

GCSU Athletic Summer Camps were a blast for kids and coaches

At Centennial Center and on West Campus athletic fields this summer, youngsters could be seen running to-and-fro kicking balls, whacking balls, dribbling balls and scurrying after balls.

It was hot. But to more than 200 kids, aged 5 to 17, playing tennis, soccer, softball, baseball and basketball at one of Georgia College & State University's eight athletic camps—it was pure fun.

"The kids who come to our camp are very much beginners. They come because it's a lot of fun. It's a great time," said Steve Barsby, head tennis coach and assistant director for athletics business and finance.

"The skills we teach them are so basic. It's very easy, and they improve so fast," he said. "They didn't even know how to grip the racket on day one and by the third day, they're hitting a fore-hander, back hand. It's actually very rewarding for the players who work here."

Barsby was 13 when he started tennis camp. His mother said he had too much energy and signed him up.

"Since that day, I've loved it," Barsby said. "It's kind of been a part of my life ever since."

He's like a stand-up comedian towering over a crowd of little heads. They look up to him and laugh at his jokes. He sings to the music and has a way of making each one feel special. He joined the student coaches in yelling out constant encouragement: "Good going!" "Nice one!" "Almost!" "Keep trying!"

After 23 years at Georgia College, Barsby discovered he was now teaching the children of parents he coached years ago.

"It's interesting to see that come full circle," he said. "It's been an amazing place, the growth, the campus facilities—everything. It's been amazing. I've loved every minute of it."

For more than three decades, thousands of area youth have learned to play sports at university athletic camps. The summer ritual means as much to the Georgia College students, who help coach, as it does for the kids who learn and practice their skills.

During tennis camp, there were morning drills, ground strokes, volleys and serves with plenty of water breaks in between. After lunch, coaches and kids played games like trivia or shot basketball hoops before getting wet in the pool.

Nathan Haines of Buford, Georgia, '17, has a degree in business management from Georgia College and is now getting his master's in supply chain logistics. He had little experience with tennis but signed on to coach anyway, because he wanted to give back to the university and community.

One 2nd grade boy, Steven Hart from Monticello, almost whacked a tennis ball over the fence. He gave a big smile full of missing teeth and said, "I want to be a professional tennis player when I grow up."

Another player, 6th grader Zach Wilson of Milledgeville, had been coming to tennis camp for five years. It's an easy place to make friends and learn new skills.

"The atmosphere is just great," Wilson said. "My backhand is not amazing, but it's getting better. I went to a different tennis camp at one point, but the coaches didn't explain things as well as these coaches."

On the soccer field, football wannabes practiced their skills. Players learn to dribble and kick balls.

Drills are built around familiar games like "Red Light, Green Light," "Knockout" or "Simon Says." Older players do more technical work like juggling, long ball, shooting and one-on-one moves.

This summer, they did ice breakers to get to know each other.

Then, got right to work on kicking skills. It was hot. But their day ended with cannonballs in the pool.

For student coaches, camp also means acquiring skills that will help them in the future. They learn to be on time and work with others. They become good leaders and impact children's lives in a positive way.

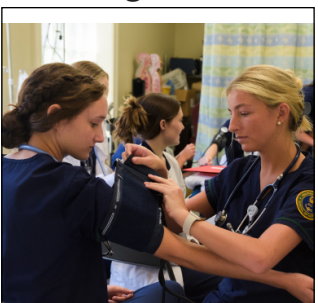
Sophomore Aralyn Everett of Covington, Georgia, is double majoring in criminal justice and philosophy. She's been playing soccer since age 3. The challenge in coaching is watching kids become frustrated, she said. Everett doesn't want them to give up.

"I love little kids. I remember being their age and wanting to learn how to play soccer," she said. "I want to be a great coach for them and help them have a really good experience and maybe love the game like I do."



Area youth learn to kick and dribble at GCSU's summer soccer camp.

Pressing need for nurses spurs 3rd nursing cohort



Through the receipt of additional state funding, Georgia College & State University's School of Nursing (SON) has added a third cohort to their Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree.

There are only 1,329 nurses per 100,000 residents in Georgia, according to the Georgia Board of Health Care Workforce (GBHCW) Nursing Workforce Data dashboard.

Nurse burnout is a major factor in the shortage.

"It is estimated that an additional 175,900 registered nurses (RNs) will exit the workforce each year for personal reasons or through retirement, and the field is expected to grow by 7%," said Josie Doss, interim director and associate professor of SON. "Though Georgia has around 100,000 RNs, we still have one of the lowest densities in the nation. We're preparing nurses to fill that need."

