

Summer 2014

The Georgia Gwinnett College Magazine

Volume 1, Issue 2

Engage

**GWINNETT
TO ASIA –
TRANBERG'S
GLOBAL VIEW**

Grizzlies win national championships in first eligible season

New GGC President Preczewski known for servant leadership

Generous gift supports Advising Center, student success



A group of students enjoy socializing in the courtyard between the residence halls. While Georgia Gwinnett is primarily a commuter college, it has housing for more than 1,000 students in modern, apartment-style suites offering all-private bedrooms, kitchenettes, study rooms, 24-hour security and even an on-site laundry that can e-mail or text students when their laundry is done. Special activities enhance the campus-living experience. Visit www.ggc.edu/housing for more.



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COVER GGC alumnus Seijin Tranberg, '13, stands among colorful decorations honoring Buddha's birthday in Seoul, South Korea. Story on page 4.

WE ARE Moving

toward a bigger and brighter future



Dr. Stas Preczewski

If you happen to visit Georgia Gwinnett College this summer, we might put you to work moving boxes. Lots of boxes.

Almost 200 people are being moved around campus to occupy new and renovated spaces. Offices, departments and services are being strategically relocated to position the college for future growth and more efficient operations.

With enrollment limited by our facilities, the long-awaited Allied Health and Sciences building will enable GGC to enroll more than 11,000 students in August. It also allows the addition of more degree programs. This fall, the School of Science and Technology will introduce a chemistry major and the School of Health Sciences will begin its first program – a bachelor of science in nursing.

In addition to occupying this 91,000-sq. ft. building, we have renovated significant space in Building D to create a new, one-stop shop for students needing a wide range of conveniently located services.

With expanded dining seating in Building A and the addition of several chain restaurants across campus, we are making changes in food service at the request of our students. We also will add a few hundred parking spaces following completion of the Collins Hill Road/Route 316 construction adjacent to campus.

Dramatic growth always presents challenges. However, thanks to outstanding planning and teamwork, Georgia Gwinnett has the *highest* space utilization rate within the University System of Georgia (USG), at 72 percent – *twice the system's average*. I applaud GGC's faculty, staff and students for their engaged input and dedicated collaboration in successfully moving the college into its next exciting phase of growth and success. Our campus is bigger and better prepared for the future.

We welcome you to visit the new Georgia Gwinnett College. And I was just kidding about the boxes.

Stas Preczewski



Notables

The University System of Georgia Board of Regents approved a bachelor of science degree program in chemistry in the **School of Science and Technology**. The program will have concentrations in general chemistry, professional chemistry and teacher certification.



Dr. David Barnes, professor of biology, received the Society for In Vitro Biology's 2014 Lifetime Achievement award.

Georgia Gwinnett College is one of nine institutions selected by the American Council on Education to participate in its Change and Innovation Lab, a groundbreaking initiative to help colleges and universities increase the number of first-generation and nontraditional students who gain a college degree.

The Continuous Improvement Commission of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation has granted National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accreditation to the **School of Education's** teacher education program.

Dr. Jennifer Chapman, assistant professor of legal studies and accounting, was chosen for the 2014 Governor's Teaching Fellows Summer Symposium and for participation in the Atlantic Institute's summer academic trip to Turkey.



Heather Kilar and **Kyle Norton** are GGC's first Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes. Kilar, a softball third baseman, is pursuing a history degree with a teacher's certification. Norton, a baseball outfielder, is a history major.

Georgia Gwinnett College's student wellness efforts earned Bronze Level HealthLead U.S. Healthiest Campus Accreditation.



Reanna Berry, CPA, accounting instructor, presented the paper, "Z[oo]ming In... How Brand Love and Sense of Community Contribute to the Success of Zumba," at the 2014 Academy of Marketing Science Annual Conference in Indianapolis.

Her co-authors on this paper are Drs. Luis Torres and Phillip Hartley, both assistant professors of marketing.

Lauren Meier was named both ITA Men's and Women's Assistant Coach of the Year for the NAIA's South Region.

The Intercollegiate Tennis Association named **Chase Hodges**, head tennis coach, the 2014 Wilson/ITA Coach of the Year for NAIA men's tennis. He also was named both the men's and women's tennis NAIA National Coach of the Year.

Dr. C. Douglas Johnson, professor of leadership and management, was a keynote speaker for the Priority Male Institute sponsored by the Community Council of Metropolitan Atlanta.



The Georgia Gwinnett College Magazine **Engage**

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GGC is a four-year degree-granting unit of the University System of Georgia, accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges or SACSCOC.

from Gwinnett

Seijin Tranberg enrolled at Georgia Gwinnett College with no clear direction, but thanks to the inspiration and support of faculty and some deep soul searching, he is now on a mission to affect international change.

