created the same employment impact statewide as Georgia's top five employers combined, the study showed.

Economic impact was measured by initial operations, personnel and student spending at USG institutions. Total economic impact included the effect of initial spending and the secondary or indirect spending that occurs when initial expenditures are re-spent.

News Stories Posted Friday August 18, 2023



Mobilized and Motivated: Record-breaking GCSU Class of 2027 gears up

[Enrollment Management](#) : Friday August 18, 2023

They've moved in. They've done acts of community service around Milledgeville for GCSU Gives Day. Now, the Class of 2027 is ready to enter classrooms and make their mark on the [Georgia College & State University](#) campus.



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They are Georgia College's biggest-sized class ever—a record-breaking group of about 1,800 first-year students. They join the university after a season of unprecedented demand. Georgia College received nearly 8,000 applications—about 2,000 more than the previous record.

In addition, the number of high-achieving students is up over

200% compared to last year, and this will be one of the most diverse incoming classes in the university's history.

"We are welcoming a historically high number of first-year students to Georgia College, while maintaining high academic standards and small-class sizes—the things that distinguish our institution," said Dr. Costas Spirou, provost and vice president for [Academic Affairs](#).

“

We are welcoming a historically high number of first-year students to Georgia College, while maintaining high academic standards and small-class sizes—the things that distinguish our institution.

- Dr. Costas Spirou

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"We have been intentional about increasing the number of classes we offer and have recruited highly qualified faculty," Spirou said. "We want to ensure that all of our students receive personalized attention."

Throughout the summer, orientations went smoothly with high anticipation and attendance. Georgia College [President Cathy Cox](#) joined every orientation—greeting many excited, smiling new faces, shaking hands and posing for selfies with students.

"Under Cathy Cox's innovative leadership, Georgia College & State University is experiencing great momentum," Spirou said. "We are excited that a larger number of students will benefit from our mission as the state's designated public liberal arts university."

Some interesting facts about this class:

- A record number of [honors](#) students, 149.
- Average GPA is 3.62 and 144 students bring a perfect 4.0.
- Two [international](#) students are coming from Vietnam and India.
- Out-of-state students originate from Alabama, Florida, Illinois and Wisconsin.
- In-state students hail from 112 different counties across Georgia.
- The biggest numbers this year are from Gwinnett/Forsyth County (194), Cobb County (163), Fulton County (147) and Cherokee County (102).
- Top majors for this class are [nursing](#), [business](#) undeclared, [biology](#), [marketing](#) and [psychology](#).

Javier Francisco, executive director of [Admissions](#), noted the geographic diversity

of this class with some students coming from areas like South Georgia. This increase—as well as the jump in applications, class size and diversity—is likely due to several factors, he said.

Georgia College is a small university that offers big opportunities, like working side-by-side with professors doing original research as early as freshman year.



Cat Crew volunteers help new students move in.

Francisco also pointed to recent national recognition.

One was an A+ grade given by the [National Council on Teacher Quality](#) for teaching the science of reading. The other: the prestigious 2023 [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#)’ Excellence & Innovation Award for Student Success and College Completion. It was given for the university’s [GC Journeys](#)—a program that ensures all students participate in high-impact practices like [undergraduate research](#), [internships](#), [career readiness](#), [community service](#), [study abroad](#) and [leadership](#).

These high-impact practices are touted at sessions with high schoolers in and outside of Georgia starting in their sophomore year. This intensive, regionwide push helped spread the word about the value and appeal of a [liberal arts](#) education.

“

Our goal is always to bring the most-qualified, the most-diverse and the most-prepared students to Georgia College, and this year we have all of those—the most-prepared, most-diverse and most-qualified class we've recruited, since I joined the GCSU Admissions staff almost two decades ago.

- Javier Francisco

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When asked why they chose Georgia College, students continue to mention the university’s [iconic campus](#), small class sizes, individualized attention and faculty [mentorship](#).

