

Chance to dance: Georgia College outreach program gets Baldwin County moving

Children in Baldwin County Schools are getting an opportunity to dance—something they wouldn't be exposed to in their early years if it weren't for dance minors in Georgia College's dance pedagogy class.

Community dance is one of the university's biggest outreach programs and has been around in some form for at least 20 years. Last year, a new element started: free dance lessons twice a week in Baldwin's primary schools and academies.

"Our aim is to expand opportunities beyond campus and provide experiences for communities that have limited access to dance," said Natalie King, dance professor.

"GC dance instructors benefit as much as their students because they get an opportunity to share what they love with a future body of movers. These instructors have dedicated their formative years to the art of movement. Now, they get to inspire young dancers to do the same."

In Baldwin County schools, Georgia College dance students lead bi-weekly lessons for kindergartners through 5th grade. College students are also part of a campus dance program, where they lead or assist in a myriad of paid classes for ages 3 to adult. These include hip hop, tap, ballet, jazz and contemporary dance.

Many dance minors discover a love for teaching through the university's outreach programs. Some go on to open their own dance studios or become performers and choreographers.

Senior accounting major Michala Hill of Douglasville just got hired to be a full-time dance instructor in Baldwin County academies. She'll rotate between grades 3 through 5 throughout the week, ensuring all kids are exposed to movement and dance.

Hill has danced since she was little. Although she also liked accounting, Hill said she "fell in love" with teaching dance after taking King's pedagogy class. Crafting her own lessons and adding her own individual twist has been rewarding.

"Dance allows students to be individuals and create something that's unique and personal," Hill said. "Sometimes in school, we can be trained to believe there's only one right answer for everything. But, in dance, a lot of times there isn't one right an-

swer. It's whatever you decide to create and what intention and confidence you put behind it. That's what makes it good. That's what makes it valuable."

College students develop interdisciplinary lessons that allow young movers to learn through creative play, King said. This makes learning "fun, engaging and meaningful" for kids who are just beginning to incorporate dance in their lives.

Both Baldwin County and Georgia College are lucky—it's unusual to have a community dance program, King said. Not many universities have outreach like this where undergraduates gain teaching experience in dance.

The university's dance minor was certainly a big factor in Hill choosing Georgia College. She researched what other school dance programs are doing and says Georgia College's outreach program is unique.

Students acquire everything they need to know in dance pedagogy class—from warm-up to line-up. They choose music playlists and engage learners in interesting ways with overarching themes.

With kindergartners recently, students used emotions to teach youngsters how to act out their feelings. Then, they moved onto weather patterns, exploring moves that show evaporation and precipitation. Stomping out anger and moving like tornadoes gives children a much-needed break from sitting—bringing a fresh supply of oxygen to the brain.

"We recognize the importance of giving students a voice in their learning process," King said. "This is especially important for our primary school learners, who are constantly encouraged to regulate their bodies. All day, they sit in neat rows, stand in straight



Senior Anna Jean Saleeby teaches at Midway Primary School in Milledgeville.

lines and avoid talking out of turn. We give them permission to disrupt these standards and express themselves individually."

Student instructors are peppy and engaging with their young pupils. They give directions in short, simple sentences. They let kids know ahead of time some movements may seem difficult. But it's OK—their college instructors will be doing the steps with them.

They use 'thumbs up' signals, high fives and supportive statements with kindergartners, like "That was awesome—first-grade behavior if I ever saw it!"

Soon, the studio is abuzz with little bodies swaying, jumping, lunging and twirling to lively tunes.

They're asked to freeze like statues, strike superhero poses and act like raindrops.

Senior sociology major Elizabeth Dunn of Marietta is a ball of energy herself. Standing in front of a group of kindergartners, she shows them how to stretch their arms to the sky. They flow side-to-side like the wind. They pretend to rake leaves for fall and swim for summer. They lunge and zigzag like lightning bolts.

"Now, wrap your arms around yourselves and say, 'Thank you, body, for dancing with me today,'" Dunn said at the end of class.

"I've been dancing since I was two," she said afterward, "and I'd love to help make it more accessible and equitable for children in Baldwin County. Dance is not just for one particular socio-economic population. There are so many counties that can't afford to offer dance. I'd like to make it happen for them."

Like Hill, Dunn feels she couldn't have gotten exposure to community outreach like this anywhere else. Since taking the pedagogy class, she's developed a passion for teaching.

Nearly 70,000 pounds of food waste diverted from landfills by GC composting project

Food. It's a necessity of life, yet it also takes up the most space in landfills. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that 30-40% of the food supply is wasted. That's 80 billion pounds each year.

Georgia College's Office of Sustainability works to curb that number, at least as it relates to food waste on campus with a composting operation.

"We've been operating since 2017, and we have processed nearly 70,000 pounds total. That's

almost 10,000 pounds just this semester," said Lori Hamilton, chief sustainability officer. "I love this program, the way it was written and the way it operates. It's something we can build off of in the future."