"After high school, I took a step back to accept my faults and immaturities, realizing they weren't conducive to a sustainable, happy lifestyle," Tranberg said. "I knew I wanted to be happy. Who doesn't? But to do so, I felt that I had to be a more conscientious and selfless person with purpose and direction."

Ready to pursue a college degree in 2009, he enrolled at GGC because it was close to home, where he was helping raise his younger brothers.

"I planned to transfer after two years, but I found a lot of hidden gems at GGC," he said. "I realized I could be a 'big fish in a small pond,' and help develop the campus community, so I decided to stay."

Tranberg's rigorous schedule included an off-campus, part-time job, serving as one of the college's first resident assistants, and later jobs as a sushi chef, a waiter and a retail salesperson.

Despite his hectic schedule, Tranberg was inspired to take on leadership responsibilities through the support of his professors in his freshman year, notably Drs. Jessica Damián and Jen Wunder, both then associate professors of English, and Drs. Keith and Amy Erickson, both associate professors of mathematics.

"Having accomplished professors who saw potential in me helped me believe in myself," he said. He was an influential leader in the Greenlight Activities Board, founded the International Affairs Society and started discussions about establishing honor societies.

Reaching ever higher, he was elected president of the Student Government Association for 2011-12 and re-elected the following year.

By Tranberg's sophomore year, his interest in global leadership came into sharper focus.

"Until then, my major was undecided," he said. "But with the help of Dr. Damián and Dr. Anthony Pinder, the college's first director of Internationalization, I earned an alternate position for a prestigious national fellowship that selected only 20 students. Being that close to winning convinced me that I had potential in political science."

With a clearer academic vision, Tranberg, who is Japanese-American, incorporated study abroad programs into his education. He spent a summer at the University of the Virgin Islands in a global leadership program. He also spent a semester in China in an intensive Mandarin Chinese language program that included courses in foreign policy, culture and sociology.

GGC selected Tranberg to attend the annual Student Conference on U.S. Affairs at West Point Academy. There, he met Rhodes Scholar finalists, as well as Truman and Fulbright Scholars who encouraged him to apply for these highly-competitive programs. Realizing his strong desire to examine international problems and work towards their solutions, he applied for a Fulbright Scholarship in 2013 and won.

Tranberg opted to spend his Fulbright year in South Korea because he believes the Koreans and China will play larger political and economic roles in the coming decades.

"I think unification of the Korean peninsula will happen in our lifetimes, and it will be one of the greatest opportunities for international cooperation and conflict resolution," he said. "The U.S., China and the Koreans have an exciting future, and I hope to be involved in solving some of the social and developmental challenges that lie ahead."

Conversational in Korean, Mandarin Chinese and Japanese, Tranberg has continued his academic career's fast pace while in South Korea. He spent his first semester teaching English to high school students. During the 2014 spring semester, he began studying for the GRE, preparing a student team for the U.S. Embassy-funded Youth Diplomacy and Activism Conference (YDAC), assisting in the YDAC diplomacy program, and leading weekly tutoring sessions.

He recently earned yet another honor by being selected as an orientation coordinator for more than 70 incoming Fulbright Scholars, and will help develop an intensive six-week summer program to prepare them for their South Korean Fulbright experiences.

As if Tranberg's schedule wasn't busy enough, he also is independently researching the social dynamics of South Korean millennials regarding increasing acceptability of tattoos and other traditionally taboo topics – a sign of a changing society.

"I've found that each generation is markedly different from those before," he said. "In three generations, South Korea has gone from a war-torn, farm-based

Tranberg's

Below: Seijin Tranberg discusses free speech with his South Korean students. At right, top to bottom: Tranberg visits the Great Wall of China; speaks to the GGC student body as SGA president; high-fives one of his students and poses for a "selfie" with other students.

South Korean photography by
Jean Chung

society to having the world's 12th largest GDP. I've found millennial South Koreans to be much more progressive, curious and open about societal shortcomings, while eager to enjoy the fruits of their rapid development and hard work. I'm interested to see where this generation will lead their nation in coming decades."

Looking toward the future, Tranberg plans to do management consulting for two years before enrolling in an MBA/MPP program.

"By that time, I hope to have gained enough financial, policy and general professional acumen to simultaneously solve social and developmental challenges using market methods," he said.

With such a vision, Tranberg has come a long way from the disillusioned, directionless young man of only five years ago. He gives strong credit to GGC and its professors for the intense focus he now has on his future.

"As a student who didn't know how to apply to colleges and had no real career ambitions, GGC made all the difference," Tranberg said. "Coming from a family that scraped pennies to get by and didn't have much experience with higher education, I have a lot of mentors and professors to thank for providing a great support network. If my life had a theme song right now, it would be 'Happy,' by Pharell Williams."



to Asia

global view

GGC + GMC

A PRESCRIPTION FOR SUCCESS

Gwinnett business and civic leaders are known for creating an environment of purposeful collaboration and partnership that contributes to the overall success of the county and surrounding region. It is this environment that made Georgia Gwinnett College possible, and which will help ensure its future success.