These are all hallmark examples of what makes Georgia College unique among state universities, said Joel Robinson, senior associate vice president for



Alternate Text

Enrollment Management.

These qualities of a Georgia College education will continue to endure.

“

This is the greatest demand ever for Georgia College from students all across the state.

- Joel Robinson

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Despite rising numbers, Robinson said the university continues to be selective when admitting students. Applications were up 37% this year, coinciding with the increase in high-achieving applicants.

“Highly reliable, serious learners are most likely to get involved in life-changing opportunities, join extracurricular activities and bring fresh ideas to campus,” Robinson said. “This is the greatest demand ever for Georgia College from students all across the state.”

“It’s not hard to see why students want to come here,” he added. “Receiving an education that one would expect at an elite, private institution but at a public university price is a very compelling value proposition for our students and their families.”

News Stories Posted Wednesday August 23, 2023



Subject-matter expert leads GCSU's original LGBTQ+ Marketing course

[Management, Marketing, & Logistics, Department of](#): Wednesday August 23, 2023

Most of us are familiar with the rainbow-colored pivot companies make when June rolls around each year. To LGBTQ+ consumers, this marketing strategy says one thing: insincerity.

Dr. Joanna Schwartz, professor of marketing and subject-matter expert at Georgia College & State University, is working to change that narrative.

With her one-of-a-kind course titled LGBTQ+ Marketing, she invites interdisciplinary students to examine marketing failures and successes, find community through discussion and become well-rounded, culturally-sensitive marketing professionals.

"It's not like any course, anywhere," Schwartz said. "The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business accredits our business college, and one thing they

want us to do is give our students a broad perspective.”

“Wouldn’t it be great if we had more coursework that creates connections to people who are different to us? So, I proposed this class,” she said.

Media outlets like the Associated Press, ABC News and The Washington Post have utilized her voice to make sense of a recent marketing blunder by Bud Light, and help direct the companies that want to do better.

In fact, Schwartz has been mentioned in the media hundreds of times since January.

In her course, Schwartz fosters an academic environment that enriches her students’ perspectives. Through her professional expertise, Schwartz guides students through complex themes, LGBTQ+ history and market segmentation so they understand the value of connection and differences.

“You can’t sell to a group of people if you don’t understand them,” she said.

The course is broken into three parts: marketing basics, aspects of LGBTQ+ identity, and how that identity intersects with other aspects of society. It was designed by Schwartz from the ground-up.

“There’s no other course like it,” she said. “There are some business classes that touch on identity, but I haven’t seen any marketing course in the country like this.”

It’s listed as a business elective, marketing elective or women’s and gender studies elective. No prerequisites are required, and it’s usually offered once a year. Students of any major are able to take the course, which currently has seats available.



Joanna Schwartz won the USG's Felton Jenkins, Jr. Teaching Hall of Fame award this year.

Craig Conyers, '20, '23, is a talent acquisition specialist with Norfolk Southern Corporation. The combination of collaborative projects, Schwartz's teaching style and innovative exam design in his first consumer behavior course made him want to be in each of her classes.

"We definitely felt super empowered in the course," Conyers said. "Dr. Schwartz encouraged dialogue on every slide of a presentation. She would ask 'What did this make you feel?' or 'What did you take away?'—even on the exams."

Exams were collaborative, Conyers said. Schwartz would lead exam prep and post-exam review. She took the student's feedback into account and would adapt exams to make them better each time.

"It was a collaborative effort, from giving students a voice to the teacher teaching," he said.

Conyers said the class ultimately made him a better professional. It helped him lead strategy in one of his first jobs in sales and marketing for a power tool company.

"Lots of marketing campaigns make construction power tools a 'one of the boys' culture," Conyers said. "Since we were targeting the LGBTQ+ demographic, we couldn't use that jargon and had to be inclusive."

"You always want to support and reward the companies doing it right," he said. "When you see companies doing it wrong, it's hard to believe in their message and you vocalize that opinion."

“

We definitely felt super empowered in the course. Dr. Schwartz encouraged dialogue on every slide of a presentation.

