COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
NEWSLETTER
FALL 2016
Dean’s Message

What could barbeque and sound waves possibly have in common? Not the sizzle of meat on a grill. Both are faculty research agendas profiled in this issue of the College of Arts and Sciences newsletter. What better place for Dr. Craig Pascoe to research the history of barbeque than a southern school like Georgia College? Dr. Ken McGill’s study of sound waves led to a scientific breakthrough and Georgia College’s first patent. As different as they are, these two projects have another important commonality. Undergraduate students got involved and contributed to the research. At Georgia College, students can participate in labs, research and pretty much anything else even in their first semester on campus. By their capstone year, students do amazing things. We could fill a newsletter with student accomplishments. Just a few examples are profiled in the student section of the newsletter.

This fall we put a spotlight on our dynamic Department of Theatre and Dance. Whether comedic, satiric or dramatic, live theatre and dance have a long and venerable history of mirroring society through plays and performance. As you’ll read in the feature, GC Theatre and Dance bring this tradition of social awareness to Georgia College and the campus community. Students are deeply involved. As performers and behind the scenes, theatre and dance productions engage students from across campus. Casting is open to any major—even a first year student can play a part, sometimes even a lead role. In a recent production, under faculty guidance, students designed the whole show, from sets to costumes, and from lights to sound.

A liberal arts education promotes education for citizenship and education for career. Social awareness is part of citizenship in a diverse global world. Theatre and dance productions build technical skills, cultivate creativity and train leaders who know how to communicate and work in teams. Employers tell us they seek these skills. Whether or not they find careers in the performing arts, theatre and dance students will be well prepared to make their way in the 21st century world.
Faculty News

History professor plans exhibit highlighting the History of BBQ
Dr. Craig Pascoe’s a barbecue expert and Georgia College history professor - a “big carnivore,” who’s been able to “turn academics into something more enjoyable.” He can explain where smoked meat eased racial tensions, how cooking methods originated or changed with migration and why food traditions make us who we are today.

“It’s a sneaky way of teaching history,” said Pascoe, who’s taught 16 years at Georgia College. “Barbecue’s a sense of community. It’s about people, family, customs and traditions. It’s more of an event, something everyone has at least some connection with.”

Every time Pascoe thinks barbecue’s been over-publicized on TV, he’s amazed to learn it still captivates the public. His passion led him on professional leave last spring to plan an exhibit called “Smokin’ History” - scheduled to open May 2018 at the Atlanta History Center. Three student interns helped research topics, collect oral histories, identify artifacts and locate images for the 3,200-sq.ft. exhibit.

“We want to make it clear to people that barbecue is not just food,” Pascoe said. “The word barbecue can be a noun, an adjective, a verb. It can be an event. It can be a meal. So when you say barbecue - it can be a sauce, it can be the contents or the product itself.”

Senior and history major Madlyn Kaufman of Canton, Georgia interned because “it was a chance to work at a prestigious history center with one of my favorite professors.”

“I think the thing I found most interesting would have to be how barbecue is such a staple in American society” and “crosses all social boundaries,” Kaufman said.

Barbecue changes according to state, region or period, Pascoe said. It can be chicken, pork, beef brisket and even sausage - an influence brought to Texas in the 1800s by German immigrant butchers. In the early 20th Century, African-Americans migrated north from rural South along the Mississippi River to Chicago where they didn’t have backyards to dig pits. Some improvised, using glass aquariums to smoke meat, a custom still seen today. In Kansas City, they used sawed-off oil drums as smokers.

“Dr. Craig Pascoe brings great energy and enthusiasm to the study of history through some deeply engaging courses and research,” said Dr. Aran MacKinnon, professor and chair of history and geography. “It is thrilling to see him inspire our students to connect their academic skills with a vital piece of our past and then share it with the wider community and the country.”
First Georgia College professor wins Top Community Journalism Faculty Paper award

This year, Georgia College’s own Dr. Christina Smith was given the Top Community Journalism Faculty Paper award for the Community Journalism interest group of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Each year, papers are submitted by faculty authors and a winner is selected to receive this award at the annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference. Smith’s paper focused on the rural weekly newspaper and how weekly newspaper workers perform their jobs.

“Most of our journalism students and journalism students around the country, end up working for the smaller media outlets, which is why it is important that we teach the community journalism approach,” said Smith. "So, for me to win this award, I am really honored. Researching and doing community journalism has taught me there is no one-size-fits-all approach to journalism.”

The Department of Government and Sociology is proud to announce the launch of their second fully online program, the Master of Science in Criminal Justice. Fall 2016 marked the inaugural semester as an online program.

Courses will utilize the university’s GeorgiaVIEW and D2L (Desire to Learn) systems. Students may now earn their master’s degree without needing to step on campus.

The coordinator of the MSCJ program, Dr. Sara Doude, shares, “Our program develops the skills which prepare students to work in social services, law, law enforcement, education and in private business. It is ideal for the self-motivated person with good time management skills. Distance and work schedules will no longer be a barrier for students wishing to pursue a professional degree.”