One community partner making a multi-faceted difference for GGC and its students is Gwinnett Medical Center (GMC), which recently made a significant commitment of \$180,000 annually in support of the college's new baccalaureate nursing program.

"We are deeply appreciative of GMC's gift toward and its commitment to the nursing program's success," said Diane White, dean of the School of Health Sciences. "GMC has been a wonderful partner, and we are looking forward to future collaborations. There is a feeling

of mutual responsibility in assuring that the next generation of nurse leaders is well-prepared to contribute to excellence in health care."

"Initiatives such as GGC's new nursing program provide support to the robust health community we have in Gwinnett and across the state," said Phil Wolfe, president and CEO of Gwinnett Medical Center. "We hope to further enhance the dedication and commitment of these nurses who will be serving our community for years to come."

GMC also is providing a large number of clinical rotation opportunities for GGC's nursing students.

"Rotations enable students to transfer what they learn on campus to the real-world, clinical setting," said White. "They learn from other health care professionals and gain experience in delivering nursing care to patients in a compassionate, competent, professional

and ethical manner."

The first rotations will include Glancy Rehabilitation Center, where students will be introduced to caring for adult and geriatric populations beyond the acute phase of illnesses or injury. During these initial rotations, students will begin to discern the role of the nurse, and the importance of collaboration and therapeutic and professional communication in the clinical environment.

In addition to its support of the college's nursing program, GMC provides comprehensive, on-site sports medicine management services for GGC's scholar athletes. The program provides assessment, injury prevention, training and rehabilitation services designed to help students perform at optimum levels athletically and academically.

GMC also has provided several internships for students in multiple disciplines, including biology and information technology.



Guests from Gwinnett Medical Center recently toured GGC's Interactive Clinical Learning Center in the new Allied Health and Sciences building. The bays along the walls will support hospital beds and equipment for instruction. Shown are Stas Preczewski, president; Renée Byrd-Lewis, vice president for Advancement; Steve Nadeau, GMC senior vice president - Human Resources; Thomas Shepherd, Gwinnett Hospital System executive vice president and chief operating officer and president, GMC-Lawrenceville; Carol Danielson, GMC senior vice president and chief nursing officer; Phil Wolfe, GMC president and chief executive officer; Diane White, dean of the School of Health Sciences; Tommy McBride, GMC executive vice president and chief financial officer, and Lois C. Richardson, acting senior vice president for Academic and Student Affairs and provost.



THE NAMES OF COLLEGE SPORTS' WINNINGEST COACHES INSPIRE THOUGHTS OF OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND ACHIEVEMENT. TO BE MENTIONED WITHIN THEIR RANKS IS INDEED AN HONOR.

GAGLIARDI, BRYANT, BOWDEN. BESS, KRZYZEWSKI, SMITH. AND HODGES.

WHO?



NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

HODGES BRINGS WINNING WAYS TO GRIZZLY TENNIS

If you are not familiar with Chase Hodges, it is only because college tennis does not garner the attention of college football or basketball. It is a quieter sport, without the big stadiums, huge crowds, prime-time television coverage and celebrity-like status of its coaches.

And in an equally quiet manner, Hodges has accomplished something that may forever remain matchless in college tennis – perhaps across all college sports. In only a 13-year career, he has led seven different programs to national ranking, and did so 12 times. Six of these programs had never been nationally ranked before Hodges took them over, and four were on losing streaks before his arrival.

GGC's two programs were new when Hodges arrived in 2013, and in only two years, both the men's and women's teams not

only reached national rankings of 3rd and 1st, respectively, they each brought home the college's historic, first national championships in intercollegiate athletics.

Think about it – Hodges led two teams from *non-existent to national championships* in only their *first* year of post-season eligibility – another achievement that may never be repeated in college tennis, or perhaps any college sport. The Grizzlies also are only the second program to win both men's and women's national NAIA titles the same year.

"I have a great group of players who have been a joy to coach," Hodges said. "We just compete out there and if you're playing the Georgia Gwinnett Grizzlies, you're in for a dogfight. Nobody backs down and it's a pleasure to represent our college."



Helena Korompis, All-American Honorable Mention, is ranked with Valeria Podda as one of the nation's top five doubles pairs.



Undefeated this year, Matias Hatem was named First Team All-American in men's tennis.

GRIZZLIES ARE NATIONAL, REGIONAL CHAMPS IN FIRST SEASON OF ELIGIBILITY



There is a concept at Georgia Gwinnett known as “GGC time,” which refers to the rapid manner in which the college conducts business and achieves planned milestones.