- Craig Conyers, '20, '23

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News Stories Posted Thursday August 24, 2023



GCSU Gives Day has an estimated impact of \$101,760 on local economy

[Student Life, Office of](#): Thursday August 24, 2023

Georgia College & State University's Class of 2027 served 3,000 hours during this year's GCSU Gives Day—Aug. 19—with an estimated \$101,760 in economic impact on the local community.

[Video](#)

Approximately 1,500 first-year students clocked in community service hours—playing games with residents at the Georgia War Veterans Home; leading activities and games for kids during the Life Enrichment Center's "End of Summer Celebration;" making blankets for the Linus Project; painting baseboards, window trim and a porch for Milledgeville Cares; and removing weeds, tires and trash at Oconee River Greenway.

Psychology major Kadima Rogers of Augusta, Georgia, volunteered by playing

games with veterans at the Georgia War Veteran's Home.



Kadima Rogers sets up a game of pool for residents of the Georgia War Veteran's Home.

"People in assisted living don't get many visitors, so, it's nice to be a smiling face they get to see," Rogers said. "I think this experience has grounded me a little more. It makes me feel humble and really appreciate the situation I'm in."

Psychology and Spanish major Kylie Gregg of Fayetteville, Georgia, was excited to help her Georgia College peers. She was the "Vanna White" of bingo at the Georgia War Veteran's Home.

"Being able to do something like this is really important. It helps the community and builds our own community at GCSU," Gregg said. "I have a lot of personal respect for veterans. I think this would be something I could come back to do myself that I wouldn't otherwise have known about before GCSU Gives Day."

Braving the heat while working



Kylie Gregg being interviewed by University

outdoors, marketing major Chance Phillips from Canton, Georgia, said it's important for first-year students to volunteer in the community beyond campus. He demonstrated a stamping technique to children at the Life Enrichment Center's Urban Arts Village.

"It's really fun right now, and I'm enjoying it," he said. "I think I'd like to continue doing something like this in my career. More than anything else, I'd rather be meeting others and giving back to help out as many people as I can."

Alumnae benefitted from the experience, as well including Joan Deremer Alford, '78, Jane Williams Boggus, '76, Anresa Stevens Davis, '75, Carrigan Flotlin, '19, '20, Faith Thomas, '76, all volunteered at GCSU Gives Day.

Davis, a GCSU Foundation trustee and site leader, hopes students will understand their relationship with the community and the community's relationship with the university.

"This is where each student's life of service begins," Davis said. "These students are going to live, work and shop in Milledgeville. But they're also going to study in the community."

"It's really important for them to understand that from this day forward, they'll have their work community and their greater community," she said. "Gives Day is where they'll learn how to be that complete citizen—a good co-worker and steward of the world around them."

She wants students to know their four years are going to fly by, and "it's the beginning of four magical years."

"I hope they'll break the ice and make new friends as a result of GCSU Gives Day," Davis said. "And I hope that it's going to spawn interest for them to go back and do service hours, simply because it feels right."

GCSU Gives Day started in 2018. Carrigan Flotlin, '19, '20, recalls the first one well.

She was a student back then, and was on the GIVE Center team that organized the first service day. She bounced around Milledgeville, volunteering at various organizations and doing social media for the GIVE Center. When she came upon the Life Enrichment Center—the place captured her heart.

"Because of that Gives Day experience and my interactions with LEC adults and the



Chance Phillips

director who I became friends with, made me a better teacher,” Flotlin said. “I’ve always known that no matter how different you are, you’re still a person. Getting to see that in the real world made me realize we have to help one another.”

Flotlin found participating in GC Gives Day in 2018 to be an “amazing experience.” She was on the GIVE Center team that helped put the first one together.

“This opportunity gave me the chance to see the student impact in the Milledgeville community through a different lens,” Flotlin said. “It’s exciting to see how far Gives Day has come since the very first one, and I’m honored I’m still able to participate.”

