

## Georgia College students hold bilingual story time at elementary school

Exposure to a second language doesn't usually begin until high school. By then, too many are fearful of new territory and have built barriers.

Not young children. Like a sponge, they're eager to absorb new experiences.

"They're not afraid to make mistakes, and that's something I have to get over myself. It's so freeing to see them learning and accepting other languages and cultures," said junior Christopher Jackson of Gray.

Jackson is double majoring in communication and world language and cultures with an emphasis in Spanish. He's part of Dr. Mariana Stoyanova's language service-learning class that provides weekly bilingual story times in Spanish and French to third graders at Midway Hills Academy and occasional Saturday readings for 2- and 3-year-olds at Mary Vinson Library, both in Milledgeville. Library coordinators told Stoyanova the sessions are popular, attracting the library's highest story-time attendance since the pandemic.

Pupils in Karlettia Jackson's third grade class also enjoy seeing and learning from college students. They cheer when Bobcats enter the classroom.

Dr. Eric Carlyle, principal at Midway, welcomes this exposure for his students and the "expansion of learning" it provides. He's always looking for ways to improve curriculum and create opportunities.

"They love it. It's a nice change to the traditional instruction they get on a daily basis," Carlyle said. "It's always great for students to have an opportunity to learn from various people—whether they're teachers in training or students who are coming in from different realms of life."

"Secondly, I think it helps our teachers to have people bringing in fresh ideas and different ways of presenting information to our students," he said. "And I think it really helps us continue forging partnerships with community partners. To have an institution of higher learning of this magnitude here is extremely beneficial."

Before entering the elementary classroom, Georgia College students must first understand the theory of acquiring a second language and ways young students learn. Hands-on experience in a classroom setting is valuable, Stoyanova said. Students design



Christopher Jackson leads a class recently at Midway Hills Academy.

lesson plans and practice their own language skills while teaching others. This builds leadership and gives them a chance to interact with different age groups.

"They're also meeting a growing need for elementary-aged children to gain access to different cultures. This helps them become well-rounded individuals and global citizens," Stoyanova said.

"They learn to give clear and concise instructions and guide younger students in their learning by adapting to their needs," she said. "Such skills go beyond the classroom and are applicable in many situations, including professional settings."

This semester, students are teaching young pupils greetings, colors, animal names and numbers in Spanish. They read age-appropriate bilingual story books and create activities to reinforce vocabulary. This includes games, music with Spanish lyrics like Disney's "Encanto," short online clips and worksheets.

One student read from Dr. Seuss' "One Fish Two Fish" ("Un pez dos peces") to teach numbers in Spanish to 20. Others read books like Bill Martin Jr.'s "Brown Bear" ("Oso pardo") and "Polar Bear" ("Oso polar") and Patricia Seibert's "Three Little Pigs" ("Los tres cerditos") to strengthen vocabulary and help kids with story organization.

Young pupils pick up language quickly, Stoyanova said. They

memorize most words by the end of a 45-minute lesson and show comprehension by completing associated activities.

"The young ones love it when Georgia College students show up," she said, "because it's like a special treat outside their regular curriculum. They enjoy the interaction because they get to learn something new in a fun way."

When Jackson stood in front of the third grade class recently, no one could tell he was nervous. He started his bilingual story time by asking questions. This stirred up memories of the previous lesson. He interacted with them in a lively, fun manner—and they loved it.

"Hey chicos," Jackson called out, "what's your favorite animal?"

They responded with a variety of animal names.

"Oh, that's great. Does anybody see their favorite animal up here?" he said, pointing to a smart board. "Does anyone remember what we talked about last week? That's right, pets. In Spanish they're called 'mascotas.' Can you say it with me?"

This interactive banter keeps the elementary students focused and actively involved. Jackson used his lesson to review color words in Spanish, while introducing new sound words. Pretty soon, the classroom was reverberating with all kinds of animal noises—barking, meowing, growling, roaring, snorting, chirping and hissing.

"A second language is a beneficial tool to have in this ever-evolving world we're in," Jackson said. "To be aware of different languages and cultures is never a harmful thing to have. It's also really interesting to see the native speakers in the classroom. They're so happy their peers understand them and have an appreciation for another language."

Jackson said he's grown and adapted, as well. This experience has reinforced his dream of teaching language, making him feel more comfortable and capable of teaching younger learners.

Leaving the elementary class recently, he waved to the kids and said, "We're going to be back next week, and we're going to learn even more Spanish. Anybody remember how to say goodbye in Spanish?"

They replied in chorus: "Adios!"

## GC team placed in early rounds of financial competition



Team photo (left to right): Slate Fluker, Nick Brooks, Lauren Moskowitz, Nathan Snow, Clayton Gardner.

A team of five students were the first from Georgia College to advance to the second round of the Southern Classic Research Challenge, a sub-regional competition in the Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) Institute Research Challenge.

The annual, global competition rigorously tests university students on their analytical, valuation, report writing and presentation skills. As part of the Southern Classic sub-region, students from Georgia College competed against 25 other universities from Georgia, Alabama and South Carolina.

After scoring in the top five in the first round, Georgia College advanced to the presentation round alongside teams from Kennesaw State University, Auburn, Clemson and Mercer University. Despite all odds, the team placed third in the

presentation round with a score of 86.8 out of 100. Mercer University placed first, and Kennesaw State University placed second.