For more information, please visit the MSCJ webpage at gcsu.edu/mscj
In December of 2015, Dr. Stephanie Opperman in the Department of History and Geography represented Georgia College as part of a faculty development program to Havana, Cuba. Organized by Dr. Steve Elliott-Gower and two professors at the University of North Carolina - Asheville, the trip included 20 Council of Public Liberal Arts College (COPLAC) faculty members in a weeklong series of discussions with Cuban scholars and students. Presentations and dialogues focused on multidisciplinary approaches to contemporary issues in Cuban society. In addition to visiting numerous museums and landmarks in Havana, the group also traveled to the Sierra del Rosario Biosphere Reserve.

Opperman recently developed a GC2Y second year seminar course entitled “Cuba in a Global Society” to introduce Georgia College sophomores to Cuban history, politics and culture, as well as to offer a deeper understanding of Cuba’s continued adaptation within global society. Focusing on Cuban relations with Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the United States, the course will analyze literary works, historical essays, speeches, newspaper articles, interviews, films and photographs in order to place Cuba’s history within the current post-Cold War global environment.

With funding from GC’s International Education Center, Opperman plans to return to Cuba this winter to explore the possibility of a study abroad option to Havana beginning in 2018. In her role as coordinator of the Latin American, Caribbean and Latino/a Studies program, she will also help to organize visits to campus by Cuban scholars this academic year. For more information on these events, follow the program on Facebook at @gclacls.
There is no better place to study the art, history and culture of another country than on site. Teaching in a classroom environment pales in comparison to using a site as a teaching tool. This past June, we took 15 Georgia College students to Amsterdam and Paris to participate in our unique study abroad program. Since 2008, we have led students through the major museums, architectural monuments and historical sites of these two exceptional cities where we examine the art and history of the Netherlands and France, our respective areas of research and teaching specialization. Our philosophy about teaching abroad is that students ought to be as fully immersed as possible in the place where they are learning. We also believe that study abroad programs are most effective when led by faculty with expertise in the site-specific content knowledge of the program location. We strive to provide our students with in-depth content knowledge and to expose them to the sites, people, food, culture and traditions of the places we visit. Indeed, our program is the only one available in the entire University System of Georgia that examines the cultural history of the Netherlands and France from an interdisciplinary, transnational perspective.

Rather than teach in a traditional classroom setting, we embrace City-as-Text pedagogy, which is a bottoms-up approach emphasizing active and

By: Drs. Elissa Auerbach and Stephen Auerbach
experiential learning. On our study abroad program the students themselves become active agents in the learning process. Amsterdam and Paris provide ideal settings for students to influence their own educational experience and participate in all levels of learning and discovery. For example, on the first day of our program in Amsterdam, our students participated in an “Amazing Race” scavenger hunt. We broke the students into groups of two. Their assignment was to locate buildings, points of interest and centers of activity; we asked them to notice details of architecture, social gathering places and clothing; we asked them to talk to locals, find out what matters to them in their daily lives, what they like and what frustrates them. At the end of the day, our group reconvened for a discussion about their findings, experiences and insights. The activity has proven to be successful way to acquaint our students with their new, temporary home and to hone their critical thinking skills.

We have discovered that Amsterdam and Paris are ideal sites for City-as-Text pedagogy. The seventeenth century was the Golden Age of Amsterdam. The city was the richest and most powerful in the world. Its canals were lined with gabled brick houses and its port was crowded with ships flying flags from all over the globe, their cargo holds overflowing with exotic goods ready for sale on the open market. While officially a Calvinist nation, because of its well-known policy of toleration (gedogen, in Dutch), Amsterdam became home to thriving Jewish and Catholic communities. Both of these groups contributed to the economic and cultural vitality of the city. Equally as important, Amsterdam fostered a vibrant intellectual and artistic community. Philosophers including Descartes and Spinoza easily mingled with artists, such as Rembrandt and Vermeer. Our students came face-to-face with these aspects of early modern Dutch history and drew connections between them throughout our study in the Netherlands. We led students on tours of Rembrandt’s house and studio, the Rijksmuseum and Van Gogh Museum, “hidden” Catholic churches, whitewashed Protestant churches, a seventeenth-century synagogue and Anne Frank’s secret annex, to name only a few site visits. Day trips to the nearby cities of Haarlem and Delft included studies of a former cathedral, the collection in Holland’s first and oldest public museum of art and science, open since 1784 and the global power of the Netherlands as evidenced by its trade in ceramics with China.