“This day gives Georgia College’s incoming freshman class the chance to start off on the right foot,” Flotlin said, “and find ways they can make a difference in their short time here.”



Carrigan Flotlin



Grad student identified algae in North Carolina waters for summer internship

[Biology & Environmental Sciences, Department of](#): Thursday August 24, 2023



Anna Agi collects algae samples at an internship this summer in North Carolina.

At her North Carolina internship this summer, Anna Agi was able to introduce the water-quality company to a few things about diatoms—a form of microscopic, single-celled algae with glass cell walls that converts light into energy.

Diatoms generate up to 25% of the earth's oxygen and are found in almost every aquatic environment from freshwater to the ocean.

"It's important to get involved in research if you're in a science background, because it opens your mind and doors to so many opportunities," Agi said. "I didn't learn about diatoms until I volunteered in the phycology lab and did undergraduate research."

“Because I learned so much about diatoms through Dr. Kalina Manoylov's mentoring,” she said, “I was able to make one of my internship projects about diatoms, in order to help the algae team with their own identification after I left.”

Agi graduated from Georgia College & State University in May with a degree in biology. She was a cross-country runner and two-time All-Peach Belt Conference record-breaker. In addition to sports, she was in Tri-Beta Biological Honor Society, the Order of Omega honor sorority and fraternity, Delta Gamma Sorority, Botany Club and the GCSU Orchestra.

“

It's important to get involved in research if you're in a science background, because it opens your mind and doors to so many opportunities.

- Anna Agi

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Her undergraduate research with Manoylov focused on the study of algae, known as phycology. Agi presented diatom research at four conferences last spring, which she described as “one of the greatest learning experiences of my academic career.”

“Anna has a rare talent of precise visual memory,” Manoylov said, “and I see great potential for her in phycological research. She loves observing algae and using the microscopes in my lab. She is also amazed of the applications of her discoveries to microbial community structure and function, biodiversity and their use in water quality management. Those are topics with current meaning and potential for the future.”

Agi was delighted when she was accepted at SePRO Corp., a company in Whitakers, North Carolina that works to restore water, plants and the environment. She found out about the internship from one of her mother's former co-workers. After a few phone calls and a Zoom interview, Agi was selected because of her research background with algae.

“When I found out I was chosen, I was a little bit nervous but also excited,” Agi said. “I'd be leaving Georgia just three days after graduation and moving to a new state for the summer without my family or friends.”

“I was excited too,” she said, “because I've always been the one who wanted to leave and go out on my own and be independent. So, I knew this opportunity was going to be new and fun.”

The three-month internship, like her research at Georgia College, was a challenging

way to “learn more and more each day,” Agi said. At SePRO, she worked mostly with water quality issues identifying green algae, cyanobacteria and various diatoms in client waters. Based on samples, Agi would confer with scientists at SePRO to determine which products would be useful for treatment—like using an algicide to treat harmful algal blooms.

Now Agi’s bringing what she learned from the internship as a project to phycology class as a first-year master’s student at Georgia College this fall.

“Dr. Manoylov prepared me very well with diatom identification, before I was thrown into real-world experience,” Agi said.

“That knowledge helped me to assist the algae team in better identifying their samples of diatoms.”

“But my internship also helped me discover various groups of algae I didn't know before,” she said. “That’ll be helpful going into my master's program. I learned a lot about water chemistry too from their product-development representatives.”

“

This work is important because few people know what to do with bodies of water when there are harmful algal blooms or algae taking over. Being able to identify what's in a customer's water, giving them a report and explaining what needs to be done can mitigate further problems that could arise if water’s left untreated.

- Agi

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The internship helped confirm Agi chose the right career field. Now she wants to expand the path she’s on to include aquatic weeds.

“This work is important because few people know what to do with bodies of water



Alternate Text

when there are harmful algal blooms or algae taking over,” Agi said. “Being able to identify what’s in a customer’s water, giving them a report and explaining what needs to be done can mitigate further problems that could arise if water’s left untreated.”

