

News Stories Posted Saturday June 1, 2024



Georgia College & State University applications grow 44% in two years

[Enrollment Management](#) : Saturday June 1, 2024

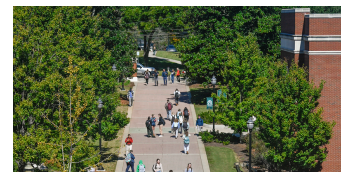
Student interest in the experiential learning and small-class environment offered by Georgia College & State University (GCSU) is at an all-time high. Heading into Fall 2024, applications to GCSU have grown 44% since Fall 2022, and 50% since Fall 2021.

GCSU Provost Dr. Costas Spirou said the growth is a by-product, first, of the professional enrollment management approaches of Sr. Vice President of Enrollment Management Joel Robinson over the past several years.

"Under Joel's direction, we are reaching out to prospective students at much earlier stages of their college exploration process to make them aware of all that Georgia College has to offer," said Spirou. "I also think the liberal arts focus and structured experiential learning opportunities we offer are very attractive to top-tier students."

University president Cathy Cox agreed.

"To some extent, I think Georgia College has benefitted from the negative experience many of our students had with online learning during the pandemic. Almost all of our academic-year courses for undergraduate students are held in face-to-face small classes," Cox



said, “and our students thrive in those discussion-based environments. They like knowing their professors and knowing that their professors know them.”

Despite that extraordinary growth of applications, GCSU has only marginally increased the size of its first-year class, from a high of around 1,500 in the fall of 2021 to just over 1,800 in the fall of 2023, so that it could maintain its reputation for small class sizes, housing for all first-year students, and accessibility to faculty and staff resources.



Alternate Text



PILLAR II

DISTINGUISH

(verb): 1. To make noteworthy or remarkable: to give prominence or distinction, 2. To mark as separate or different

[Learn more about the Distinguish Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)

News Stories Posted Wednesday June 5, 2024



GCSU's herbarium fills the gap for Middle Georgia

[Biology & Environmental Sciences, Department of](#) : Wednesday June 5, 2024

The variety of plants surrounding Athens, Georgia, are well documented and cataloged. This isn't the case for Baldwin County and Middle Georgia.

But students and faculty in the herbarium at Georgia College & State University are working to change that.

"The majority of our samples are from Georgia, and mostly Baldwin County," said Dr. Gretchen Ionta, associate professor of [environmental science](#) and current curator of Georgia College's herbarium. "Around Athens there's a ton of herbarium specimens, so you can go online and see where things were collected. But there's a big hole in the center of the state."

"A student could go through here and write a publication with all the different county records," she said. "It's not that the specimens are rare, it's just that nobody looked."

In an herbarium, plants are documented with their location like books in a library. This resource allows researchers and enthusiasts to monitor the environment and see if the same plants remain or change over time.

Local documentation of plants is important for understanding the ecology of an area and identifying what could be disappearing, Ionta said.



The herbarium was officially registered by Ionta in 2017, but students started collecting samples well before then.

For example, a Georgia College graduate student inventoried the plants of [Andalusia](#) collecting 260 specimens, almost a third of the herbarium's specimens. It's like a plant map of Andalusia.



Dr. Gretchen Ionta founded the herbarium at GCSU.

Almost all the specimens in the Georgia College herbarium were collected by students. They document plant location, create botanical labels, press specimens and mount the specimens on acid-free paper for easy retrieval.



Holly Lewis (left) and Sophia Williams (right) work to mount specimens.

"We have about 1,000 samples, and there's probably about 600 mounted," Ionta said. "There have been 448 student collectors over the years, and we have 99 plant families, 249 genera and 358 species that those students have mounted."

"You can see how beautiful their work is," she said. "They're doing a great job—incredible."

Holly Lewis, a sophomore biology major at Georgia College, is one of those students. She mounts specimens for the herbarium every Thursday.

"I'm doing something with my hands, which I've always really enjoyed, but I'm also hanging out with my friends and getting to take a break," Lewis said. "I didn't think I'd be doing it, but I'm really glad I did, and it's really important to be doing this."

First-year biology major Sophia Williams is getting in on the action too.

"I came into ecology like 'what is an herbarium?'" Williams said. "But I love it. I think it's super fun and relaxing—it gives me a break."

After Ionta retired at the end of May, Dr. Melanie DeVore, professor of environmental science, will take over as curator so the work can continue.

"It was a no-brainer for me," Ionta said. "I love herbariums, so I'm going to make one. There were already plant presses and students collecting things, but it was never organized."

"It was sort of in a closet," she said, "so I decided why not—this is a really good thing for our students."

The [Fringed Campion Chapter](#) of the Georgia Native Plant Society will be partnering with the Georgia College herbarium to develop native plant demonstration plots and projects at Andalusia. The documentation of the plant communities in Andalusia, provided by Gretchen and her students, is an essential tool in those projects.

This fall, DeVore will teach a plant taxonomy class where students will use and contribute to the herbarium's current collection.

"Gretchen personifies the metaphor, 'beneath still waters, there is a strong undertow.'" DeVore said. "She quietly built this resource with her considerable knowledge and expertise, and thoughtfully and carefully selected and trained students in herbarium techniques."



Mounting specimens is delicate work.



PILLAR IV

ENGAGE

(verb): 1. To occupy, attract, or involve (someone's interest or attention), 2. To participate or become involved

[Learn more about the Engage Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)



News Stories Posted Thursday June 13, 2024



Class of 2028: High school valedictorian excited to pursue pre-med at GCSU

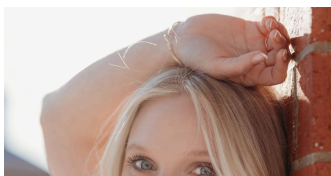
[Orientation](#) : Thursday June 13, 2024

By University Communications Intern, Sicilia Reed

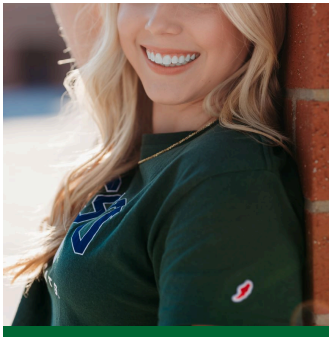
First year student Lindsey Kreschollek of Ty Ty, Georgia, is excited about coming to Georgia College & State University after earning valedictorian status from Tift County High School.