Grizzly Athletics has taken “GGC time” to a new level, bringing home conference/unaffiliated titles and national championships in only its first year of postseason eligibility.

First, the men’s soccer team won the college’s first postseason championship last fall, and logged its first appearance in a national postseason tournament. The year’s signature win came as GGC hosted its first-ever postseason tournament, the 2013 Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.) championship, where the Grizzlies dispatched national #3 Ashford (Iowa) by 3-0 to claim the title.

The team topped out at #9 in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) coaches’ top 25 poll and finished at #18. The program is a stellar 30-7-1 over its first two seasons, with Steve DeCou earning his 150th career victory as a head coach. The women’s soccer team also achieved a top 25 ranking with a highly successful 14-4-1 campaign.

Then came spring semester and the Grizzly trifecta.

WOMEN’S TENNIS

Earning the college’s first #1 national coaches’ ranking in any sport, the women’s tennis team ended the regular season with a 13-3 record, defeating every NAIA team it played. The squad took second place in its conference/unaffiliated tournament, earning a second-seed at the NAIA national championships. Coach Chase Hodges remarked that while the team had lost the battle, “Hopefully, we can win the war.”

Taking their fight to NAIA’s national tournament in Mobile, Ala., the Grizzlies did win the war, and the national title – GGC’s historic first in intercollegiate athletics.

MEN’S TENNIS

Only a few hours later on the same courts, the men’s team repeated the feat, winning the national championship. The team ended the season with an unbeaten 21-0 record and the conference/unaffiliated title, as well. GGC is only the second college in history to win both the men’s and women’s tennis NAIA titles in the same year.

BASEBALL

Meanwhile on the baseball diamond, the Grizzlies won their first postseason title after a rocky start at the A.I.I. tournament outside Boston. That championship earned the team a top seed in the five-team Lawrenceville Bracket of the NAIA Baseball National Championship Opening Round. Again facing elimination after an early loss, the team strung together four straight must-win games to capture the Lawrenceville Bracket and punch their ticket to the program’s first-ever Avista-NAIA Baseball World Series in Lewiston, Idaho. As the tournament’s #6 seed, GGC fought hard but was eliminated among the nation’s final eight teams. Three players became GGC’s first to be drafted by Major League Baseball franchises.

The softball team, while seeing its 39-10-1 season come to a close in the A.I.I. tournament, took the national #1 team to extra innings at one of the nation’s most competitive postseason tournaments. The team received votes in the coaches’ top 25 poll, making GGC 6-for-6 across all sports in its first season of poll eligibility.

The softball team also won the 2014 Buffalo Funds NAIA Champions of Character Softball Team award, out of 200 eligible programs. The Grizzlies earned this prestigious award for dedication to integrity, respect, responsibility, sportsmanship and servant leadership.

This totals three conference and two national titles – all in the Grizzlies’ second year as a program and first year of postseason eligibility. The program finished with a 160-36-2 overall record across six sports, a winning percentage of .808.

“It’s truly been a remarkable year for Grizzly Athletics. We’ve been fortunate to build a program around outstanding coaches and terrific student-athletes, but to experience so much early success has been a thrill. We look forward to competing on the national level for years to come, as the word is already spreading about the GGC Grizzlies.”

– Dr. Darin S. Wilson, director of Athletics

New GGC President Preczewski



Stas Preczewski, PhD

When Charlene Harland lost her shoe as she walked across the stage at GGC's 2014 spring commencement, she calmly pressed on as if nothing had happened, receiving her diploma and posing for a photo with guest speaker Karyn Greer of the 11Alive Morning News. Suddenly, Harland was surprised to see that Dr. Stanley "Stas" Preczewski had retrieved her shoe, and kneeled to slip it onto her foot amid a wave of appreciative, "Aww," from the audience.

Such is the humble, respectful and endearing manner of GGC's new president.

Preczewski's management style is hallmarked by his servant-leader philosophy. He prefers to lead by example and does not hesitate to take advantage of teaching moments to coach faculty, staff or students. Always an educator, helping others develop leadership skills comes naturally to him.

"Stas is team-oriented," said Renée Byrd-Lewis, vice president for Advancement. "He appreciates everyone's

contributions to GGC's success, no matter their role. He inspires enthusiasm for the college, invests in the empowerment of employees and champions student success as the top priority in everything we do. Nothing excites him more than seeing GGC help students achieve their best and sharing their amazing success stories."

Preczewski is hands-on and emphasizes open communications and continuous improvement. He regularly engages with faculty, staff and students at town hall-style meetings and monthly luncheons to discuss college news, as well as hear first-hand what works well and what needs improvement. He follows up on all student and parent concerns and questions, and welcomes all suggestions at president@ggc.edu.