Agi hopes to follow her master’s with a Ph.D., then work in aquatic ecology. She can’t imagine being where she is today without the help of Manoylov, “who pushes me more than anyone and, without her, I wouldn’t have found my passion for algae and diatoms.”

“This summer, I grew in discipline and motivation and just overall as a person,” Agi said. “I feel like I’m coming back to Milledgeville prepared to learn more and ready to dive into my master’s with even more drive and determination.”



Anna Agi, front, with coworkers this summer in North Carolina.

News Stories Posted Friday August 25, 2023



Well-prepared by GCSU professors, senior excels at Oxford University

[International Education Center](#) : Friday August 25, 2023

Being a [history](#) major with minors in [museum studies](#) and [English](#)—could mean someone has a fascination with antiquity.

That is certainly true about Caroline Cole—a senior from Buford, Georgia, who's fallen in love with everything England.

True, her first love is [Georgia College & State University](#), where she made friends easily in small classes and the [Honors College](#). It was here, she got the opportunity to work at [Georgia's Old Governor's Mansion](#). And it was here, she took difficult

classes that fully prepared her for study abroad and the rigors of [Oxford University](#)—the oldest English-speaking university in the world.



The quad at Regent's Park College at Oxford University.

Cole spent a semester away last spring and, thanks to efforts by officials at Georgia College's [International Education Center](#) and Honors College, she's returning to Oxford for another semester this fall. Or, as the English say: another 'term.'

"While I love Georgia College and will be glad to spend my final semester here in the spring," Cole said, "life and education at Oxford really is something special. There is always something going on—people to meet, topics to learn about, streets and meadows to walk in. I just love how connected everything is, and I'm so thrilled to have one last term there as an undergraduate."

Cole always hoped to go to Oxford, since reading "The Great Gatsby" in ninth grade. When applying for Georgia College, she noticed its "[GCSU in Oxford Experience at Regent's Park College](#)." It seemed like the perfect opportunity to fulfill her dream.

Aside from a family trip to Exuma Cay in the Bahamas in 2022, Cole hadn't traveled much beyond the Southeast. She was a little terrified at first, and the first three weeks were rough. But, after that, she settled into the experience, made a bunch of English friends and had "the best six months of her life."

"Studying at Oxford in some capacity had been a goal of mine for years," Cole said, "so this study abroad semester really was a dream come true. It didn't feel real, though, until I was on the plane for London. I had never done something of this capacity before, but I am so glad that I took the risk."

"Oxford has become a very special place for me," she said. "When I learned that Regent's had extended an offer for me to return in the fall, I actually cried with joy."

Her first trip to Oxford, January to July 2023, consisted of two Oxford terms. There are three eight-week terms during an academic year with five-week breaks between terms and a three-month summer vacation.

In her two terms, Cole studied at one of Oxford's 39 colleges, Regent's Park College, the smallest. She lived in a residential hall and took history and English "tutorials." These tutorials include one-on-one meetings weekly or biweekly with a professor to discuss essays. Cole had to write an eight-page research paper every week and sometimes two every other week.

During the first term, she studied “The Global Middle Ages” and “Victorian Literature.” In the second, she took “Modern China since 1650” and “Modernist Literature.” This fall, she plans to take “Modern Britain” with a focus on the Second World War and “The Works of C.S. Lewis.”

Taking Oxford’s tutorials would’ve been much harder, except for two professors Cole had at Georgia College.

Before Dr. Bruce Gentry’s “Flannery O’Connor” class, Cole had never formulated her own essay prompts or been subjected to such scrutinous grading. The rigor of Gentry’s class more than prepared her for the one-on-one tutorial-style classes and 12 term papers at Regent’s Park College.



Caroline on her first day at Regent's Park College in January.

In Dr. William Risch’s “Modern Eastern Europe” class, Cole was expected to read a book each week and write five-page essay responses.

“

Even after the Oxford tutorials—I can say that these two Georgia College classes were easily the most difficult and most rewarding courses I’ve ever taken. They prepared me well.