The project started small with a few faculty members in environmental sciences—Drs. Sam and Christine Mutiti and Dr. Allison VandeVoort. The Mutiti's initially allowed students to compost at their own home. Then they worked with the Office of Sustainability to formally establish the program on campus and get it funded through the Sustainability Fee Program. From that funding, the facility was built, the machines purchased and student interns were hired to run the daily operations of the program

This semester, Molly Robbins and Jackson Masters serve as student interns for the composting initiative. Their job is to collect the food waste from the university's dining hall, known as the MAX and take it to the facility on West Campus.

"We have two bins in the MAX. One to collect our pre-consumer food, so that's anything that doesn't make it to plates. Then we have another one which collects anything that gets scraped off plates," said Robbins, a junior environmental science major.

Each morning on Monday through Friday, the team drops off the containers. Each afternoon, they collect them for processing.

"First, we weigh what we've collected to keep a record of how much compost we're doing," said Masters, senior history major. "Before



Molly Robbins shovels food waste into the machine.

we put the food in the mixer, we have to add a carbon source, which for us is sawdust."

From there, the mixer combines food waste with the sawdust, which is the beginning of the composting process.

"After about 15-20 minutes, we send it up the auger, which is like a screw that brings it up from the mixer into our machine," said Robbins. "Our machine is a giant drum, and typically the compost turns slowly in the vessel for approximately two to three weeks."

Once it's removed from the machine, the compost needs time to mature in the open air. It allows bad bacteria to continue to die off and good nutrients to increase.

Masters and Robbins work to turn more than 20 piles at the compost site weekly.

"The bacteria that are breaking down all the material is aerobic. It breathes the same air that we breathe, and it needs oxygen. That is why we have to turn the piles," Robbins said.

"We also take the temperature to gauge the maturity of the pile," she added. "When it's young it's really hot 140-150 degrees Fahrenheit, but it cools as it matures."

The process takes weeks from start to finish. Once the compost has fully matured it's used at the Campus Garden.

The project has come a long way since its humble beginnings, but those involved still see potential for growth.

"Our long-term goal is to make our product available for purchase externally. The whole idea is to hopefully make a little bit of money that we can put back into the program," Hamilton said. "I see us possibly expanding to work with local restaurants, especially downtown. If they collect it, we could come pick it and process it."

Students also see the value of the learning opportunities provided by the project, both through course research and working as an intern.

"It has great student research opportunities," Robbins said. "We've actually had two environmental science students present on two separate research projects on the composting process, and we have another one approved that they're going to get started, on as well."

GC 32nd Annual JazzFest

Georgia College's 32nd Annual JazzFest will be Saturday, April 30 from 4 to 8:30 p.m. on Front Campus.

Sponsored by the university's Department of Music, in partnership with Allied Arts, the evening features live performances by local middle and high school bands.

Georgia College's Jazz Band, featuring Atlanta pianist Tyrone Jackson, will also be in the spotlight, along with renowned trombonist Marshall Gilkes.

JazzFest gives local schools the opportunity to showcase their student bands in a 30-minute to performance. Students can receive invaluable feedback from guest clinicians to improve their musicianship.

This event is free. Bring a picnic blanket and lawn chair for a relaxing evening of local and professional entertainment. GC student organizations will provide food and drinks for sale.

A Jam Session will follow from 9 to 11 p.m. in the A&S Courtyard. For more information on JazzFest, please contact Chris Enghausser at chris.enghausser@gcsu.edu.

Georgia College's

32nd Annual JAZZFEST

SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 2022
4 - 8:30 P.M.
GC FRONT LAWN

Featuring:
Georgia College Jazz Band, Georgia College Jazz Combo, Luella High School, Baldwin High School, Apalachee School, Putnam County High School, Oak Hill Middle School

Jam Session to follow featuring Tyrone Jackson
9 - 11 p.m. • A&S Courtyard

Special Guest Marshall Gilkes



What's going on in Bobcat Territory?

Visit frontpage.gcsu.edu/calendar

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>26</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Come enjoy an evening of electronic music in Max Noah Recital Hall (in Porter Hall) as Georgia College's Music Department presents "Sound Sculptures XVII: Clutch Time." Directed by faculty member Dr. David H. Johnson, this concert features newly composed electronic compositions by Georgia College students.</p>	<p>27</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Please join us in Max Noah Recital Hall or on facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment for a Senior Recital, featuring Alex Ragan as violinist and lecturer. The title of his lecture is "Changes in Violin Technique in the 18th Century." Ragan will perform violin pieces by Bach and Mozart, with pianist Dr. Lev Ryabinin.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Georgia College's Percussion Ensemble will hold its annual concert in Max Noah Recital Hall. Titled "The Rainbow after the Storm," this concert shows there's a silver lining in every situation and—despite the changing and challenging state of the world—there's always hope.</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5 p.m.- GC Softball vs Augusta.</p>	<p>30</p> <p>1 p.m.- GC Softball vs Augusta.</p> <p>4 p.m.- Georgia College's 32nd Annual JazzFest will be from 4 to 8:30 p.m. on Front Campus.</p> <p>7:30 p.m.- Join us for a beautiful weekend of dance as the Department of Theater and Dance presents the annual GC spring dance concert on Saturday, April 30, 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, May 1, 2 p.m., at Russell Auditorium. The 50+ GC dance minor students have been working hard for many months to produce a beautiful concert consisting of classical ballet, hip-hop and contemporary movement.</p>