The second half of our program was spent in Paris, which has been rightly called the capital of the modern world. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Paris witnessed the founding of monarchical absolutism, the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. Highlights of our visits in Paris included discussions of art in the Louvre and Orsay museums and a walking tour of the French Revolution, where we retraced the journeys of condemned prisoners to their deaths during the Reign of Terror. We began at the Conciergerie, the former medieval palace-turned prison known as “death’s waiting room.” Prisoners sentenced to death by the revolutionary government, including Marie Antoinette and Robespierre, spent their final hours here before getting into the tumbrels that would take them to the guillotine. We follow the very route those prisoners traveled, pausing at the spot where the artist Jacques-Louis David sketched the very last portrait of Marie Antoinette with hair cut short and hands bound behind her back. We also stop at the location of a notorious pub where patrons jeered and hurled insults at the condemned as they passed by. It is easy to imagine the tumbrels rumbling along the cobblestone streets of Paris on their way to the guillotine. Finally, our group made its way to Place de la Concorde where, in 1973, the guillotine dubbed the “national razor,” stood, which was considered the most humane method for disposing of the revolution’s enemies.

We began teaching abroad seventeen years ago and are strong believers in the value of international and interdisciplinary education. We have experienced firsthand what research has demonstrated: students who study abroad evince higher levels of multiple aspects of engagement, including abstract reasoning, higher order thinking, integrative learning and social development. We are currently busy planning next summer’s study abroad program in Amsterdam, Paris and Rome. What better place than the “Eternal City” to learn about ancient and modern art, history and culture? With the addition of Rome to our itinerary, students will be able to make connections from the ancient world of Rome, to the early modern world of Amsterdam and the modern era born in Paris.
But if you’re Dr. Kenneth McGill, that’s when you go with the flow. And, along the way: Disprove a 139-year-old science theory. Build a better flow-meter. Get Georgia College its first-ever patent.

“I’ve come up with something that’s really a fundamental discovery in acoustics that hasn’t changed in over 100 years and so that’s crazy exciting,” said McGill, chair of chemistry and physics.

It took 20 years of false starts, outright failure and bureaucratic delays - as well as 30 students, a 256-inch pipe, 128 microphones, 512 cables and financial support from Georgia College - for McGill to realize his dream.

U.S. Patent #9,441,993 was issued Sept. 13, 2016, giving Georgia College ownership of McGill’s new theory: the “Conduit Bound Propagation Separation Model.” The method will lead to constructing a better flow-meter to measure fluids in interstate pipelines worth trillions of dollars a day. Industries like petroleum, pharmaceutical, chemical and mining must know precisely when materials begin and stop flowing. Businesses can’t afford to lose a single drop of expensive commodities like gasoline, oil, coal slurry or water.

“That’s money going down the pipeline. So they always argue about who started first and how fast it’s flowing,” McGill said. Previously, the only way to measure was by drilling a hole and inserting a turbine or metric bar. Pipes had to be shut down, stopping production and profits. Holes also increased risk of leakage and need for repairs.

The patent brings a new level of distinction to the university, showcasing success in its science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, said Kenneth J. Procter, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

“Everyone expects patents and research start-up companies to spin off from big science and engineering doctoral universities. Dr. McGill’s patent demonstrates that ground-breaking science is a vital element of the Georgia College liberal arts mission,” Procter said. “Our students are the big winners” working with “great faculty like Dr. McGill in exciting, hands-on labs.”

Over the years, undergrads constructed “bits and pieces” of the flow-meter, pushed buttons when directed by computer code and got “just a glimmer of how things work” by graduation. Five students currently collect data. They’ll help write findings in science publications and co-author anything McGill publishes.

Senior chemistry major Arthur Shue of Madison has worked with McGill more than two years. The “idea of the unknown” intrigued Shue, who said it’s rewarding to work on “something bigger” than himself. He hopes his contribution will help get him into medical or graduate school.

It’s “an overwhelming feeling,” Shue said. To “create something that has never been before – is pretty surreal.”
Dr. Tina Yarborough, professor of art history and interdisciplinary studies. It is with great sadness that we say goodbye after 20 years. The world is surely diminished by her passing.

Please join us on Oct. 24 as we pay tribute to Tina with a special symposium on the artist Edvard Munch with papers presented by fellow scholars and close friends of Tina, 2-4:30 p.m. in the Arts and Sciences Auditorium. A public celebration service will follow at 5:30 p.m. in Magnolia Ballroom.

The Department of Art continues its collaboration with local and regional communities with student work rotating in downtown Eatonton and major mural projects in the works. Associate Professors Emily Gomez and Carlos Herrera received promotion to full professor and we continue our tradition of long term faculty colleagues. A new wood shop has been installed at our Fine Art Printmaking Facility in Miller Annex and renovations to the Grassmann Ceramics Studio have been completed. The department announces the development of its fourth and newest concentration leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Art, with a proposal for graphic design to be added to its offerings in art history, museum studies and studio art.
Dr. William McClain, assistant professor of music and director of orchestras at Georgia College, has recently been named principal violist for two ensembles, Orchestra Noir in Atlanta and the Colour of Music Festival held in Charleston, South Carolina.