- Caroline Cole

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“It was a workload I had never experienced before,” she said, “but I adjusted and succeeded through it. At Oxford, I had to do this again except the essays were longer and involved more research. Even after the Oxford tutorials—I can say that these two Georgia College classes were easily the most difficult and most rewarding courses I’ve ever taken. They prepared me well.”

While abroad, Cole joined the Oxford University Intercollegiate Christian Union and Trinity Church Oxford. She’d meet other students for fun in Regent’s Junior Common Room. Her favorite social was the Final Fling, a formal ball in June.

During breaks, she traveled around the United Kingdom and Ireland. She visited Aberdeen, Belfast, Dublin, Brighton and Dover. She enjoyed Edinburgh, London, the Cotswolds and Canterbury the most for their architecture, history and walkability.

Cole said British food isn't "as bad as it's made out to be, but that's coming from a person who can hardly handle any form of spice in their food." Steak and ale pie were delicious. Her favorite meal was Sunday roast.

"The most English thing I did was attending the Coronation of King Charles III," Cole said. "It was a spontaneous decision alongside my friends, Tim and Jack. We caught the 6 a.m. train from Oxford to London and spent the whole day standing in the rain in St James's Park by Buckingham Palace. We saw the procession go by twice, so I can say that I have seen the British royal family in person."

This time around, Cole looks forward to celebrating Halloween at Oxford and going to the Christmas Market in Bath.

After graduation, Cole plans to get a master's degree in museum studies and work in a museum.

Study abroad is something she recommends all students experience, if they can. Her self-confidence is stronger, and she's much more at ease in social situations.

"Truly, my time at Oxford has changed me so much for the better. This hasn't been just a leisurely sight-seeing trip to England," Cole said. "This has been a formative experience for me that has impacted me in deep-seated ways that I can hardly articulate into words."

“

I just feel different—stronger, more mature, more empathetic. I never knew I could achieve so much socially, academically and practically until I did. I essentially had to start over in Oxford, and I've learned that once you put yourself out there and get involved, everything will fall into place, and the sooner you do it, the better. This will help me when I have to do this all over again in grad school and beyond.

You have a successful place wherever you are, if you only go and claim it.

- Caroline Cole

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News Stories Posted Monday August 28, 2023



Search and Rescue: just another day for this intern

[Health & Human Performance, School of](#): Monday August 28, 2023

Between meetings at her internship this summer, Elizabeth Czarick, '23, talked about missing persons, radiation attacks and disaster prep.

She has just finished an internship with the Gwinnett County Office of Emergency Management. She can now graduate with a public health degree from Georgia College & State University and move on to her master's in Health and Human Performance.

As a unit of the Gwinnett County Police Department, the agency plans for emergencies, coordinates response resources and assists the public in recovery following a disaster.

Her first project was identifying the critical infrastructure located at 2,000 different addresses. This was crucial for the county's hazard mitigation plan which was due for its five-year update.

Czarick worked with Deputy Director of the agency, Michael Shaw, and met with representatives from municipal utilities and agencies like the Department of Homeland Security, Georgia Department of Health and American Red Cross.

“

I've seen how much [my team members] work together, so I feel like I could work with them too.

- Elizabeth Czarick, '23

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At a conference in Marietta, she also learned about disaster response to radiation and the coordination required between critical agencies to prevent catastrophes.

“I think the internship site was the best place I could have picked,” Czarick said. “Most of the emergency management agencies I saw were for the city. Working with the county as a whole, I got to see it more in-depth. The county works with all the cities, metro Atlanta and other offices as well.”

Working with police, fire and health services showed her the impact disasters have on a community's public health, and how hard people work behind the scenes to avert emergencies.

“I've seen how much they work together, so I feel like I could work with them too,” Czarick said. “I'm glad I interned here, because they were all amazing, and I discovered how much emergency management ties into public health.”



During her internship, Elizabeth was in the midst of emergency management professionals.

She traveled with the team wherever they went, including on a search and rescue training mission for their Deputy Director.