The inaugural cohort was admitted this summer and included 40 students. These students will attend classes for four continuous semesters, allowing them to graduate in just 15 months. Traditional nursing students typically do not take courses during the summer and graduate in two years.

Though they are increasing the number of nurses trained at Georgia College, SON isn't sacrificing quality to meet Georgia healthcare needs.

"We're giving the students the tools they need in their undergraduate years so they're prepared for the workforce," said Morgan Fordham, lecturer of nursing.

"I'm teaching them high-pressure situation skills and stress management techniques to help them after they graduate, because it's not enough to have warm bodies in healthcare," she said. "A good quality nurse is going to save a life."

Summer classes were Monday through Thursday in the new cohort, with clinicals on Mondays and Wednesdays. Students had lecture courses Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"Seeing how impactful and important nurses are means a lot, so I am excited to fill those gaps," said junior nursing major Kerry Kidwell. "When it gets challenging or I'm tired, it's nice to have everyone in the cohort that I can relate to."

Did you know?

This summer, Dr. Micheal Stratton, dean of the J. Whitney Bunting College of Business and Technology, announced the establishment of The Center for Innovation at Georgia College & State University (GCSU).

Multiple programs at the center will provide students and local residents with opportunities for originality, invention and creative thinking. New businesses can grow in a low-cost environment with shared resources and more direct access to faculty experts.

"The center will facilitate the growth and impact of community-based engaged learning," Stratton said. "With faculty mentorship, students will serve as consultants for local and regional organizations in a variety of areas, including marketing, business strategy, human resources and operations." (For more information, call 478-445-1310.)

Constitution Week is coming

Every fall Georgia College & State University (GCSU) holds its annual Constitution Week. And, every year, one of the most popular events is the Constitution Week Concert. This year's performance will be at 6 p.m. Monday, Sept. 19. It's entitled "Tuning into Politics: A program featuring music from U.S. Presidential Campaigns, 1840 to 1964." This lively production includes well-known campaign songs like "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too," "Help Us Win the Vote" and "Hello Lyndon." A lecture on the history of women's voting rights, "Journey to the Vote," will be given by Dr. Victoria Gordon, GCSU's Coverdell Visiting Scholar. The concert is sponsored by Trax on the Trail, a website co-founded by faculty member Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, and the GCSU Constitution Week Committee. Faculty and students will perform, and Dr. Jennifer Flory will conduct the university's Max Noah Singers. A \$5 donation is encouraged. For more information, please email music@gcsu.edu or call 478-445-8289.



Macon Bacon player well-seasoned in baseball and life

Georgia College & State University (GCSU) junior Dominic Arienzo has been playing baseball since age four. It's a skill that came natural to him. The Morgan County native plays baseball for Georgia College and the Macon Bacon—a Georgia-based wood-bat collegiate summer baseball team that plays in the Coastal Plain League.

Arienzo chose to play for Macon Bacon, so he could be closer to home during the summer. Last summer he played baseball in Boone, North Carolina.

"The level of competition I was going to be playing with the Bacon is very good," he said. "I wanted to see this type of competition day-in and day-out."

Macon Bacon coaches contacted Georgia College's Head Baseball Coach, Nolan Belcher. He arranged for Arienzo to play in Macon.

"Dominic seemed like the type of player they were looking for to put on a temporary contract," Belcher said. "He's a talented, high-character young man."

Arienzo mainly played shortstop and sometimes middle infield with the Macon Bacon. When the team had its opening game, he couldn't believe the size of the crowd, which was over 2,000 people.

"It was the biggest crowd I've ever played in front of," Arienzo said. "The crowd keeps the game fun. And sometimes I get wrapped up in the competitiveness of it all." (Photo credit: Ty Van Duyn)



What's going on in Bobcat Territory?

Visit frontpage.gcsu.edu/events/

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
13	14	15	16 A "Voice Honors Recital"—featuring 10 vocal students from the Georgia College & State University Department of Music—will be at 7:30 p.m. in Max Noah Recital Hall and also livestreamed at www.facebook.com/GCMusicDepartment . For more information, please email music@gcsu.edu or call 478-445-8289.	17 The 4th Annual "Jazz at the Magnolia" will be at 7:30 p.m. in Magnolia Ballroom. The GCSU Faculty Jazz Quartet and Student Jazz Combo will join the TDC Trio with vocalist Trineice Robinson-Martin and pianist Tyrone Jackson for this rousing community concert and fundraising event. For more information, please email music@gcsu.edu or call 478-445-8289.