Orchestra Noir is Atlanta’s premiere all African-American Orchestra and has been covered in Rolling Out Magazine, the Tom Joyner Show, CBS Radio, NPR and many other prestigious media outlets. Orchestra Noir strives to unite the musical legacies of the African diaspora with that of Western Europe to yield a deeper, more enriched understanding of artistic universality.

Now in its fourth year, the Colour of Music Festival offers a musical kaleidoscope highlighting the impact and historical significance of black classical composers and performers on American and world culture. Assembling acclaimed black chamber ensemble players and artists to form the Colour of Music Orchestra, the four-day festival showcases some of the top black classical musicians in the United States.

“I am very excited to represent Georgia College on the International Stage. During the Colour of Music Festival musicians from around the world will assemble to perform some of my favorite masterworks including Fauré’s ‘Requiem Mass,’ Dvorak’s ‘Symphony No.8’ and Carl Orff’s ‘Carmina Burana.’ Also the opportunity to present opera and symphonic music alongside gospel, spirituals and traditional African-American folk music is an appealing prospect as a classically trained musician,” said McClain. “I believe that ensembles such as Orchestra Noir are the model for attracting a new generation of music enthusiasts from all walks of life. Both Orchestra Noir and the Colour of Music festival have deep connections to the community which will offer many opportunities to connect, to give back and to raise the profile and awareness of the important work that we do at Georgia College.”
Student presents her work in one of Professor Valerie Aranda’s courses in Ennis Hall.
Department of Theatre and Dance performs “Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays” in Russell Auditorium.
How the theatre and dance department builds social awareness through the arts
History of social awareness in the theatre program

From our inception as an independent department eight years ago, the Georgia College Department of Theatre and Dance has made social awareness a hallmark of our work. Community outreach and impacting the lives of GC students, faculty and the families in Baldwin County continues to be our mission. From the beginning, we worked with the Youth Enrichment Services (YES) Program, collaborated with the Macon Tubman Museum on a play about Martin Luther King Jr. with local high school students and began an annual touring children’s show to promote literacy in Baldwin County. Our children’s theatre shows have focused on such issues as anti-bullying, conservation and overcoming peer pressure. We send our Dance Minor students out to teach children in almost every school in Baldwin County.

All the way back to our very first year as an independent department, we dedicated our season to women playwrights, a group which is historically underrepresented. Not long after that, we won a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) grant to integrate and illuminate grade school sciences and math through theatre. Our multidisciplinary work includes collaborations with many departments on campus, from the history and geography department to the English, music and art departments, as well as the Cultural Center and the Women’s Center.

We have determined that our departmental mission is to help in our small way by introducing social awareness to our students. We know that despite the “Hamilton” phenomenon on Broadway, there is a dearth of Tony Awards for people of color. As Theatre Major Elizabeth Kelly states, “Our major gives us a creative outlet to address the good, bad and ugly in society and will hopefully be a catalyst for change.”

Courses for social awareness

For a number of years GC Theatre Department Chair Dr. Karen Berman and Assistant Professor Kristi Papailler have been teaching GC2Y courses in Theatre as Social Change to primarily non-theatre majors. The course is based on the work of the late Brazilian theatre theorist Augusto Boal and his Theatre of the Oppressed. Under this methodology, the students in the class create and perform original performance pieces on social and health issues – topics of importance to teens. The pieces end without a satisfactory conclusion.

The middle school and high school students from Early College then come up on stage to replace one of the characters and create their own solutions to the problems. The middle school and high school students become empowered to find solutions on their own to issues in their lives. The GC students collaborate together to research and write the plays on important themes such as religious tolerance, gender identity, sexting and substance abuse in order to create social awareness.

Our current challenge for social awareness

In our season brochures, we state: “Passion for Theatre. Engage for Justice.” Our engagement in social awareness includes the intentional diversity of faculty and staff in our department, the purposeful plays we choose, and the deliberate grants we propose. Associate Professor Eric Griffis directed “The Laramie Project” to urge the campus to embrace tolerance and acceptance of all people. Last year during our “Season for Love and Justice” and just after the Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage, Dr. Amy Pinney directed “Standing on Ceremony: The Gay Marriage Plays.” Assistant Professor Kristi Papailler directed “The Ballad of Emmett Till,” a true story which helped to activate the Civil Rights Movement. This year in our “Season of Creativity: 21st Century Currency” Dr. Karen Berman will direct “A Streetcar Named Desire,” which explores the issue of violence against women.

Each of our productions, in the truest sense of the liberal arts mission, is accompanied by interdisciplinary talkbacks and brown bag lunches in which we invite a group of faculty and staff experts to help contextualize our plays. Our plays have provoked such topics as the labor force and the roles of women, the criminal justice system, diversity and anti-war revolutions in the 1960s. Talks by Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Veronica Womack, Professor Matt
Roessing, Dr. Stephanie McClure and Dr. Beauty Bragg, among others, have provided guidance for hot button topics. Student Mary Helen Higgs has learned from our mission, “Never stop asking questions about how the world works. Never stop seeking justice. Always hold to your beliefs, but be willing to listen to the ideas and beliefs of others as well.”