“I was just going to tag along for a missing-persons search, and we ended up going to his last-known address in Duluth, Georgia,” Czarick said. “We were using a Project Lifesaver device to ping his transmitter. I got to watch everyone, but they let me

try it too. I was able to get hands-on experience simulating a missing person search.”

They found their man in little over an hour.

This fall, Czarick plans to put her knowledge to good use in Georgia College's Health and Human Performance master's program. She'll specialize in health promotion, learning more about how to protect communities.

"If bad things were to happen, it's good to know those emergency plans are there to look back on," she said. "Somebody had been thinking about the well-being of everybody in the county."

News Stories Posted Tuesday August 29, 2023



The bots among us: University and Sodexo roll out new Pizza Hut delivery system for students

[Auxiliary Services](#) : Tuesday August 29, 2023

[Video](#)

We are not alone.

Here comes Barnacle, Techno and Scrumptious...and they come in peace.

They're part of a fleet of 10—the cutest little robots you've ever seen, brought to Georgia College & State University by its dining company, Sodexo.

They deliver pizza to hungry students—5 p.m. to midnight Sunday through Thursday on West Campus.

And the media blitz it created? That's just the pepperoni on top.

The little boxes on wheels attracted attention from all three TV news stations in Macon, the Baldwin Bulletin and Baldwin 2K. Prior to the rollout last week of the new delivery technology, WGXA News wrote "Robots to invade GCSU, and they're bringing pizza." A reporter for 41NBC, Dejon Campbell, was all smiles chasing after the "A.I. powered robots" to film them.

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Pizza and college students go together like midterms and all-night study sessions.

- Lori Johnson

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The headline at 13WMAZ was "It's not a bird or a plane, it's a pizza robot. Here are the new robots roaming Georgia College." Anchors Lori Johnson and Frank Malloy said, "Pizza and college students go together like midterms and all-night study sessions. Sodexo and the university have brought a new technology to campus that makes getting pizza a little more convenient."

And, well, the students are eating it up. The perky delivery bots are winning both hearts and stomachs.

They're the size of a pet—on wheels. The robots maneuver sidewalks, back up and turn around. Their front screens show blue blinking eyes, white stars and red hearts. They wink at you and have multiple sounds. They bleep, whistle and squeal with mechanical delight.

And, if you're missing your cat, they even purr.

Students use the Everyday APP on their phones to order pizza or snacks and drinks from a convenience store near Pizza Hut. An electrical engineer, employed by Sodexo, works behind the scenes to ensure bots are working correctly, turning corners and bypassing obstacles. Orders are placed inside the bots, which are then loaded, locked and ready to roll.

They enter apartment buildings and bring orders straight to a student's door. The lid then opens to reveal goodies inside.

One student told the media he was having a bunch of friends over this weekend but didn't want to leave his room to get food. Another said he had already ordered, and the bot arrived quickly with the pizza still hot.



Alternate Text

It's all part of a bunch of new things students are seeing on campus, regarding food.

The MAX dining hall was renovated over the summer. It's much brighter and offers new options like gluten-free and vegan meals. There's also a new U Cook station, where students make their own omelets and quesadillas. President Cathy Cox will demonstrate at that station at 11 a.m. Friday, Sept. 1.

“

We are one of the first universities in Georgia to introduce A.I. delivery robots, Having good food is important to keep our students happy. Food reminds us of home, and having a brand-new dining hall enhances the experience even more.
- Sam Fernandez, general manager for Sodexo at Georgia College

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But the new ideas don't stop there.

If pizza bots prove to be popular—the plan is to expand their use to Main Campus in January.

It's an easy bet that'll happen too, considering this week's reaction.

Grace Horton, a senior creative writing and French double major, said, “They are adorable!” Senior psychology major Caiden Evans said, “Life is so much easier with Pizza Hut delivery on campus.”

So, with all the talk about artificial intelligence these days—we best get used to it.

Bots are among us.

Eat pizza and be at peace.