His U.S. Army training and experience in multiple aspects of higher education prepared him well for leading a college. Preczewski served on the faculty of the Naval War College, and as a faculty member for 11 years at The U.S. Military

"That the Board of Regents and the chancellor would grant me this privilege to continue serving Georgia Gwinnett College speaks volumes about the reputation GGC has developed through the selfless efforts of a dedicated staff and faculty and the outstanding students they serve. GGC itself is the result of a community's commitment to an exceptional academic institution that is affordable, accessible and which reflects the wonderful diversity of Gwinnett County. I am excited about our future."

– Stas Preczewski



Stas known for servant leadership

Academy at West Point, where he also served as chief financial officer for Academic Programs, managing millions in funds annually.

As GGC's first vice president for Academic and Student Affairs from 2006 until 2013, Preczewski was involved in most aspects of the college's development. He was responsible for overseeing GGC's process for initial regional accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC), which was achieved in 2009. He also supervised the hiring of over 500 faculty and academic staff. In 2013, he was named interim president of the college.

In 2003-04, he earned an American Council on Education Fellowship and served at Wake Forest University in the Office of the President, later returning there as a private consultant for enrollment management activities. Preczewski also successfully served as interim president of Georgia College & State University for a year.

He even coached intercollegiate crew (rowing) teams at Cornell University and West Point, leaving behind such an impression that his methods have been the subject of, "What would Coach P. do?" Harvard case studies and class exercises.

When discussing leadership with students, faculty or staff, Preczewski often uses his crew teams as examples of teamwork. All crew team members must work together, rowing in synchronization. If one team member falls out of sync,

"Stas is a great leader who goes above and beyond so every student gets the most out of GGC. He stands true to our institution's principles of leadership, scholarship, creativity and service. I am confident that with his guidance, Georgia Gwinnett College's best days lie ahead."

– Sean George, '14

either by not trying hard enough or trying too hard, it negatively affects the entire team's performance.

His belief in teamwork is evident as he prefers to organize committees of campus representatives when policies, procedures or special initiatives must be addressed. GGC faculty, staff and students really do play an important role in the growth and development of the college.

"In my time as Student Government Association vice president and president, I had the pleasure to work with Stas for quite some time," said Sean George, '14. "Stas is a great leader who goes above and beyond so every student gets the most out of GGC. He stands true to our institution's principles of leadership, scholarship, creativity and service. I am confident that with his guidance, Georgia Gwinnett College's best days lie ahead."

Preczewski maintains a laser-focus on ensuring the future success of GGC, building upon its momentum and considerable community support. With every key decision, he considers what is best for the college and its students, both

now and decades into the future.

"There could be no more fitting choice for the second president of Georgia Gwinnett College," said Tommy Hughes, board chair of the GGC Foundation trustees. "Stas understands GGC's unique mission and vision and was instrumental in creating the college from the ground up. Georgia Gwinnett has established itself as a new model for higher education. It is important that GGC's chief executive officer understands and maintains the institution's innovative approach and its commitment to student success."

"Over the past months, Dr. Preczewski has demonstrated to the college, to the community, the board and to me that he is ready and highly qualified to lead Georgia Gwinnett College," said University System of Georgia Chancellor Hank Huckaby. "The transition from interim to permanent president is not just appropriate, it is an excellent decision for the college and its future. We are pleased to give him this well-deserved opportunity for leadership."



For Preczewski's complete bio, visit engage.ggc.edu



Brittany Perry wastes nothing – neither opportunities, networking contacts nor waking hours. And in her mission to achieve her goals, she certainly is not wasting time. Nor is she wasting her talents, skills and knowledge in pursuit of her careers.

Yes, careers – plural. Perry sees no reason to restrict herself to just one. This is an empowered young woman who realizes her potential to make a difference and who feels a deep responsibility to do so. She sees herself as a “global change agent,” with no limits to what she can accomplish.

Things didn’t start out that way, however.

Perry’s family includes medical and law professionals, so she initially pursued medicine. She was nearing completion of a degree at another college when she realized that health care was not for her. She decided to take a year off to reevaluate what she wanted for her future.

Perry transferred to GGC in 2011, ready to own her education and take charge of her success, according to Dr. Jennifer Wunder, director of GGC’s Honors Program.

After deciding on a business major and connecting with faculty mentors like Dr. Doug Johnson, professor of leadership and management, Perry found her stride. Her grades improved, earning a place on either the Dean’s or President’s lists every semester. She served as a School of Business senator in the Student Government Association and was a founding executive board member of the National Society for Leadership and Success.

Determined to get started as soon as possible on her career plans, she buckled down with a challenging schedule and graduated a semester early as the first alumna of the GGC Honors Program.

“When Brittany came into the Honors Program as a charter member, she wanted to know what she could contribute to the program,” said Wunder. “She maximized every opportunity provided her. She is a 21st Century Renaissance woman.”