The interdisciplinary team is made up of five students: junior economics major Lauren Moskowitz, junior economics major Clayton Gardner, junior management information systems major James "Slate" Fluker, senior economics major Nathan Snow and junior marketing major Nick Brooks. They are proud of what they've achieved.

"We, a small school without a finance major, made it to the next round of a global finance competition," Moskowitz said. "Our goal when we were to make it to the presentation round. We feel like we prepared very well."

The students, selected in September 2021, were tasked by the CFA Institute to analyze the entire financial picture of a designated company and provide a recommendation to judges on whether stock should be bought, sold or held. This grueling work resulted in a 20-page financial analysis report.

The report was graded by judges from companies like Truist and JPMorgan. The third team from Georgia College to compete in as many years, they were the first from to advance to the next round for presentations.

## Georgia College receives federal grant for writing, literacy outreach in Baldwin Schools

A nearly \$400,000 grant will help promote writing and literacy skills for youth in Baldwin County schools. Georgia College has been awarded funds for a new Writing for Success program from the Department of Education.

The program will include a combination of workshops, one-on-one consultations and peer advising for K-12 students at their schools.

"Georgia College is committed to supporting our community and is dedicated to fostering the success of students in our local public schools. This program draws from our liberal arts mission to develop creative problem solvers, skilled communicators and engaged citizens," said Dr. Costas Spirou, Georgia College's provost and vice president for Academic Affairs.

Many rural school districts in the state struggle with adequately preparing students with the skills they need for successful careers. Initiatives like the Writing for Success program aim to address these challenges and offer participants an opportunity to develop the skills to improve their academic performance and career readiness.

"We hope to spark passions and spur opportunities for students as we work to promote greater literacy. Our community and the state will benefit from students who are better prepared to communicate and succeed in their futures—whether they go directly to college or to careers," said Dr. Irene Burgess, executive director of the Andalusia Institute.

"Who knows. Some students may even follow in the



footsteps of famed authors Flannery O'Connor and Alice Walker who called this area home," she said.

Georgia College will begin working with local educators and administrators to assess the district's needs and the needs of their students. Once those are identified, facilitators will formulate programming to meet those needs. Programming could include training for teachers, hands-on engagement for students or enrichment activities.

"We all know how important reading, writing and speaking skills are for all life

situations. This new program will help expand the reach in our schools and bring new opportunities for our students to have support in these vital areas," said Dr. Noris Price, superintendent of Baldwin County Schools. "We are grateful for the partnership with Georgia College on this initiative and look forward to seeing how this benefits our students as we move forward."

The \$385,000 grant is funded through the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, which was recently signed by President Joe Biden. Georgia College is grateful to Sen. Raphael Warnock, who advocated for this initiative.

"Investing in our students means investing in future generations of change-makers, thinkers and innovators. I am proud to have secured these funds for the Writing Success for Central Georgia Youth program because I believe writing is a gateway for young people to positively express themselves and contribute to our society. Students deserve our unwavering support, and I will continue pushing for federal policies that invest in the constructive development of tomorrow's leaders," said Sen. Rev. Raphael Warnock.

## What's going on in Bobcat Territory?

Visit [frontpage.gcsu.edu/calendar](http://frontpage.gcsu.edu/calendar)

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>29</b></p> <p>3 p.m.- GC Men's Tennis hosts #9 North Georgia.</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Please join us in Max Noah Recital Hall or on facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment for a Senior Recital, featuring pianist Conner Garmon. Other performers include Dr. Sungbae Kim, tenor; Professor Rebecca Cooke, clarinet in A; and Nicholas Koeber, violin.</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Please join the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Campus Black Box Theatre for a solo performance of Background Noise, written and performed by senior Theatre major Michael Williams. Admission is free, but seating is limited.</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>5 p.m.- GC Baseball vs Newberry.</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Please join the Department of Theatre and Dance and the Campus Black Box Theatre for a solo performance of Background Noise, written and performed by senior Theatre major Michael Williams. Admission is free, but seating is limited.</p>	<p><b>31</b></p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Enjoy two special performances by Georgia College's Wind Symphony and Orchestra in Russell Auditorium. First up is the Wind Symphony with "Then and Now, Near and Far," followed by the GC Orchestra with "Young and Baroque," featuring our Concerto Competition Winner, flutist Jillian Truchan and the Kazanetti String Quartet. This concert will also be livestreamed at facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment. For more information, please email music@gcsu.edu or call 478-445-8289.</p>	<p><b>1</b></p> <p>5 p.m.- Join the Women's Center &amp; LGBTQ+ Programs in celebrating identity through art. Amplified is an exhibition centered around the themes of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and more featuring GC students, alumni, staff and community members. An opening reception with refreshments will be held Friday, April 1 from 5-7 p.m. at Ennis Hall. Please RSVP at <a href="https://bit.ly/AMPRSV">https://bit.ly/AMPRSV</a>. The exhibition will be available to view on the first and second floors of Ennis from April 1-7.</p> <p>6 p.m.- GC Baseball vs Flagler.</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>Noon- GC Women's Tennis hosts Savannah State.</p> <p>1 p.m.- GC Baseball doubleheader vs Flagler.</p> <p>4 p.m.- GC Softball vs USC Aiken.</p> <p>7:30 p.m. Please join us in Max Noah Recital Hall or on facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment for a Senior Recital "Days of Plenty," featuring Megan Ostrat. Dr. Lev Ryabinin will accompany her on the piano.</p>