National symposia produced by the theatre and dance department include “The Holocaust Theatre: Staging Justice and Diversity in our Global World,” “Celebration of Hispanic Theatre and Culture” and “Performance of the African Diaspora as Social Change.” National grants for guest artists who create master classes for our students and performances for GC and the entire community include: The Liz Lerman Dance Company, who worked with a multi-abled population; Rennie Harris Puremovement Hip Hop, who taught the African origins of hip hop to the Baldwin County middle and high school; The Dance Exchange, who explored race and gender in the Old Governor’s Mansion; and Ayikodans, who performed for grade school children and GC the historical struggles and culture of the Haitian people.

Our global social awareness work has extended into study abroad trips with four plays written by Dr. Karen Berman and her husband Paul Accettura and produced with her students at the Eastern Regions International Theatre Festival in the Czech Republic. Each of the plays has investigated the role of Communism and Fascism on the people, and has thus included a trip to the Terezin Concentration Camp with her study abroad students. Theatre major Clay Garland says that because of this work, “I am a changed person. I look at theatre as a global community now.”

To create good citizens in this election year, we recently produced an election year play commissioned from the Firehouse Theatre Company. In partnership with the American Democracy Project, voter registration was held before and after the play. Theatre Major Clarissa Bacon says, “I learned that these pieces that we perform are most often larger than just us.”
The Department of Theatre and Dance collaboration with the Old Governor’s Mansion and guest artists The Dance Exchange presenting the Civil War Field Guide, an interactive performance that focused on the separations and divides based on race and gender in the Old Governor’s Mansion.

Panelists for the Brown Bag discussion titled “When Blood Memory Recalls Freedom: Past as Present in August Wilson’s ‘The Piano Lesson’” contextualizing the Theatre and Dance Department’s production. (left to right, Dr. Veronica Womack, Deitrah Taylor, Dr. Stephanie McClure, Dr. Beauty Bragg and Professor Jameliah Shorter)

Cassandra Wright and Deitrah Taylor present at a session moderated by English Professor Dr. Beauty Bragg at the “Symposium on Performance of the African Diaspora as Social Change” in The Depot.
In April 2016 the Department of Theatre and Dance sponsored a “Symposium on Performance of the African Diaspora as Social Change,” chaired by Assistant Professor of Theatre Kristi Papailler of the Department of Theatre and Dance. The department received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Georgia Arts Council’s Vibrant Communities program to support the symposium and the residency of the Ayikodans from Haiti. Other co-sponsors of this multi-disciplinary symposium were the Office of Inclusive Excellence, the Cultural Center, the Africana Studies Program, MOVE and the Departments of Art, Music and History and Geography.

Symposium committee members included Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Veronica Womack, Theatre and Dance Department Chair Dr. Karen Berman, Professor of English Dr. Beauty Bragg, Assistant Professor of Philosophy Dr. Jamelia Shorter-Bourhanou, Cultural Center Coordinator Deitrah Taylor and Student Records and Communications Coordinator Laverne Renfroe.

This international conference included numerous presentations and performances on important social awareness topics. The symposium began with a keynote dinner and address on “In Search of August Wilson: American Theatre and the Challenge of Diversity” by African-American playwright Pearl Cleage, the author of the award winning play “Flyin’ West.” Cleage also wrote the bestselling novel “What Looks Like Crazy On An Ordinary Day,” which was an Oprah Book Club pick. Cleage’s good advice to students included “Work hard, pay cash, buy time, not stuff, register and vote in every election, and don’t lie, ever.” Georgia College President Dr. Dorman introduced Cleage with a strong statement of Georgia College’s commitment to diversity.

In addition to the scholars who came from as far as California, Missouri, Illinois and Virginia to present at the conference. Georgia College dance minor student Hannah Thomas, presented her undergraduate dance research on “Strange Fruit: the Revolt against a Cyclical Harvest” about the U.S. lynching of African-Americans. Recent dance minor Georgia College graduate Azaria Hogans, currently pursuing her Master of Fine Arts in Dance, presented on “Activism and Creativity in the Making of More that Time Stolen,” an original dance piece on sexual assault. Special guest artists from Haiti, the Ayikodans company that included singers, dancers and drummers, put on an amazing performance in Russell Auditorium for the entire Georgia College and Middle Georgia community highlighting the cultural richness of Haiti. Their founder and artistic director Jeanguy Saintus led the troupe and hosted discussions on the culture of Haiti.

Georgia College Theatre and Dance students hosted the events and participated in master classes conducted by the Ayikodans dancers at the Good Karma: Center for Yoga and the Healing Arts. The Ayikodans conducted a workshop and master class of Haiti Carnaval for K-12 students in Dublin, Georgia, with one teacher writing that the students were “completely enthralled by the experience.”