When most children are asked what job they want to do when they become adults, the options are usually similar: doctors, firefighters or even recently influencers. However, for one young girl, reaching academic achievement throughout her high school career was her goal from a young age. Kreschollek knew she wanted to do many things throughout her time in high school, including becoming valedictorian of her class of over 500 students.

Kreschollek knew her passion for academics, community service and dance could be combined into a vigorous college career at Georgia College.



"I chose GCSU because of the small, family atmosphere," Kreschollek said, "I'm from a small southern town in Georgia. So, I want a place that feels like home."



Lindsey Kreschollek

During her time at Georgia College, she hopes to pursue a major in [pre-medicine](#) with a minor in [business](#).

"I've always wanted to work in the healthcare field," she said. "I've always been involved in health-care clubs and everything else. I am even going to shadow at a pediatric clinic this summer. And then I like the business aspect of it, as well. I've always wanted to be like a world changer and help people. So, I can really do that through that. And I like making people feel better, getting to know different people and making those connections."

A self-described "busybody," Kreschollek knows beyond the classroom she wants to engage with clubs such as the [GCSU Sassycats](#) to connect with her competitive dance experience, as well as academic programs like [Leadership Academy](#).

"I'm just looking forward to making those connections and friendships with a lot of new people!"



PILLAR II

DISTINGUISH

(verb): 1. To make noteworthy or remarkable: to give prominence or distinction, 2. To mark as separate or different

[Learn more about the Distinguish Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)



News Stories Posted Monday June 17, 2024



GCSU students win \$7,500 in business competition

[College of Business & Technology](#) : Monday June 17, 2024

Four Georgia College & State University students tied for first place in this year's [Global Scaling Challenge](#)—winning \$7,500.

The Global Scaling Challenge (GSC) provides teams and mentors with a chance to address intricate scaling requirements and obstacles encountered by businesses operating in diverse settings. This year, it was hosted by the University of New Mexico's [Anderson School of Management](#).

Trey McCallum, Joseph "Joe" Dubsky, Grant Jones and Grayson Stoudenmire won a split of the \$15,000 top prize, and each went home with \$2,250 after winning \$1,500 in the regional round of

competition.

"All four of us researched industry information, put together pitch decks and presented them to the judges, so it was very much a collaborative effort," Dubsky, junior finance and economics double-major, said. "We competed against schools from around the world like India, Europe and South America too. Our research experience in creating pitch decks helped our team take home the gold."

Participants engaged with real firms, and student teams led by experts presented their solutions to firms and judges through a live, online format. The competition tasks teams and mentors with understanding the complex scaling needs of actual entrepreneurial firms and devising strategies for their immediate and future growth.

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We competed against schools from around the world like India, Europe and South America too. Our research experience in creating pitch decks helped our team take home the gold.

- Joe Dubsky

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Three regional qualifier events were held from March 6 through 8. Georgia College participated in the Americas where they also won first. They then went to the finals on April 26-27 against the top two teams from other regions: Europe and Africa, Asia and Oceania.

"This competition had the team present ideas to aerospace companies that are looking to scale up their businesses," said Dr. Nicholas Creel, assistant professor of business law and team faculty mentor. "None of these four students are engineers or are majoring in the hard sciences. This speaks to how their liberal arts education has given them the innate flexibility to not just compete in a competition like this, but to excel in it."

To top it off, the CEO of Space Kinetic, one of the companies they were pitching to in the competition, has asked the team members to sign NDAs and come on board to work for the company this summer.

"This is outstanding, for Dr. Creel and our students," said Dr. Micheal Stratton, dean of the [College of Business and Technology](#). "We applaud their success and appreciate their work to well-represent the College of Business and Technology and GCSU through this accomplishment."



PI LLAR I





INNOVATE

(verb): 1. To make changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas, or products



[Learn more about the Innovate Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)



A testament to determination and dedication: Eric Neas

[Graduate Programs in Business](#) : Monday June 17, 2024

By GCSU senior Olivia Reichert.

At Georgia College & State University, success stories aren't uncommon. The same is true for double bobcat [Eric Neas](#), '12, '13, whose journey is a testament to determination and dedication. In a recent interview, Eric shared insights into his educational path, career progression and the impact of his alma mater, Georgia College.

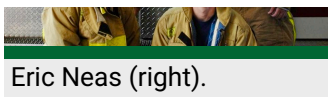
After graduating from Georgia College with a degree in accounting in 2012, Eric continued his studies to earn a master's degree in 2013. His time at Georgia College laid a strong foundation for his professional journey.

During his graduate studies, Eric truly found his stride through a graduate assistantship which in turn paved the way for a successful transition into the professional world. Reflecting on his time at Georgia College, Eric expressed gratitude for the supportive faculty and administrators who played a pivotal role in his academic journey.

Eric also shared anecdotes about his time as a firefighter in Baldwin County. Balancing his duties as a first responder with his academic responsibilities, he often studied accounting coursework during night shifts at the firehouse, exemplifying his dedication to both his community and his education.



Maintaining connections with his alma mater has always been important to Eric. Despite the changes in faculty, he stays in touch with mentors like Dr. Moore and Dr. Whelan, along with retired faculty member Dr. Sally Humphries and administrators such as Susan Whittle. Eric's commitment to Georgia College extends beyond mere communication; he actively participates in campus



Eric Neas (right).

events, including career fairs and classroom presentations, representing his employer, [Aprio](#).

Eric's career trajectory took a significant turn when he joined the firm in 2013. Starting as an audit associate, Eric's dedication and hard work propelled him through the ranks, eventually leading to his current role as an audit partner. At Aprio, Eric found a supportive and inclusive environment that fosters growth and prioritizes employee development.

