

GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

Highlights

2025-2026



Dear Friends, *Friends*

Georgia College & State University is entering a period of strategic growth. Across Academic Affairs, we are expanding graduate education, strengthening faculty excellence, investing in research, improving student outcomes and creating new pathways that prepare graduates for a rapidly changing world. These initiatives are guided by our Imagine 2030 Strategic Plan, as well as our renewed mission as Georgia's designated liberal arts university.

In the past year, the institution has seen unprecedented student demand, achieved record-high rankings, centralized graduate admissions, increased investment to add new positions and enhanced graduate degree offerings, along with refining its mission statement.

These changes correspond with the 30th anniversary of GCSU's designation by the University System of Georgia as the state's public liberal arts institution, a change that took place in 1996 and altered the university's identity forever, building a strong foundation for so much of the success we see today.

I invite you to review our new mission, which reflects our ultimate goal: to prepare students to do more, learn more and seize more of what the world has to offer. The highlights you'll find through these pages illustrate that impact, so please join me in celebrating everything that we accomplished together last academic year, as well as in setting visionary goals for a bright future.



Thank you,

Dr. Holley M. Roberts

Provost and Vice President
for Academic Affairs

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Georgia College & State University's distinctive liberal arts model provides innovative undergraduate and graduate programs that challenge future leaders to do more, learn more and seize more opportunities to make a positive difference in the world.

We fulfill this mission through:

- Early access to transformative learning experiences for students, including internships, leadership, service programs, study abroad and undergraduate research.
- Meaningful connections with faculty and staff mentors.
- A campus climate that fosters wellness and a sense of belonging.
- Opportunities to collaborate across programs and degree fields.
- An honor code built on "The Three R's" of Reason, Respect and Responsibility.



IT'S
DIFFERENT
HERE



IMAGINE 2030
SCAN HERE FOR GCSU'S
STRATEGIC PLAN



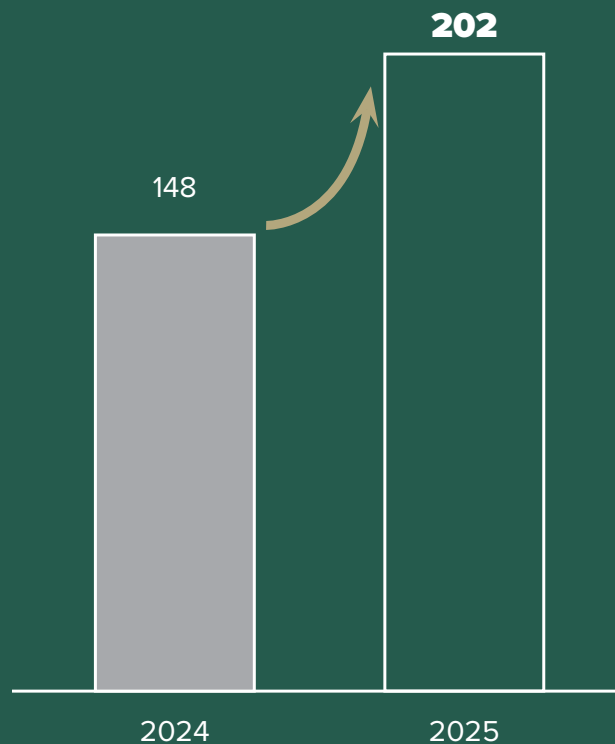
FACULTY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

YEAR IN REVIEW: GRANTS & PUBLICATIONS

202

Faculty published 202 articles in peer-reviewed research journals last year — marking a 54-article increase over the number published the previous year.



FEDERAL



LOCAL



STATE



PARTNERSHIPS

\$3.8M

The Office of Grants and Sponsored Projects received \$3.8 million in local, state, federal and private funding this year.

MOLECULAR BIOLOGIST EARNS GCSU'S FIRST COTTRELL SCHOLAR AWARD

Dr. Arnab Sengupta, assistant professor of cell and molecular biology, has been named a 2026 Cottrell Scholar by the Research Corporation for Science Advancement, a rare honor that includes a \$120,000 grant to fund future research.

This nationally competitive recognition expands externally funded research opportunities for undergraduate students while strengthening the university's growing research profile.



NEW DEANS JOIN GCSU



Dr. Amit Ghosh

J. Whitney Bunting College of Business & Technology



Read more about the new dean online.