The symposium was so successful that scholars from across the country agreed that Georgia College should be the home to a continuing symposium. Survey comments from conference participants included: “It was a wonderful safe space for artists of color to commune, create and find inspiration.” Likewise another participant stated, “It was a sense of community, built on mutual cultural identity, girded by scholarship.” Yet another scholar commented, “The region and maybe the nation needs this symposium. It was a great way for us to unite and share as scholars and learn that we were not alone as individuals working at our various institutions.” The symposium committee members agreed that this experience was a change-maker for Georgia College in terms of enrichment in diversity.
AS A FIRST-YEAR STUDENT DURING FALL 2015, Jonathan Mangrum knew one thing—he wanted to get involved.

“I came to Georgia College as a marketing major, but then I found my passion was in politics—not being a politician, but diplomatic work,” said Mangrum.

His passion was fueled through his involvement in an organization that focuses on civic engagement. The American Democracy Project (ADP) is a multi-campus initiative that concentrates on public education’s role in preparing the next generation of informed and engaged citizens.

“As far as students go, Mr. Mangrum is a rarity. ADP asked a lot from him, due to the political climate of the country and a contested unification proposal on the ballot during his first semester at Georgia College. ADP hosted a public forum to allow public discourse of the pros and cons of the legislation. Jonathan worked diligently to understand the legislation in order to help prepare questions and support the event moderator” said Dr. Julia Metzker, former director of
ENGAGE and ADP coordinator. For that work, Mangrum was recognized by Campus Compact as a 2016 Newman Civic Fellow.

“I am honored to received this award and to even be nominated for this and that others see potential in me,” said Mangrum.

As part of his work with ADP, Mangrum helped plan and facilitate several events that promote political and social awareness, most notably a citywide forum held on the Milledgeville and Baldwin County unification referendum.

“My interest was sparked in this organization from the very beginning of my time at Georgia College,” he said. “I saw politics as a way to get involved at the university and also as a way to expand outward to the community.”

His involvement doesn’t stop there. Mangrum also serves as the vice president of the Georgia College Model United Nations, as a student justice for the Georgia College Student Government Association Judicial Board and as an executive council officer for Eta Sigma Alpha, the honors society of the Georgia College Honors Program.

“I just really love people and working with others and that really started for me in high school and just developed on from there,” he said. “I appreciate the opportunities I’ve gotten at Georgia College so far and I want others to know I’ve been able to do what I have done because of how great this university is and the great people here.”

Where there is a pulse, there is hope

Students in Criminal Justice professor Dr. Alesa Liles’ Canines and Corrections course learn the truth of that axiom first hand. Liles has partnered with the Baldwin County Jail Dog program, which pairs dogs from the Baldwin County Animal Shelter with inmates incarcerated in Baldwin County. These inmates train and rehabilitate the dogs so that they will be adoptable.

The students experience first-hand the transformative power this program has on both the inmates and the dogs. They also learn the benefits of organizations partnering with each other in pursuit of common goals.
DURING SPRING BREAK 2016, several Georgia College mathematics students and faculty members attended the Mathematical Association of America’s Southeastern Section Meeting at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. The Georgia College Math Jeopardy team, coached by Dr. Hong Yue, spent several weeks prior to the conference preparing for the annual Math Jeopardy competition. At the conference, the Jeopardy team, comprised of the following students: Ryan Lawson, Brian Minter, Cuyler Warnock and Austin Bryan, won the preliminary round and advanced to semifinals, where they worked hard and demonstrated their mathematical abilities.

When reflecting on the experience Cuyler Warnock, a junior mathematics major, said, “I really enjoyed going to hear all of the different talks on topics that were interesting to me. I also had a ton of fun competing in Math Jeopardy and building relationships with the Jeopardy team members.”

Additionally, three students, Emily Baum, Samantha Clapp and Kirsten Morris presented their research in the Undergraduate Paper Session. Baum presented her senior capstone project, “Effectiveness of a Supplemental Instruction Program in a Statistics Classroom.” Clapp presented on her Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) research, “Momentum Term for the Modified Spectral Projected Subgradient Method (MSPS).” Morris presented on her capstone project and independent study, “Determining the Rank of a Kronecker Sum and Characterizing its Generalized Eigenvectors.” Baum, senior mathematics major, noted that, “I really enjoy seeing the amount of students who wanted to attend the conference. I think conferences are a great opportunity for younger students because they are exposed to the different areas of math. These talks could shape the classes a math student takes in the future or influence their senior capstone project.”

All of the students enjoyed attending the various activities at the conference including the undergraduate talks, invited lectures and the graduate fair. Austin Bryan, sophomore, said, “This is the first conference I’ve attended as an undergraduate mathematics student and I am grateful for the experience. Since I am early in my math career, this conference helped by giving me the opportunity to explore the different areas of math, which will help shape the path I take in the future. I also enjoyed competing with the Math Jeopardy team and getting to know the students in the math department better. I look forward to attending more conferences in the future.”