Perry:



21st Century Renaissance Woman

“Brittany is exactly the kind of student for which GGC was built, and she’s precisely the sort of role model other students need. They already see her as an accomplished business person. She is a first-rate embodiment of our vision and mission and what’s possible when we all work together to make that vision a reality.”

– Dr. Jennifer Wunder, director of Honors Program

Perry attended a board of councilors meeting at the Carter Center, meeting the former U.S president. She also attended Leadercast, the HOPE Global Financial Dignity Summit and several conferences, seminars and virtual events related to financial literacy. Through these events, as well as an Honors Program course focused on global change and leadership, Perry not only met numerous local and national business and civic leaders, she engaged with them in thoughtful discussions that continue today. Her network of contacts rivals that of any corporate CEO.

Through internships at TBS, Perry worked with well-known figures and contributed to post-production activities and promotional strategies for various prime-time television shows. Her experience in the entertainment industry inspired her to develop her own show, focused on topics of financial literacy and community awareness. Her drive, energy and ability to tackle complex issues have caused some to refer to her as “a new Oprah.”

Perry is pursuing a master’s degree in accountancy from Wake Forest University on a scholarship. One of the reasons she selected Wake Forest was its similarity to Georgia Gwinnett’s educational experience – including smaller class sizes, active learning, case-based research and high interaction with deeply engaged professors committed to student success.

Perry plans to obtain her CPA license and work at a major accounting firm. She

also plans to create a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the viability of small businesses by helping their owners develop financial literacy. She wants to help clients create sound business plans and avoid pitfalls related to asset valuation, financing growth, risk management and other business management issues.

Through these initiatives, she hopes to provide business owners with the knowledge needed to succeed, thereby building stronger communities. She wants to particularly focus on helping business owners in underserved groups.

“It is imperative that everyone has a level of financial literacy,” Perry said. “If you go into business, you need to be able to ‘speak business.’ These people need someone in their corner – everyone needs some educational foundation in life. What is knowledge if it is not shared?”

Perry has strong awareness of her own brand and already leverages it to creatively connect her experiences and relationships to ensure that she achieves her goals. She has no doubt she will succeed, and her infectious enthusiasm leaves no doubt for others, as well.



Criminal Justice scholarship established

The Lawrenceville Police Benevolent Fund has established an endowed scholarship for GGC students pursuing bachelor degrees in criminal justice. Representatives of the Lawrenceville Police Department recently presented a gift of \$50,000 to the college. Shown are (back row) Officer Josh Morris, Officer Neil Zellous (middle) and Lieutenant Ryan Morgan; (front row) Sergeant Brad Grove (in suit), Captain Tim Wallis, GGC President Stas Preczewski, Chief Randy Johnson, (row starting behind the car door) Captain Jeff Smith, GGC Professor of criminal justice/criminology Dr. Ron Hunter, Captain Greg Vaughn and Major Paul King.

GLOBAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

enlightens tomorrow's leaders...

While many students enjoyed their 2014 spring break at the beach, 15 students prepared meals for the homeless at the Church of St. Augustine's soup kitchen in Barcelona, Spain, through the Global Civic Engagement Program (GCEP).

The offices of Internationalization and Student Involvement created GCEP to expand service learning to include global experiences and perspectives. It also supports GGC's emphasis on producing globally competent graduates who are prepared to become contributing citizens and future leaders for Georgia, the nation and the world.

"This program enhances the internationalization of Georgia Gwinnett's educational experience through global awareness, social impact and creation of cultural competence. It instills a broader world perspective through global participation and civic engagement," said Dr. Maria Lumpkin, director of Student Involvement and the Student Center.

The program helps students develop appreciation and respect for diverse cultures, analyze the impact of socioeconomic, political and cultural factors on civic engagement and evaluate approaches to working toward the common good in a global society.

In addition to feeding Barcelona's homeless, the students toured an environmental education facility focused on renewable energy, urban development and sustainability. They also toured an organic dairy farm that provides jobs for mentally disabled and challenged adults. In addition to a sociopolitical and economic discussion led by their tour service, the students also visited several key cultural and historical sites.

"This trip put into my hand the key to understanding how I can serve others on an international scale. I learned that I should not limit myself."

– Victoria Thompson, '16





To view a video and a full gallery of images, visit engage.ggc.edu



“We were able to look into the eyes of another person and no matter what barriers existed, language or otherwise, find understanding.”
– Suretha Thacker, '14





Dr. Barry Biddlecomb admits that he can become emotional when watching GGC students make their way across the commencement stage to receive their diplomas.

“I know how hard they worked to earn their degrees. And I know that GGC made a difference in helping them achieve their goals. That would not have been possible for them at many other institutions.”

– Dr. Barry Biddlecomb, dean,
School of Transitional Studies

GGC TRANSFORMING INSTRUCTION AT OTHER USG INSTITUTIONS

A program piloted by the GGC School of Transitional Studies was so successful that it is now used at other University System of Georgia institutions.