Dr. Loleta Sartin

John H. Lounsbury College of Education

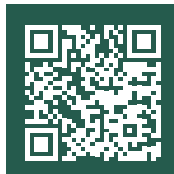


Read more about the new dean online.



Dr. Indiren Pillay

College of Arts & Sciences



Read more about the new dean online.



USG NAMES TWO BOBCATS TO EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Dr. Harold Mock, assistant vice president for International Education and executive director of GCSU's Institute for Leadership & the Public Good (second from left), and Dr. Joanne Previts, former interim dean of the College of Education and professor of middle grades education (second from right), were selected to the 2025-2026 prestigious Executive Leadership Institute class, sponsored by the University System of Georgia. They are pictured above with (from left to right) GCSU President Cathy Cox, USG Chancellor Sonny Perdue and GCSU Provost Dr. Holley Roberts.

Dr. Harold Mock speaks at the 13th annual John H. Lounsbury Distinguished Lecture Series on American Education.





PSYCHOLOGY PROFESSOR NAMED GCSU'S FIRST-EVER CUR FELLOW

Dr. Tsu-Ming Chiang, director of Mentored Undergraduate Research and Creative Endeavors, was named a 2026 fellow by the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR) and inducted into the CUR Fellows of Distinction Class, recognizing more than three decades of outstanding mentorship, leadership and scholarship.

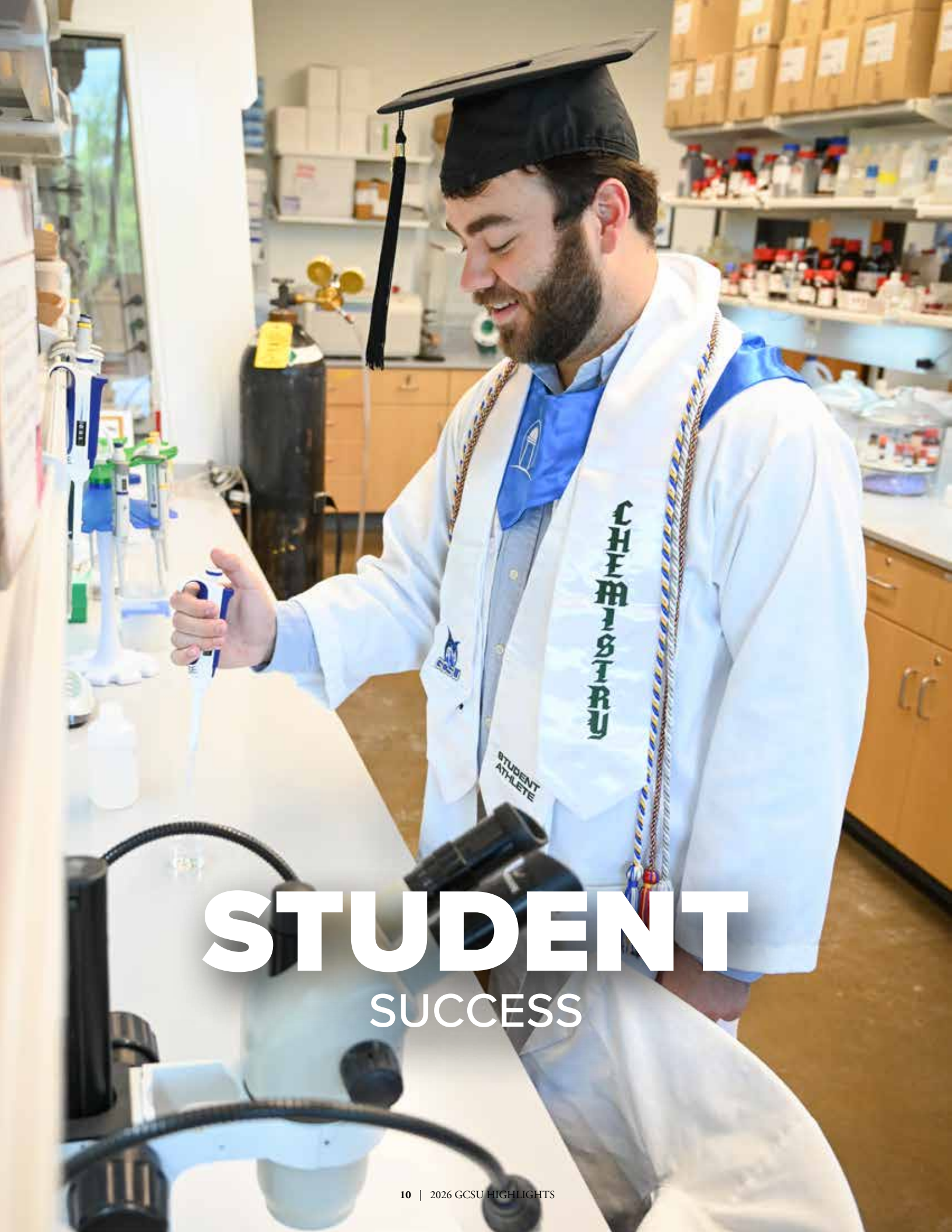
Georgia College's first-ever CUR Fellow, Chiang is one of just four academic leaders nationwide to earn this distinction this year.