In discussing the state of the accounting profession, Eric highlighted the challenges and opportunities facing aspiring accountants. Despite fewer undergraduate accounting majors, Eric remains optimistic about the future of the industry. With a focus on educating students about the dynamic nature of accounting and the exciting opportunities it offers, Eric is determined to inspire the next wave of accounting professionals.

This blog post celebrates Eric Neas's remarkable journey and highlights the importance of education, mentorship, and professional partnerships in shaping successful careers.



Neas with his degree at graduation.



Eric Neas attends his graduation ceremony.

We asked him some questions about his experiences to guide future accounting and business majors in the J. Whitney Bunting College of Business & Technology.

Q: What is a quality or characteristic that has helped you in your career?

A: As the accounting profession evolves, CPAs are now not only adept in compliance, but true business advisors to our clients.

Being a strong problem solver with excellent analytical skills has contributed significantly to my success. The ability to analyze complex issues, identify solutions and make informed decisions has been essential in guiding my clients.

Q: To what extent does your degree relate to your current position? What skills do you use for your work?

A: My degrees from GCSU have direct application to my position as an audit partner at Aprio. The degrees are the foundation that have shaped me to be an experienced advisor to Aprio clients. The technical knowledge, analytical skills and ethical foundation I gained during my studies are crucial to my daily responsibilities, from building success in others within Aprio to success in our clients.

Q: What parts of the business program had the strongest impact on you as a professional?

A: The intimate setting of GCSU had a significant impact on me, providing the opportunity to network with other business program students and engage with professors and professionals. I was able to learn how to connect with people, learn who they are, what their drive is in life and where they aspire to be. At Aprio, we are passionate about what's next – that means truly knowing our clients, well

beyond the numbers. My experience at Georgia College has enabled me to develop a strong professional skillset in the field of interpersonal business.

Q: What advice would you give to current/future business majors at GCSU?

A: Take advantage of every opportunity to learn and grow, both inside and outside the classroom. You

have the chance to gain invaluable experiences and connections from internships, networking events, and professional organizations that will benefit your career in the long run.

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- Eric Neas

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[Learn more about Eric on his LinkedIn page.](#)

News Stories Posted Tuesday June 18, 2024



Class of 2028: Incoming student inspires through love of theater

Orientation : Tuesday June 18, 2024

Class of 2028 first year student Kenzie Hattaway didn't have a typical trajectory to theatre.

It wasn't something she always dreamed of, but after she suffered a traumatic brain injury in the eighth grade, theatre became her lifeline and she fell in love.

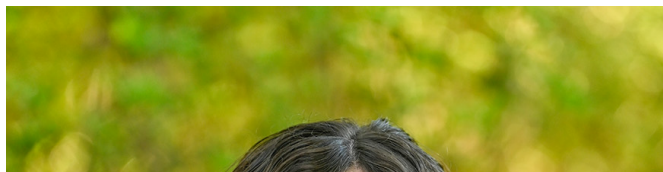
After a major accident, Hattaway relearned how to walk, talk and eat. Her doctors told her that competition cheer and basketball were out of the picture.

"My life was sports," Hattaway said. "I had to find something to fill the void. My friends were in theatre and the doors were open, so I took the opportunity and fell in love with theatre, performing—all of it."

Where Hattaway went to school—Bleckley County High School in Cochran, Georgia—theatre is "what the cool kids do," Hattaway said. There are more people in theatre than any other extracurricular there, and out of all the options, theatre wins the most accolades.

She's performed for up to 15,000 people and has traveled to places like Orlando, Opryland in Nashville, Savannah and Kentucky. She performs in show choir, dances, acts and has competed across the nation.

But Kenzie won't actually be majoring in theatre, dance or music when she comes



to campus.

Hattaway is joining Georgia College & State University in the fall as a computer science major in the [College of Business & Technology](#). Her first love: video games.

"I grew up in a household where at family get-togethers and stuff, we'd play video games, and we always liked playing Nintendo together," she said. "It's just been something me and my family bond over. And I decided to go with that route—the computer route—for college because it's also where the world is moving."

Hattaway definitely is not giving up on [theatre, dance](#), singing or performing though. As she majors in computer science, she plans to engage with the arts and culture scene on campus and eventually perform, taking advantage of the opportunities provided to her by a [liberal arts education](#).

"I'm excited to meet new people, and I always love to see Cathy Cox talk," Hattaway said. "I wanted to go to a really good school, but I didn't want to go to a super big school."

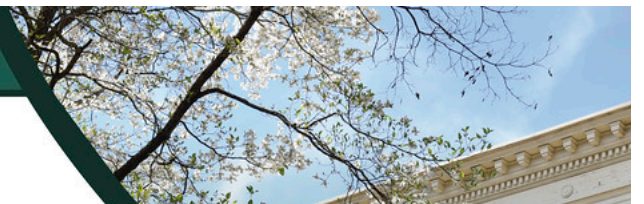
"Georgia College felt like the perfect mix of small town and a small school, but also big school, big name," she said.



Kenzie Hattaway.