The program tested the effectiveness of enrolling students in Student Success pre-college courses while simultaneously enrolling them in college-level courses in the same subject. The Student Success courses provided extra support and instruction that corresponded to assignments in the college-level courses.

The pass rate of these students was about 30 percent higher than those not in the program, and because they took the

college-level course at the same time as the Student Success courses, the students were one semester ahead in their studies.

This is an excellent example of how Georgia Gwinnett is a driving force for change in higher education.



Dr. Deanna Jackson, associate director of Advising Programs, greets a student requiring assistance.

SCHOOL OF TRANSITIONAL STUDIES

SUPPORTS

STUDENT SUCCESS

Georgia Gwinnett was literally built from the ground up for student success, no matter the level of student preparation. GGC's access mission means it enrolls many students who would not be accepted at selective institutions, as they are among the least prepared for college. They may be the first in their families to go to college. They may not have performed well in high school. They might need help mastering core skills.

The School of Transitional Studies (STS) provides tools to ensure students have every opportunity to succeed. As STS dean, Dr. Barry Biddlecomb greets this responsibility with enthusiasm and purpose.

By 2020, more than 60 percent of Georgia jobs will require a certificate or an associate or bachelor degree. At this time, only about 42 percent of the state's young adults are prepared to such a level. To remain competitive, Georgia must not only maintain current graduation levels, but must also produce about 250,000 additional college graduates in upcoming years.

Governor Nathan Deal's Complete College Georgia initiative targets the need to increase the proportion of young adults with post-secondary education. As an access institution, Georgia Gwinnett is positioned to contribute significantly to the state's goals.

"High-performing students will likely always complete college," said Biddlecomb. "Any increase in the number of people with college degrees must come from other students who, historically, might not have attended or completed college. They are the reason our access mission exists."



Davette Harvey, an Academic Enhancement Center tutor, helps a student with her mathematics.

Critical to Complete College Georgia is the rate of student retention and progression toward completing a degree. While multiple Georgia Gwinnett initiatives and practices support Complete College Georgia, every function within STS contributes to the cause.

"Our model helps students build success in their academic, personal and professional lives," Biddlecomb said. "However, all students are held to the same standards, and are expected to be independent learners and responsible for their education and personal growth."

The college commits about \$5 million annually toward STS' services:

- **NEW STUDENT CONNECTIONS** includes GGC's required Bear Essentials new student orientation program, that introduces students to the college.

- **TESTING SERVICES** places students into appropriate courses and provides standardized tests such as CLEP, Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators and others.

- **STUDENT SUCCESS** pre-college courses taught by specially trained instructors prepare students for college-level courses. This includes mathematics, English and reading, as well as English for Academic Purposes for students for whom English is not their primary language.

- **THE ACADEMIC ENHANCEMENT CENTER'S** (AEC) staff of about 50 provide tutoring in the library and Building B. The Tutors Around Campus program takes service to common areas in Building B, Building A and the residence halls.

continued on page 18

STUDENT SUCCESS

continued from page 17



Nancy Ciudad-Simmons, an advisor in the college's new Advising Center, consults with a student.

Tutors in the Classroom assist faculty during classes and Tutoring Online Everywhere is available 24/7. Tutoring is offered to all students.

• Because of a generous \$250,000 gift from Greg and Tammy Shumate (*see related story, page 19*), STS recently opened an **ADVISING CENTER**. The center provides mentoring and advising for students taking Student Success pre-college courses. Of its 679 advisees enrolled for fall 2013, 92.6 percent returned for spring semester.

"GGC's 82.5 percent first-year, fall-to-spring retention rate for all first-year students is remarkable, particularly for an access institution, but these advisees are at high risk for not progressing in their studies," Biddlecomb said. "A 92.6 percent retention rate is tremendous."

Of the Advising Center's total 1,071 advisees for 2013-14, most completed their courses, and many did well. For example, when one student was failing MATH 0099 at mid-term, his advisor coached him on how to communicate with his professor and create a plan to improve his performance. The student not only passed, he earned a B.

The center's Grizzly Renewal Opportunity Workshop (GROW) allowed students who had been

academically suspended after fall to attend spring semester with fewer courses and specific expectations designed to help them progress. Of 50 GROW students, 10 successfully exited the program and another 15 are eligible to continue.

The AEC's staff includes professionals

Every student matters.

with bachelor and master degrees. Some are retired faculty, former teachers or volunteers. The AEC also provides some student peer tutors.

"Some of our tutors are current faculty," Biddlecomb said. "And of course, our faculty are great about tutoring their students when needed."

For students still struggling, but motivated to do better, the college will hire personal tutors. "As long as the student puts forth the effort, we will do whatever we can to help them. Every student matters." Biddlecomb says.