PROFESSOR NAMED NATIONAL NURSE-MIDWIVES FELLOW

In 2026, Dr. Tamsin Lewis, assistant professor of nursing, was selected as a fellow of the American College of Nurse-Midwives, receiving one of the organization's highest honors recognizing individuals whose leadership, clinical excellence, scholarship, education and service have made significant contributions to advancing the profession of midwifery.

GCSU's Nurse-Midwifery program became the first accredited program of its kind in the state in 2024.





STUDENT SUCCESS

STUDENT SUCCESS: BY THE NUMBERS

53%

GCSU's 53% four-year graduation rate places it among the state's best — ranking within the 90th percentile in the University System of Georgia.

+65%

Participation in Study Abroad programs increased 65% over 2025.

68%

Nearly 70% of GCSU students participate in faculty-mentored undergraduate research — many in first year on campus.

93%

Over 90% of Bobcat students report having transformative learning experiences* — starting in Year One.

**Including undergraduate research, study abroad, internships, leadership and community-based engaged learning programs*





Fulbright Scholars and semifinalists network with peers at events like the Intercultural Leadership Program, in addition to traveling abroad.

TWO STUDENTS NAMED FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS, FOUR SEMIFINALISTS

Six students from Georgia College were recognized by the Fulbright U.S. Student Program this year, including two Bobcats who, selected as finalists, are currently spending their senior years teaching abroad on fully funded assistantships.

Seniors J.D. Caulley and Paola Martinez were named finalists. An English major, Caulley traveled to Antwerp, Belgium, to teach college-level English. A Spanish and elementary education double major, Martinez is teaching elementary students in La Rioja, Spain.

GCSU's Fulbright semifinalists include Tommy Creekmore, Riley Curtis, Hunter Pierce and Connor Sivley.



Gertrude Ehrlich as a student at Georgia State College for Women



REFUGEE-ALUMNA'S HISTORIC \$9 MILLION GIFT TO SUPPORT GENERATIONS OF STUDENTS

When Dr. Gertrude Ehrlich fled Nazi-controlled Austria with her family in 1939, she found an educational haven at Georgia College & State University (then Georgia State College for Women). The class of 1943 alumna died in 2025 at 102 years old, but her legacy will live on through a \$9 million gift from her estate to the university — the largest gift in the institution's 137-year history.

This funding will be used to support students with financial need and cover housing and meal costs to allow local students to take advantage of GCSU's required first-year housing experience. The program will welcome its inaugural scholarship class this fall, assisting 22 local students.



Dr. Gertrude Ehrlich ('43)





\$400,000 IN FULL-RIDE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO GCSU STUDENTS TO ADDRESS STATE'S NURSING SHORTAGE

Twenty-seven nursing and pre-nursing students, including seven first-year students, received a combined \$400,000 in full-ride scholarships to strengthen the state's nursing pipeline. It marked the fourth group at Georgia College to benefit from the Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation Nursing Scholars Program.

Recipients must reside in one of 15 Central Georgia counties.



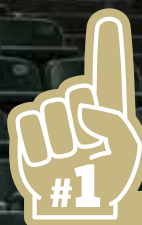
FIVE YEARS RUNNING:

GCSU NAMED NO. 1 IN NATION FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS RATE AMONG DII PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Bobcat scholar-athletes rank first among all NCAA Division II public institutions in the nation in academic success rate, having recently earned this distinction for the fifth consecutive year.