PILLAR II





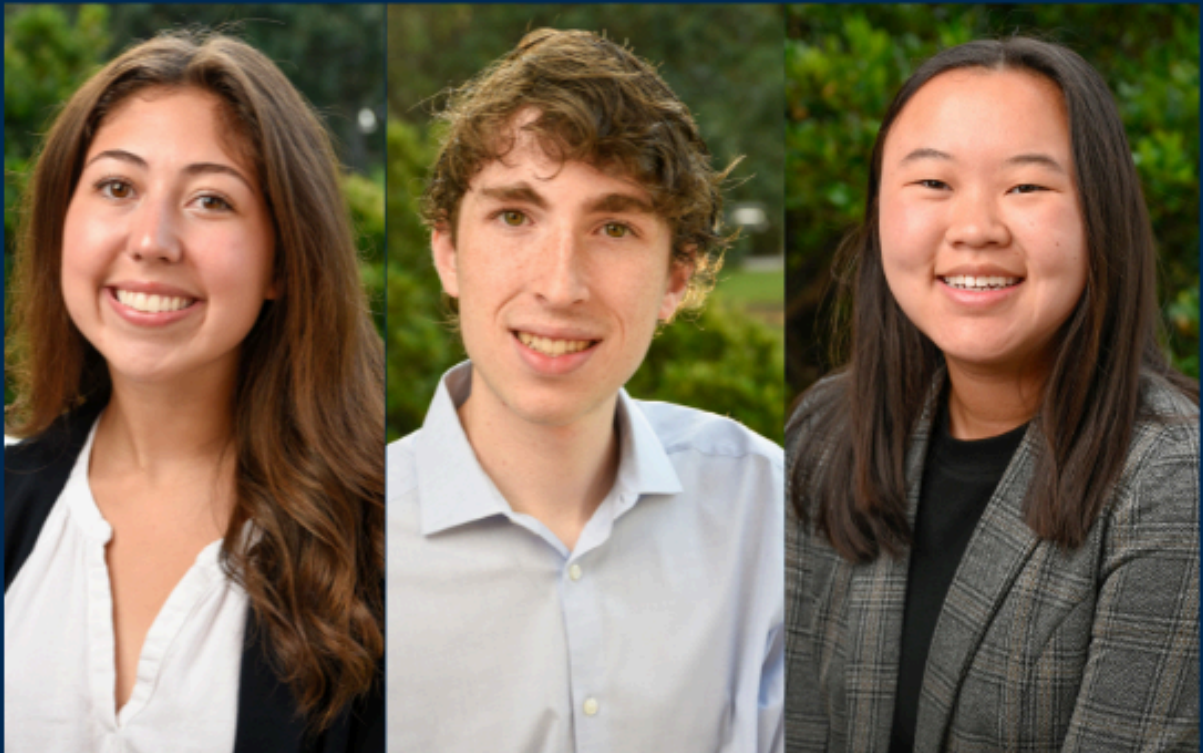
DISTINGUISH

(verb): 1. To make noteworthy or remarkable: to give prominence or distinction, 2. To mark as separate or different



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News Stories Posted Thursday June 20, 2024



Three students receive prestigious Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Scholarships

[National Scholarships Office at Georgia College](#) : Thursday June 20, 2024

By: University Communications Intern, Sicilia Reed

Three Georgia College & State University students have been awarded the [Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Scholarship](#).

Kassie Arps, a rising junior majoring in mass communication, Paige Blakemore, a rising senior

majoring in mass communication and Tommy Creekmore, a rising junior majoring in English, were among 125 students nationwide selected for this award. All of them utilized the scholarship to participate in [GCSU's Intercultural Leadership Program](#) at the European Parliament.

The program, which is based at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France, brings together students and scholars, as well as diplomats, policy-specialists, military officers, elected officials, business executives and non-profit leaders. Program participants complete coursework in global leadership and intercultural communication and visit important international political institutions.

Phi Kappa Phi is the nation's oldest collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines. Its study abroad grant program distributes \$1.3 million each year to outstanding students through graduate and dissertation fellowships, funding for post baccalaureate development and grants for local, national and international literacy initiatives.



From left to right: Kassie Arps, Samantha Peyton, Paige Blakemore, Shelby Brown and Tommy Creekmore.

To apply for this award, Arps, Blakemore and Creekmore submitted transcripts, letters of recommendation and essays detailing their selected study abroad programs and the impact their programs would have on their future academic and professional careers.

Tommy Creekmore is eager to use his scholarship.

"I want to understand how leadership is executed across cultures and enable myself to better appreciate the history and culture of the Alsace region," he said.

Paige Blakemore is excited to share her experience abroad with others.

"The Phi Kappa Phi Study Abroad Grant will enable me to immerse myself in the beauty of France and its culture," she said. "This grant not only supports my academic pursuits but will also contribute

to fostering a deeper understanding of the world around me."

Kassie Arps applied what she has learned in her major at GCSU to her studies abroad.

"I know that understanding different cultures and effectively communicating across cultural boundaries are essential skills in today's globalized world," she said. "This scholarship gives me the opportunity to meet my academic and personal goals, providing me with the necessary tools to become a more effective leader and communicator."

Applicants for the honor society's study abroad scholarship do not need to be a member, but they need a GPA of 3.75 or higher. Students interested in applying for this award should contact [National Scholarships Office Coordinator](#) Anna Whiteside.