Overall, the conference was an excellent experience where the students from Georgia College were able to learn about various topics in the field of mathematics as well as compete in Jeopardy and give presentations.
Georgia College researchers track strategic shifts in campaign music

Music plays a subtle role in forming public opinion about presidential candidates. It gets marginally attentive voters interested in politics and reveals strategic shifts in campaigns.

These are some results of research being done through a unique website – Trax on the Trail - created last winter by Dr. Dana Gorzelany-Mostak, assistant professor of music. Used regularly by journalists nationwide, Trax has also morphed into an educational tool for teaching media literacy – with scholars Skyping into college classrooms and collaborating on digital lesson plans with the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Ohio.

“It’s wound up being more successful than I would ever have imagined. I had no way of anticipating that it would get as big as it’s become,” Gorzelany-Mostak said.

As the U.S. election season races to a climax – and presidential candidates spend millions of dollars to present visual and written images – Trax examines how sound shapes candidate identity. Two changes noted by researchers: Democrat Hillary Clinton has softened her “women empowerment” image by sidelining Rachel Platten’s “Fight Song” and moving to classic pop songs like 1967’s “Ain’t No Mountain High Enough” by Marvin Gaye/Tammi Terrell – while Republican Donald Trump has added traditionally conservative country music like Lee Greenwood’s 1984 “God Bless the USA” to his repertoire. In that way, Gorzelany-Mostak said Trump is “channeling” Ronald Reagan, who used the song when running for re-election in 1984.

“I think when we listen to music, we’re not just hearing the song in the moment, but we hear in our minds all the moments throughout history where we heard that song and what was going on in our lives. And I think that creates a very powerful, positive association for a lot of people,” Gorzelany-Mostak said.

Students watch C-SPAN and YouTube to catalogue songs into a single database. They check playlists on Spotify and often pick up songs from news outlets that mention what’s playing as a candidate enters the stage.

Trax has enabled senior Victoriana Lord of Dublin to apply what she’s learning in class to real-world practice. A management information systems major, Lord helped design the website and logo. Since then, she’s helped maintain digital content – uploading, editing and keeping track of entries to make sure they’re up-to-date, relevant and accurate. She gives radio interviews, talks at events and takes photos – all things she never thought would be part of the job description.

“This is absolutely the first job I’ve had where this was something that integrated directly elements of what I’m learning in the classroom with a job opportunity,” Lord said. “I think that integration really helped me be comfortable in the job but also to understand challenges that are in the job are fixable, and I can rise to meet those challenges.”

The website may rev-up again for the 2020 presidential election – but Gorzelany-Mostak expects excitement to subside until then.

“Let’s just say, I’m not going to be very popular come Nov. 9,” she said.
Tales untold:
A student’s quest for community storytelling

Haley Myers, ’16, created a web series highlighting the untold stories of Milledgeville.
What started as a class project on why students love their community turned into a tightly-scheduled, coordinated effort of a web series garnering thousands of views.

“I actually began this as part of a class last semester,” said Haley Myers, ‘16. “But the reaction I got was amazing and that feedback made me think I could do something bigger.”

After showing the video clip to Senior Lecturer Angela Criscoe, the capstone course ran with it and developed “When in Milly” as the class project. Myers’ vision for the web series comes from the popular social media project, “Humans of New York,” whose tagline is “New York, one story at a time.” Similarly, Myers’ mission is to tell the story of people and places of Milledgeville.

The class consisted of team groups of four who develop story ideas and pitch them to Myers. The class produces one video every Wednesday, which they push out on their social media.

“Myers said the importance of community is something she hopes to highlight throughout the web series.

“I think a lot of students have this tunnel vision and they can sometimes think that walking to class and dorms and the Greenway is it—they think that is the total community,” said Myers. “They don’t see the larger community around them.”

Criscoe said that the project was a large undertaking and speaks to the dedication of the students in the class.

“Mass communication students are hardworking. When you see one with a camera strapped around their shoulders you know that they will spend a minimum of three hours on one project...one hour of prep, one hour of shooting and one hour of post.” said Criscoe. “But for a web episode, these students will put into it a minimum of 15 - 20 hours. It takes a lot of commitment to be in the mass communication program and the students in capstone have been doing it for two years.”
All in the Family: Father and daughter earn degrees
Recent graduate Kristen Morris took full advantage of her three years at Georgia College.

"I've always enjoyed being active both inside and outside of the classroom and balancing these roles has taught me a lot about myself," said Kirsten, who graduated in May. "I knew I wanted to continue being active in organizations when I came to college."

During her time here she was active in collegiate 4-H, the Student Government Association, served as a student ambassador, was in the Honors Program and helped create the first chapter of the Association for Women in Mathematics at the university. She was also accepted to 12 Ph.D. programs across the nation and recently landed on the University of Georgia.

"I'm truly thankful for all the opportunities I've had at Georgia College," said Kirsten. "What I've learned in my three years here is that all of the promotional material, all of the marketing that I've ever seen about Georgia College, was all true."