Georgia College posted a 93% academic success rate, a metric used by the NCAA to measure the number of students who graduate within six years of college enrollment. GCSU is also one of 43 NCAA D-II institutions to receive the Presidents' Award for Academic Excellence; it is the sixth consecutive year the Bobcats have earned the award.

Oscar Lynch ('26) made GCSU history as one of the institution's first male scholar-athletes to earn the title of valedictorian.



TOP ACADEMIC SUCCESS RATE IN THE NATION

AMONG ALL NCAA DII PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



STRATEGIC PILLAR
DISTINGUISH

STUDENT-LED RECYCLING DRIVE GOES DISTRICT-WIDE

Mass communication students organized a three-week battery recycling competition across all five public K-8 schools in Baldwin County. The “Battery Hero” project debuted at one school in fall 2025 before expanding in the spring.

Georgia is one of just 17 states without household battery recycling requirements, according to call2recycle.org, and battery drop-off locations in Baldwin County are scarce.



A student at Midway Hills Academy, in Milledgeville, participates in the Battery Hero program.



CROSS-COUNTRY STAR WINS PEACH BELT'S TOTAL STUDENT-ATHLETE AWARD



The Peach Belt Conference presented its inaugural Total Student-Athlete Award to Bobcat women's cross-country runner and class of 2026 Valedictorian Emily Wright (left, above). During her time at Georgia College, Wright's research was published in a national undergraduate political science journal and she earned an internship with government affairs firm Troutman Strategies. She graduated summa cum laude with degrees in political science and philosophy.

GEORGIA COLLEGE GRADS RANKED TOP 3 FOR CAREER EARNING POTENTIAL

In a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, bachelor's degree holders from Georgia College ranked third-highest of all graduates from the University System of Georgia in salary earnings, four years after graduation. Nearly 80% of the class of 2025 had a full-time job lined up or had been accepted into graduate school before turning their tassels at commencement.





RESEARCH DAY 2026

GEORGIA COLLEGE

RESEARCH DAY

JOURNEYS

RESEARCH

BOBCAT EARNS NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Two GCSU students were recognized by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Program, which honors students who demonstrate potential for significant achievements in research. Of 14,000 applicants nationwide, Amber Stubbs ('24, '26) was one of just 2,500 to win the award, and Sydney Irons ('25) earned an honorable mention.

The NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program provides three years of financial support, plus a \$37,000 stipend and \$16,000 cost of education allowance.

Stubbs will begin her Ph.D. program this fall at San Diego State University, where she will study rattlesnake behavior.

Stubbs was mentored by Dr. Dominic Desantis at GCSU. Irons was mentored by Dr. Bruce Snyder.

Amber Stubbs ('24, '26)



ORNITHOLOGY STUDENTS LEAD NEST BOX PROJECT TO CONSERVE GEORGIA WARBLERS

Ornithology students built and installed nesting boxes to track the migration of prothonotary warblers, a species of high conservation concern in Georgia.

The project, funded by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and led by assistant professor of biology Michelle Moyer, will enable researchers to tag the birds with devices that monitor barometric pressure and light, which will help identify when and where the birds stop along their migratory path.



STRATEGIC PILLAR
DISTINGUISH

The Environmental Costs of Cosmetic Consumption



Environmental Impact

- An estimated 120 billion units of cosmetic packaging are produced annually with nearly 70% of the industry's waste attributed to packaging waste.
- Most cosmetic packaging is made from plastic, which is non-biodegradable and increases the risk of microplastic leakage into the environment.
- Microplastics (e.g., microbeads found in cosmetics, facial scrubs, and lip balms) are a major source of pollution and are found in the environment.
- Microplastics can enter aquatic systems (e.g., oceans) leading to bioaccumulation in marine ecosystems.
- Single-use containers often fail to recycle or are incinerated before they reach the recycling stream.

STUDENTS FLOCK TO LARGEST RESEARCH DAY IN UNIVERSITY HISTORY

Research Day – Georgia College’s annual showcase of faculty-mentored student research – saw 283 projects (presented by 420 students) in 2026, marking a 12% participation increase over the previous year. All academic disciplines were represented in a day of posters and presentations, and of the 283 total projects, 250 were completed by undergraduate students, highlighting the university’s commitment to providing transformative learning experiences to bachelor’s degree-seeking students.

Natalia Eason presents her work at GCSU’s Research Day 2026.