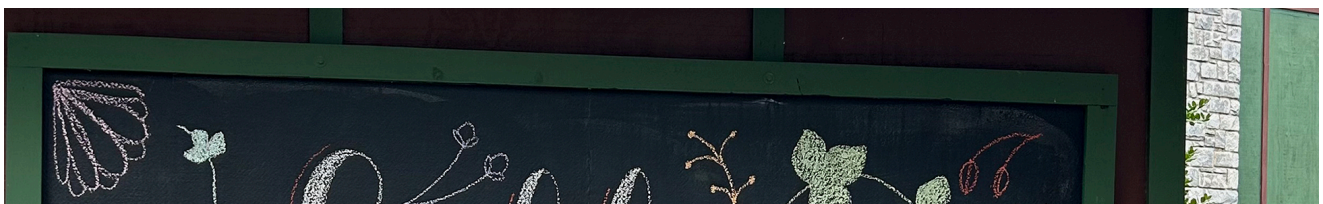


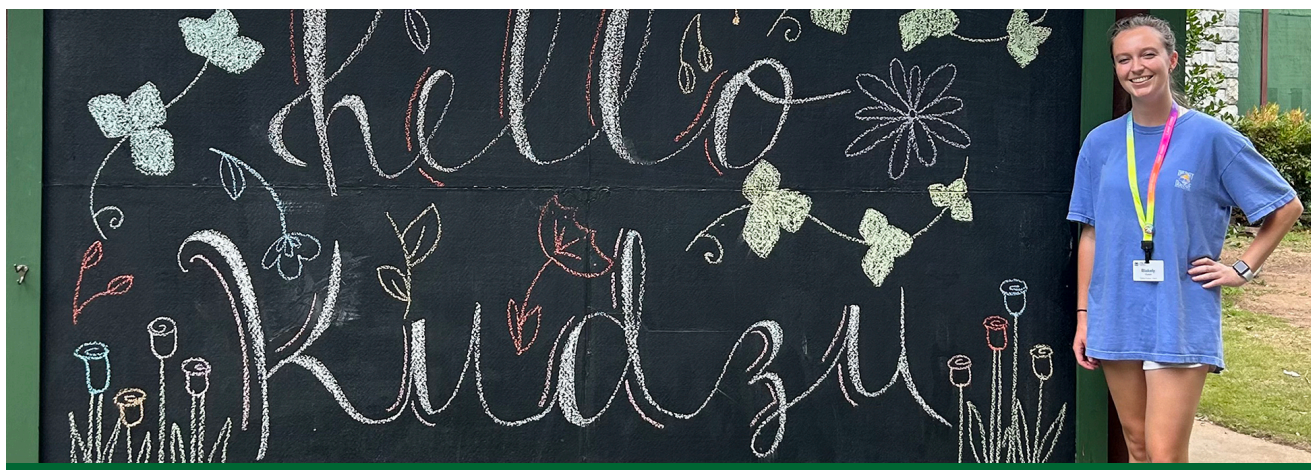
GCSU intern improves quality of life for kids with Type 1 Diabetes

[Health Promotion, Office of](#) : Thursday June 20, 2024

Senior [public health](#) major and [sociology minor](#) Blakely Queen knows the rewarding feeling that comes from volunteering and working for the public good.

She's a public health community engagement intern this summer at [Camp Kudzu](#), which serves children and teens with Type 1 Diabetes.





Blakely Queen prepares for campers.

Queen learned about the camp from two close friends who attended as kids. During her senior seminar class in fall 2023, she spotted Camp Kudzu as Georgia College & State University's approved work site.

"When I saw it on the list, I immediately knew that's where I wanted to go," Queen said.

Camp Kudzu's mission is to educate, inspire and empower campers and their families. There are approximately 180 campers attending the first summer session.

"I love to see an organization educate people on how to live their lives with Type 1 Diabetes without them feeling left out," she said. "Sometimes a chronic illness can make people feel very isolated, so they don't talk about it much. Camp Kudzu creates that community to connect people, living with Type 1 Diabetes, to show they're not alone."

The camp also shows campers they can have a normal life—like every other kid—with a few precautions.

“

Having a chronic disease can lead people to not talk about it and feel very isolated. I hope these campers leave feeling like they have a new friend. I've already heard kids super excited during check in saying, 'I can't wait to meet my diaBESTie.'

- Blakely Queen

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"I enjoy seeing how these kids connect with other people and leave camp feeling completely renewed with their illness," she said. "That's awesome to me."

Camp Kudzu's programming varies from year-round and overnight summer camps to weekend and day camps. The popular week-long summer camps reach about 1,200 children and teens each year.

Queen interacts with each camper. She also helps facilitate educational sessions which are split by age group. Then, she watches the kids participate in a variety of activities including touring a farm, swimming, kayaking, horseback riding, participating in arts-n- crafts and pool parties.

Queen enjoys the community aspect the camp creates the most.

"We rely on our volunteers a lot to help run



pretty much everything,” she said. “They are amazing.”

Queen was given the [Eve Puckett Giving Tree Award](#) for her legacy of service at Georgia College. She volunteered through the Center for Health and Social Issues. She also served as an assistant coach at Shiloh Horse Ranch and volunteered 100-plus hours a year through the university’s Shelter Buddies Rescue Service Organization.

“I love to hear why people volunteer,” Queen said. “That’s what I always thought about when I volunteered was, ‘Why am I here?’ It’s heartwarming to know the reasons others do it.”

She’s learned how to modify different lessons, gearing them toward different age groups. That way, everyone understands what’s being taught. Knowing these skills will help her in her future role as a health educator. But first, Queen plans to attend the University of Georgia this fall to work toward getting her Master of Public Health.

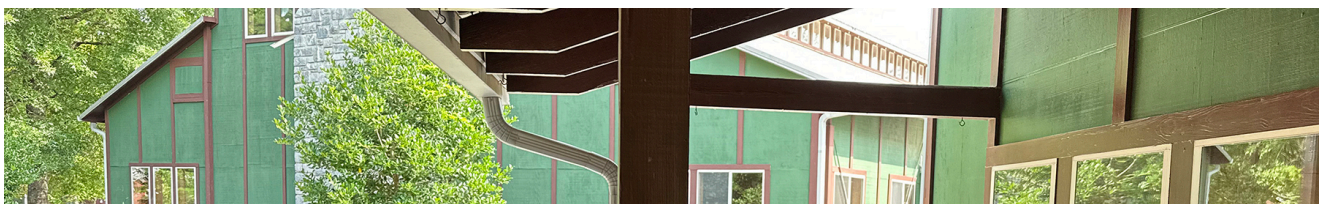
“All campers do the same activities at different paces, especially in the education sessions,” Queen said. “We present concepts differently to our 15- and 16-year-olds than we do to our eight- and nine-year-olds.”

The internship helped her refine her skills in Canva and Excel computer programs, which will also help Queen in her career.

In her internship, she applies much of what she learned in her public health classes. What she learned about cultural competency in her community health class has been most useful.



Blakely Queen facilitates a game with teens at Camp Kudzu.





Blakely Queen (right-center in a blue T-shirt) tells campers about activities at Camp Kudzu.

"We have many campers from so many different backgrounds coming in one week," Queen said. "So, we must understand when checking in their families, if their family is not fluent in English, we have a translator to help us so we don't have to use their children to help translate for them."