Kirsten also had the opportunity to participate in Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) in California where she collaborated with faculty at California State University Channel Islands. She was also accepted into a summer 2016 REU at Purdue University. She participated in the EDGE program (Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education), an intensive, 4-week experience that focuses on women entering into Ph.D. programs.

"I knew I wanted to go onto graduate school and having the REU experience just made me feel even more prepared and confident applying for programs when it came time," said Kirsten.

Her time at Georgia College was also marked with sharing her love of math with others through her jobs as a tutor, supplemental instructor leader and a supplemental instructor coach at the Learning Center.

For Kirsten, the excitement of her graduation day was made to be even more of a momentous occasion as her father Mark Morris also graduated with his MBA on May 6, 2016.

"Completing an MBA program has been high on my list for several years, but one thing or another seemed to get in the way. I knew I wanted to further my business education before finishing military service, but wasn't sure how," said Mark.
Michael Ziegler, ’16, was awarded the National Science Foundation (NSF) Fellowship to conduct paleoanthropology—the study of the origins of present human species using fossils and other remains—research summer 2016 in the east African country of Kenya.

After two applications and an interview, he was selected as one of 30 students to take part in a research project at the Koobi Fora Nature Preserve. The area has been a central location for research since around the late 1970s. They focused their efforts towards establishing a connection between our past ancestors and why our culture/environment is the way it is today.

Ziegler is the first student from Georgia College to embark on this experience. Out of over 300 applicants, he is also one of the few who received a fellowship.

“This is an enormous, prestigious opportunity. To be an undergrad and get a NSF fellowship for this is huge,” said Dr. Al Mead, professor of biology, geology and mammalogy. “I think he will make us look great. He has the passion and he wants to do something most haven’t done.”

Ziegler learned about this opportunity through Dr. David Patterson, a GC alumnus.

“He came and talked to Dr. Mead’s class about the research he was doing. He said there’s an opportunity, but you’d have to camp out in Kenya for six weeks and it’s in lion territory,” said Ziegler. “Everyone else kind of shied away, but I was interested.”

Partnering with the Nairobi National Museum, each selected student worked on a smaller, separate project.

“There’s a ton of different projects, whether it’s working on scorched wood to prove that there was fire around two million years ago, or looking at bones to see if there were cut marks,” said Ziegler. “Were humans using stone tools? Were we the ones hunting or being hunted?”

The subprojects will later be combined as support for a larger project. Through his experience, he hopes to encourage other students so that they too can pursue such opportunities.

Ziegler plans to substitute teach in order to “get more kids interested in science.” Simultaneously, he will be applying for the Fulbright Scholarship. With the scholarship, he hopes to study abroad for a year and pursue a master’s or Ph.D. He says his ultimate career goal is to become a college professor.

“I want to give back the enthusiasm and encouragement to more students,” said Ziegler. “And I really enjoyed my professors here at Georgia College, as well as at my high school.”
Alumna math major receives Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship

From a very young age, Kendall Brown knew she was destined to teach, even playing school with her sisters when they were kids.

“I feel like I’ve really been called to teach,” said the May 2016 graduate. “When I’m sharing what I know with others, I’m giving them a gift that no one can take away from them and that’s education.”

The mathematics major fell in love with the subject in high school, so much so she knew a high school math classroom is where she wanted to spend her career.

“I’ve always loved the challenges math brings and the fact that you can use different ways to solve complex problems,” said Brown.

For her work as an undergraduate and dedication to teaching others, Brown was accepted into the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship STEM Teaching program. The fellowship includes admission to a master’s degree program at a well-established partner university, teacher certification in science, mathematics or technology education, extensive preparation for teaching in a high-needs school for one full year before becoming the teacher and a $30,000 stipend.

“I heard about this opportunity and was encouraged to apply,” she said. “I never thought I’d be one of the 60 chosen to participate in the state.”

The process included an interview, meeting with board members, teaching a mock lesson, answering policy questions and more—all of which Brown shined in, a trend she continued from her experience at Georgia College.

“Kendall was a dedicated student. In addition to her classes, she was a teaching assistant and a tutor in the Learning Center, she was an officer in the math club and she showed great interest in the research of mathematics education,” said Dr. Doris Santarone, assistant professor of mathematics.

“Even though she is not a teacher yet, Kendall already exemplifies the traits of a good teacher. In the few times that I saw her teach, Kendall showed great professionalism and composure. She used innovative teaching techniques to help with student retention and she had an excellent knowledge of the content that she was teaching. I know she will be a great teacher someday.”

For Brown, Georgia College prepared her well for her next challenge thanks to the dedication of the faculty in the math department.

“I came in my freshman year with the hopes to pursue a mathematics degree and never changed. I never felt alone because I had so much help and support from the professors,” said Brown.

She’s already started her master’s program at Georgia State and beginning this fall will be co-teaching at Cedar Grove High School in Ellenwood. After she completes the one-year program as part of the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, she will work in a high-needs school, teaching math at the high school level.