TOP STORIES

RECORD-HIGH RANKINGS



GCSU is now among the five best public institutions in the 12-state Regional South category of U.S. News & World Report's annual rankings, having held the No. 6 position for several years. The university scored high marks for affordability, ranking as the No. 2 Best Value School in the state among public regional institutions. The Graduate School at GCSU also earned high marks from U.S. News, earning top-five designations among all regional South universities for graduate degree programs in nursing, criminal justice, education and the WebMBA.



Georgia College ranked among Top Five in South by U.S. News & World Report



Georgia College online master's programs ranked among best in the South by U.S. News & World Report



GCSU ALUMNI ARE LEADING PUBLIC EDUCATION IN GEORGIA



Education alumnus Dr. Marc Feuerbach ('10) named Georgia Superintendent of the Year, credits GCSU for shaping his leadership style.



Three-time alumna Charm Mapp named Georgia's Teacher of the Year 2027.

TOP TEACHER TRADITION

GCSU HAS PRODUCED **THREE OF THE PAST FIVE** GEORGIA TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

Georgia College alumni are on a remarkable run. In the past five years, Bobcats have earned the state's highest education honor, Georgia Teacher of the Year, three times.

MEET THE BOBCAT AWARDEES



Charm Mapp ('03, '06, '10)
2027 Georgia Teacher of the Year



Holly Witcher ('01)
2025 Georgia Teacher of the Year



Michael Kobito ('23)
2023 Georgia Teacher of the Year





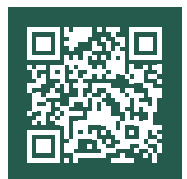
Dr. Hasitha Mahabaduge tests electrical equipment with a student.

GEORGIA COLLEGE, GEORGIA TECH PARTNER TO LAUNCH DUAL-DEGREE ENGINEERING PATHWAY

Students who begin their bachelor's studies in physics, mathematics, chemistry, computer science or data science at Georgia College can now pursue a dual degree in engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology. The GCSU-GT Dual-Degree Program provides a pathway for STEM majors who complete their first three years at GCSU to transfer into one of 11 undergraduate engineering programs at Georgia Tech, resulting in a Bachelor of Science degree earned from each institution.



Senior Caleb Rogers



LEVERAGE AI. LEAD WITHOUT LIMITS.

GEORGIA COLLEGE UNVEILS 100% ONLINE AI STRATEGY MASTER'S DEGREE

A new Master of Science in AI Strategy degree — an innovative program meant to equip individuals from any background with the skills to harness the power of emerging technology in any business or industry — launched at GCSU in fall 2026. Designed for working professionals, the master's degree is offered fully online and applicants are not required to hold a computer science degree.



President and CEO of Fouts Bros Inc. Scott Edens, with employee and GCSU alumnus Grant Motley ('25), on the factory floor



GEORGIA COLLEGE LAUNCHES INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP AND THE PUBLIC GOOD

The Institute for Leadership and the Public Good, a new initiative that brings together the university's Leadership Programs and the International Education Center under a single organizational structure, was established in summer 2026. Designed to advance leadership development, civic engagement and global learning, the Institute reflects Georgia College's mission as the state's public liberal arts institution in its commitment to prepare students to make meaningful contributions to their communities, professions and the world.

As part of this transition, Dr. Harold Mock – who has been overseeing the university's Leadership Programs and International Education -- has been appointed Executive Director of the Institute and Assistant Vice President for International Education.



INSTITUTE FOR
LEADERSHIP
AND THE PUBLIC GOOD
GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

Amelia Lord ('20)



STRATEGIC PILLAR
DISTINGUISH

Sheriff Bill Masee ('70, '25)
mentors a student.



ALUMNI SHERIFF RECRUITS BOBCATS TO STAFF NEW REAL TIME CRIME CENTER

Bill Masee ('70, '25) is one of the state's longest-serving sheriffs, having led the Baldwin County Sheriff's Office since 1989. Masee credits close relationships with Georgia College faculty with helping him prepare the next generation of tech-savvy law enforcers. With the launch of the Real Time Crime Center, Masee has been enthusiastic about hiring interns and full-time employees from GCSU whose backgrounds range from management information systems to math to liberal studies.





**STRATEGIC PILLAR
DISTINGUISH**

Gabriela Sanacore ('26), left, and Shannon Rogers ('26), right, celebrate commencement.