Many of her sociology classes overlap with her public health classes; both examine health disparities. She envisions expanding on what she's learned in her career.

"My public health classes examine the statistics of health disparities," Queen said. "But, with my sociology degree, I hope to dig a bit deeper into health disparities to find the cause and take an upstream approach to help minimize health disparities and improve the overall quality of life for everyone."

She wants to continue creating connections with people to help them improve their lives.

"Community is most important to me," she added. "I want to help people whose quality of life is poor, because even if they understand what they can do, they aren't likely to strive for that end goal if they feel alone."

"I had an eight-year-old boy talk to me about his insulin pump. We taught him more about it," Queen said. "And he was like, 'Oh my gosh, I have to talk to my mom about this.'"

She hopes her campers don't leave camp feeling alone.

"Having a chronic disease can lead people to not talk about it and feel very isolated," Queen said. "I hope these campers leave feeling like they have a new friend. I've already heard kids super excited during check in saying, 'I can't wait to meet my 'diaBESTie.'"



PILLAR IV





ENGAGE

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[Learn more about the Engage Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)

News Stories Posted Monday June 24, 2024



MIS student finds success in STEM field internship

[College of Business & Technology](#) : Monday June 24, 2024

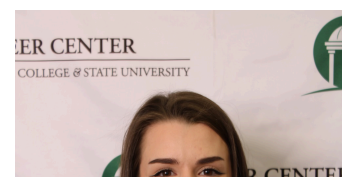
By: University Communications Intern, Sicilia Reed

As summer rolls around, most college students begin their professional careers through the sought-after summer internship. Sydney Logan rose to the challenge this summer as she approaches her senior year. Logan is a [management information systems major](#) with a computer science minor who knew she wanted to work with technology from a young age.

"I hadn't really heard of MIS before looking into colleges," Logan said. "I loved it because it's a mixture of computer science and business. You get to work with people, as well as technology. So that's why I took MIS because it was kind of a bridge between people and technology. And I love them both."

Logan was presented with the opportunity to attend the [Grace Hopper Conference](#) in Florida. This conference is dedicated to Hopper's legacy as a pioneer for women in technology. Logan, funded

through Georgia College, was able to attend alongside other students and faculty. Despite over 30,000 attendees, Logan describes her determination to meet with company representatives and hopefully secure an interview for an internship. One company that stood out to her was Northrop Grumman, a military defense company.



"The competition was high, and I went up to a ton of different companies," she said. "But when I went to Northrop, they were super interested in my resume. They scheduled an interview for me, and I did the interview at Grace Hopper."

After a successful phone interview, Logan secured her internship at their location in Florida where she currently resides with other summer interns. Because of the sensitive nature of their work, she was unable to comment on what exactly she has been doing, but she offers advice to other students looking to pursue their own internship.



Sydney Logan

"I feel intimidated, but I think it's imposter syndrome. And different people are going to assume where you're at. Some of these interns are sophomores and don't have any experience and some are grad students. So you must learn to ask questions and be honest. Which is hard because I don't want to embarrass myself asking a stupid question. But that's how I'm going to learn."

“

So, you must learn to ask questions and be honest. Which is hard because it's sometimes embarrassing. I don't want to embarrass myself, asking a stupid question. But that's how I'm going to learn.

”

Logan described how she knew she wanted to work in the digital space since she was young, but she did not know in what capacity until she looked internally at her passions versus career goals.

"I just knew technology needed to be a part of it, but I also knew that I didn't want to just be coding, I need that social aspect," Logan said, "which is why I went with MIS, but I've always knew I wanted some sort of technology. And I think getting to college has amplified that."

With those ideals in mind, she entered Georgia College confident of her goals. She enjoyed how through the [J. Whitney Bunting College of Business and Technology](#), she had classes that encouraged holistic business education.

"It's really rewarding, especially my IT class and IT Networking," she said. "I took that with Dr. Marshall. For what I'm doing specifically, I think that class is probably the most applicable. It's just so important to have those business classes, because even though I'm more on the tech side, everything leads back to business, right? So with management, I learned how to deal with people. It's also nice to have those skills. It's very rewarding to apply what I've learned."

Logan offered advice to any students at Georgia College considering MIS or computer science as well.

"Do not be afraid to reach out for help," she said. "It's hard, and you're going to have to work hard. And

that's a good thing. There are tutors and a lot of amazing resources that you can take advantage of. For me, the professors are amazing. I really value the connection you have with your professors, because I believe our MIS department is amazing. I haven't had a bad teacher in the MIS department. The female professors are amazing."

"There's a reason I'm here," Logan said. "The professors worked so hard to get students to the Grace Hopper Conference and for them to take advantage of all those opportunities the conference and the [Women in Technology Club](#) offers. I recommend getting involved, because everyone wants to see you thrive."



PILLAR I

INNOVATE

(verb): 1. To make changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas, or products

[Learn more about the Innovate Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)



News Stories Posted Wednesday June 26, 2024



Students learn overarching concepts on climate change through liberal arts perspective

[First-Year Experience](#) : Wednesday June 26, 2024

New, this past spring, students in the GC2Y 2000 Global Perspectives Class learned from expansive assessments on climate change. The class, taught by Dr. Mark Causey, senior lecturer of [philosophy and religious studies](#); Dr. Steven Elliott-Gower, associate professor of [political science](#); and Dr. Hedy Fraunhofer, professor of [French and German](#), combined their teaching using the [liberal arts](#) approach.

Students learned about climate change from different disciplinary perspectives including the humanities, [religion](#), [philosophy](#), [politics](#) and policy. The faculty taught four sections to nearly 80 students. Elliott-Gower taught two sections of climate politics, while Causey and Fraunhofer taught two sections of climate emergency. Students then changed to new sections halfway through the semester.





Dr. Mark Causey



Dr. Steve Elliott-Gower



Dr. Hedy Fraunhofer

GC2Y 2000 Global Perspectives Class instructors

"Students get a great example of a liberal arts education at its best, because we've got people from these various disciplines, addressing one central issue from different perspectives," Causey said. "I hope that helps students connect climate change to the different classes they must take. What they learn in science class also applies in this humanities class and vice versa."