A+: GCSU EARNS TOP MARKS FOR LITERACY EDUCATION

The undergraduate elementary teacher preparation program at Georgia College earned an A+ from the National Council on Teacher Quality, placing the institution among the nation's best in preparing future instructors to teach reading to elementary students. In 2023, which was the last time the council awarded grades on Reading Foundations, Georgia College was the only program in the state to receive an A+.



**STRATEGIC PILLAR
ENGAGE**

DEAL CENTER READING CLINIC EXPANDS, WITH HELP FROM GCSU STUDENTS, FACULTY

The Sandra Dunagan Deal Center for Early Language and Literacy, which serves as the state of Georgia's key research arm and plays a key role in setting literacy-education standards in legislative policy, expanded its reading clinic from Baldwin County into Greene County this year.

Through this program, pre-education students gain confidence in helping struggling readers.





\$4.5 MILLION MUSIC REHEARSAL HALL OPENS ON CAMPUS

The last time Georgia College unveiled a new building dedicated to music, Judy Garland's "Over the Rainbow" was No. 5 on the U.S. Billboard charts. After 86 years, it was time for an upgrade. In fall 2025, Georgia College cut the ribbon for its new \$4.45 million, 10,400-square-foot Music Rehearsal Hall, the university's first space built specifically for music and choral rehearsal.



NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART SIMULATION CENTER OPENS TO TRAIN NURSING, HEALTHCARE STUDENTS



Georgia College's Simulation and Translational Research Center expanded in fall 2026, giving School of Nursing and College of Health Sciences students more hands-on learning experiences than ever before. The university invested \$633,000 into the now-13,000-square-foot facility.



Ella Hardegree ('25)

GCSU's annual Gives Day boasts a near-100% participation rate among first-year students.



BOBCAT STUDENTS SURPASS 1 MILLION SERVICE HOURS, EARN NATIONAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

Georgia College earned the 2026 Carnegie Elective Classification for Community Engagement, a national certification that rewards the impact of thousands of service hours logged annually by students. With nearly 100% of students participating in community service during their time on campus, civic involvement remains core to GCSU's mission. The Office of Community Engagement and Belonging has facilitated thousands of student volunteers through a collaboration with Academic Affairs, which has resulted in 1.1 million hours of service to the Baldwin County area, accounting for a \$26 million impact over the past 25 years.





Georgia College's Enrollment Management team celebrates its largest applicant pool in university history.

RECORD-HIGH NEW STUDENT APPLICATIONS EXTEND HISTORIC GROWTH PERIOD AT GCSU

Georgia College & State University reached an unprecedented milestone April 1, 2026, receiving more than 10,000 new student applications for undergraduate admission, the most ever received in the university's 137-year history. This fall, the university welcomed its largest-ever incoming class, at nearly 1,850 first-year students, and recorded an all-time high total enrollment of nearly 7,500 graduate and undergraduate students. These milestones marked four consecutive years of record-breaking enrollment figures at Georgia College.



NEW FACULTY

Despite the university's growth, small class sizes remain a constant, as more than 120 faculty lines were created or filled in the past two years to maintain the university's ultra-low 17:1 student-to-faculty ratio.





Alyssa Zuegel
(‘21, ‘26)

MOBILE HEALTH UNIT PROVIDES CARE ACROSS GEORGIA



NEARLY 600 FREE HEALTH SCREENINGS

No-cost health screenings have been administered to nearly 600 rural Georgia residents since the launch of the Mobile Health Unit in fall 2024.



\$100,000 SAVED

The unit has saved residents nearly \$100,000 in medical expenses.



725 SERVICE HOURS

Nursing and public health students have donated over 700 hours of community service time since the unit's launch, gaining hands-on work experience in the process.

Business student Savannah Goode presents at the Georgia College Venture Capital Challenge.



BUSINESS INCUBATOR TO NURTURE STARTUPS THROUGHOUT GEORGIA

Georgia College was awarded more than \$600,000 in federal funding to boost business development throughout Georgia, specifically within rural areas. Appropriated by the United States Congress – through the offices of Sen. Jon Ossoff, Sen. Raphael Warnock and Rep. Mike Collins – the funding will help GCSU launch the Bobcat Business Incubator, a university-led initiative to nurture startups and cultivate entrepreneurship throughout Middle Georgia.