The students formed multidisciplinary perspectives on climate change plus learned from industry experts. These included a business leader from Southern Alliance for Clean Energy and colleagues from the hard sciences like Dr. Hasitha Mahabaduge, associate professor of physics at Georgia College & State University. He laid a foundation for students by helping them understand a solar aspect of climate change.

"Even I learned why climate change, or global warming, can also cause cold spells that had been previously unseen," Fraunhofer said.

"The complexity of the issue helped me understand that human beings are driving climate change," Causey said. "It's going to require a fundamental shift in our thinking in our relationship to nature."

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- Dr. Mark Causey

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"That's where the humanities—that often get left out of this discussion—come in and contribute," Causey said.

"All students are shown climate change documentaries, that I wouldn't normally show in my class, to allow my students to see climate change from these other ethical and humanities perspectives," Elliott-Gower said. "Also, bringing in industry experts is an enormously important part of what we're doing here."

"Climate change touches on so many areas that to respond to something as big as this is going to require political, economic, scientific, ethical and religious responses. It touches every aspect of our lives," Causey said.

This class gave first-year accounting major Will Turner a look into the world's larger problems that affect climate change.

"Taking classes with professors from diverse disciplines allowed me to consider different

perspectives which expanded my own," he said. "I don't want to be narrow minded. Instead, I'd like to keep my mind open to new possibilities."

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The science behind climate change has been in for several years now, and it's debatable whether we're reacting appropriately to the crisis. The humanities have a significant role to play in facilitating this discussion.

- Dr. Hedy Fraunhofer

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All three faculty members also benefited from the multidisciplinary approach.

"I'm learning things about climate change that I didn't know before, and looking at climate change from these different perspectives that my colleagues in this multidisciplinary endeavor are bringing to my attention," Elliott-Gower said.

"The pedagogical discussions we have among us are often on how to address this issue," Fraunhofer said. "We're also learning how to teach from each other. That's been helpful."

"The science behind climate change has been in for several years now, and it's debatable whether we're reacting appropriately to the crisis," Fraunhofer said. "The humanities have a significant role to play in facilitating this discussion."

From the political perspective, students learn why progress on climate action is difficult because of competing political interests at stake from the corporate, oil and gas industries.

"International cooperation is especially difficult on climate change," Elliott-Gower said. "This is due to massive ethical and equity issues that must be dealt with, namely, that we, in the Global North, are largely responsible for climate change. But it's primarily the countries in the Global South that experience the worst effects of climate change."

"The industrialized nations, which happen to be the richer nations, caused the most damage," Causey said. "The effects are mostly borne by poorer nations."

"I highlight indigenous voices, as well, because indigenous people have already lived through colonization," Causey said. "Their land—all of that's already changed—it's already gone. But they're still here."

Several of his students commented that they'd never encountered indigenous voices and perspectives at the levels they're studying in this class.

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International cooperation is especially difficult on climate change. This is due to massive ethical and equity issues that must be dealt with, namely, that we, in the Global North, are largely responsible for climate change. But it's primarily the countries in the Global South that experience the worst effects of climate change.

- Dr. Steve Elliott-Gower

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"It really gives them a different lens to think about what's going on," Causey said. "That has proved

helpful.”

Since climate change is a global problem, Elliott-Gower points out the impacts of climate change in different countries, including the severity of effects near the equator. Then his class examines how these countries are responding.

“In the literature section, we read novels that feature the impact of climate change on different parts of the world,” Fraunhofer said. “Since I’m from Europe, I am very interested in news, including news about climate change, in Europe. So, I always draw cross-cultural comparisons on how different regions of the world are addressing or not addressing climate change.”

The effects of climate change are happening worldwide while disproportionately affecting people with the least ability to cope with those kinds of issues.

“Immigration into the U.S. is a big political issue,” Causey said. “But students don’t realize how much immigration and migration around the world is caused now by climate change. These people are climate refugees. This problem is only going to get worse.”

“I hope our students leave these classes with a sense of hope, and more importantly, a sense of agency,” Elliott-Gower said. “They need to know there are things they can do both individually and collectively, to help us avoid the worst effects of climate change.”

Students learned that they’re part of the ecosystem.

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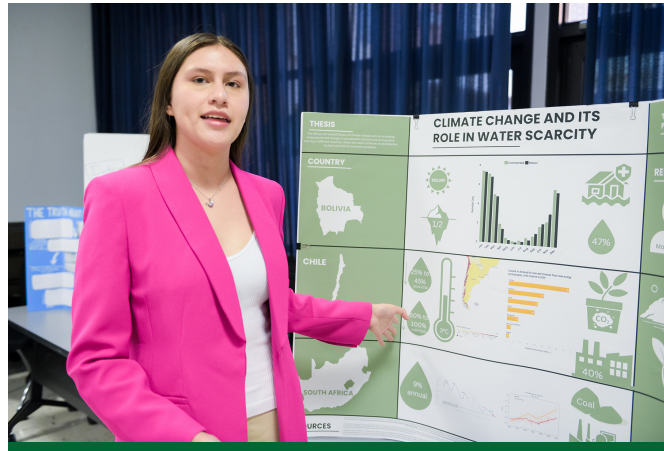
I hope to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to continue holding corporations accountable for their emissions,” he said, “possibly by measuring the amounts and costs that should be applied to these emissions.

- Will Turner

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“My hope is they leave with a broader understanding of our interconnectedness with nature—what we do to nature, we’re doing to ourselves,” Causey said. “If we destabilize, we’re undercutting our own ability to live and thrive. I hope this class gives students a feeling of connection with the larger world.”

Causey also hopes students will be informed voters when it comes to climate action.



World Languages and Cultures major Paola Martinez explains how climate change contributes to water scarcity in Bolivia, Chile and South Africa during the Sustainability Symposium.





Will Turner stands near his final project "Reshaping the land: Rising and receding water," that he completed with the help of three classmates. Students described their project during the Sustainability Symposium leading up to Earth Day.

Turner found this course to be "eye-opening" in learning about different ways countries across the world are responding to climate change. His area of focus was the European Union.

"The EU has a lot of power to reduce its emissions and the emissions of those who trade with it," he said. "But countries like Kenya or Venezuela are focused on adapting to the impacts and trying to survive."

Turner hopes to make the world a better place for everyone.

"I hope to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to continue holding corporations accountable for their emissions," he said, "possibly by measuring the amounts and costs that should be applied to these emissions."



PILLAR IV





ENGAGE

(verb): 1. To occupy, attract, or involve (someone's interest or attention), 2. To participate or become involved



[Learn more about the Engage Pillar in our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan](#)



Afterschool program at GCSU broadening high schoolers' horizons

[School of Continuing and Professional Studies](#) : Wednesday June 26, 2024

High schoolers got a taste of what it's like to create a podcast this year as part of Georgia College & State University's [High Achievers Program](#).

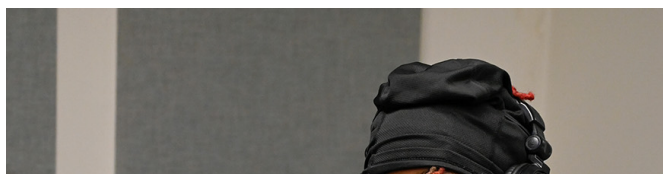
Students from [Baldwin High School](#) and [Georgia College Early College](#) participated in a three-month endeavor to learn the basics of podcasting, resulting in their own podcast pseudo-episodes dealing with common problems for teenagers—like relationships and life issues surrounding mental health.

"We're encouraging their public speaking skills, increasing their confidence levels, and fostering their leadership development and their teamwork," said Kenneth W. Daniels, HAP coordinator. "The idea of the program is to strengthen leadership development while being involved in several activities. It's about making a well-rounded individual that positively contributes to society—most of these opportunities the program participants wouldn't find anywhere else."

The afterschool youth development program is funded by the Georgia Department of Human Services and partners with Georgia College, the Baldwin County Board of Education, the city of Milledgeville and Baldwin County.

Students in the program explore all kinds of hands-on activities from outdoor obstacle courses to using microscopes in labs and other STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) activities, to engaging with professional guest speakers. Recently, the program introduced students to podcasting techniques and equipment.

"I've been teaching them podcasting: how to come up with topics, how to research topics and giving them the information they need to produce a podcast," said Dr.



Chad Whittle, assistant professor of communication at Georgia College. "It's a great opportunity for the students in the program to learn how to share their thoughts and ideas, and it's got to be interesting, engaging and informative."

The Georgia College [Department of Communication](#) donated thousands of dollars of grant-funded equipment to the project, giving HAP students the basic experience needed to produce podcasts after their lessons.

"I'd like to be doing gaming podcasting," said ninth-grade Baldwin student Arreon Amir Stephens. "I enjoy interviewing people and sharing viewpoints. I like podcasts, so I'm interested."

Stephens and his peers examined mental health as their podcast topic and interviewed each other about what they're going through.

"You will never know what people are going through," Stephens said. "I could be having issues right now, and you'd never know, so I look at it as consideration. I care."

Through their participation in podcasting for mental health education and afterschool exploration via the High Achievers Program, students are learning more about the opportunities they have awaiting them.

"This is a small family of kids who undoubtedly realized that they do have potential," Daniels said. "They do have greatness within them and have the opportunity display and cultivate it. We just push and lead them forward to expand their horizons."



Arreon Amir Stephens in the podcasting booth.





Live podcasting in the Terrell Hall booth.



PILLAR IV

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GCSU Sophomore named 2024 Newman Civic Fellow

[Leadership Programs](#) : Wednesday June 26, 2024

By: University Communications Intern, Sicilia Reed

Sophomore Tyler Hill has been named a [2024 Newman Civic Fellow](#) for his dedication to leadership and community within Baldwin County and Georgia College & State University.

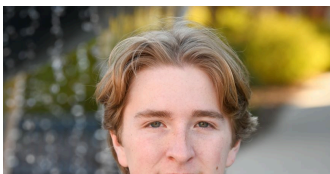
"Tyler offers an inspiring example of finding innovative solutions to seemingly intractable problems," said Dr. Harold Mock, director of the university's [Leadership Programs](#). "He embodies the best of Georgia College's commitment to leadership for the public good."

Newman Civic Fellows are an inspiring group of community-committed students who are already making an impact in communities where they live, learn and serve.

Hill's passion for leadership was noticed after he founded a food donation organization called Agape. He founded Agape with Carlos Lopez Blackwell in February of last year, and together they provide relief for children under 18 who struggle with food insecurity in Baldwin County.

"Leadership can look like many different things," Hill said. "It has taught me the best leaders lead by serving those they lead. I learned quickly when I tried to act on the ideas I had for my community that leading through service wasn't enough. You also must be willing to collaborate."

[Agape's Thanksgiving food drive](#) last year culminated in a day-long festival that not only provided food boxes to families in need, but brought in community resource organizations to connect with local families. As a result, 75 local families were provided with food boxes.



At this year's Jingle Jam Toy Drive, Hill proved instrumental in giving out toys to 150 families, ensuring that 250 local area children



Tyler Hill

didn't go without. He hopes to continue working with community leaders and his classmates to address food insecurity issues within the Milledgeville community.

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 Cathy Cox.

Through this honor, [Hill will work with the university's Leadership Programs](#) to continue his work and fulfill Agape's mission—bettering the university and local community.

Newman Civic Fellows also have access to exclusive scholarship and post-graduate opportunities through the organization [Campus Compact](#). These opportunities support the fellows in their personal, professional and civic growth.

"I hope to continue to connect and collaborate with my community so that I can most effectively serve those around me," Hill said.



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