School of Transitional Studies – Report card*

Testing Services	2013	10,120 tests
Academic Enhancement Center	Spring 2014	1,553 students served with 5,298 tutor sessions 84 users served in 409 online sessions
Advising Center	2013-14	679 Student Success advisees for fall '13 92.6% fall '13 advisees retained for spring '14 13 workshops 1,071 students served 2013-14 academic year
Student Success courses	Spring 2012	77.7% passed ENGL 1101 with tutoring 67.4% passed ENGL 1101 without tutoring 62.3% passed MATH 1111 with tutoring 55.4% passed MATH 1111 without tutoring <i>Receiving tutoring increased pass rate by 10-13%</i>
Retention	First semester	84.4% with tutoring 75.2% without tutoring
	First year	75.4% with tutoring 62.9% without tutoring <i>Receiving tutoring increased retention by 10-12%</i>

*Most recent available confirmed data



Tammy Shumate, Stas Preczewski, president, and Greg Shumate

Shumates make Advising Center possible

A significant gift of \$250,000 from Greg and Tammy Shumate enabled Georgia Gwinnett College and its School of Transitional Studies to open a much-needed Advising Center (see related story, page 17). The center served 1,071 students in its first year.

"We wanted to provide support where it would make the greatest impact on student success, which is the hallmark of a GGC education," said Greg Shumate. "Georgia Gwinnett is uniquely dedicated to ensuring that all students are provided with the tools they need to complete their degrees. This not only transforms students' lives but supports Complete College Georgia goals."

The Advising Center serves students who must take special courses to improve basic skills so they can take college-level courses. The center's staff proactively helps advisees to identify and use campus resources, develop and stick to academic improvement plans and communicate with professors. They meet with students individually or in groups and provide in-class workshops.

"We help students reconcile what they think college is about and what is actually expected of them once they're here," said Dr. Karen Jackson, center director. "Our advisors focus on supporting students in developing academic success skills, setting realistic goals and implementing a manageable plan to achieve those goals."

The center's efforts are already paying off. An impressive 92.6 percent of its advisees – the students most at risk for not progressing –

were retained for a second semester of study.

"Thanks to the Shumates, 1,071 students have immediately gained an improved opportunity to complete their degrees," said Renée Byrd-Lewis, vice president for Advancement. "This affects 1,071 careers and families, exponentially extending this gift's impact into the community for generations to come."

When one considers that the Advising Center will do this for thousands more students over the years, the incredible significance of this gift to the Gwinnett area and to the state of Georgia can never be adequately measured, Byrd-Lewis said.

"Investment in GGC ultimately benefits the community through a more highly trained workforce and more engaged citizens," said Greg Shumate. "GGC's innovative model thus enhances our community's vitality and economic strength. Supporting the college is an effective way to leave a legacy that will continue paying dividends for decades."

The Shumates are long-time residents and active leaders in the Gwinnett community. Greg is CEO and managing partner of Brand Mortgage, where Tammy also works in Corporate and Community Development.

"The Shumates' commitment to their community is an inspiration," said Byrd-Lewis. "We appreciate their support of our students, and GGC's mission and vision. People like the Shumates make our community, state and region an even better place to live and work."

Emergency fund provides beacon of hope for GGC students

It is a sad reality that some GGC students face the disheartening prospect of being unable to stay in college because they fall a few dollars short of what they need to pay for tuition and fees. However, with the generous support of The Beacon Foundation Charitable Trust, a one-time emergency grant can keep their college dreams alive.

"The Beacon Foundation seeks to relieve poverty and financial distress, and they understand that these students are on the verge of leaving college for a small but critical financial need," said Lori Buckheister, associate vice president for Development. "Relieving that financial stress allows more students to stay enrolled and continue working on their degree."

The Beacon Foundation provided funding to create a Student Emergency Fund, which assists students with a demonstrated financial need and a tuition/fee shortfall of \$200 or less. Financial Aid works with the GGC Foundation to identify eligible students.

"The Beacon Foundation has contributed \$15,000 to the fund in the last three years," Buckheister said. "Through this critical support, 114 students were able to continue working toward the more promising future that comes with a college education."



For more on the Shumate gift, visit engage.ggc.edu

Marshall Boutwell

A leader in corporate citizenship

Marshall Boutwell's life didn't turn out exactly as planned. He never expected to run a large credit union, let alone one that helps students attend college at GGC.

Raised in a military family, he enlisted in the U.S. Army and held several command and staff positions. He learned all he could about leadership, aware of his responsibility when leading soldiers into combat.

Highly decorated, he earned several medals including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star and Distinguished Flying Cross.

When a reduction in force ended his military career, he had to rethink his future. He earned a degree in trust management from Campbell University in Buies Creek, N.C. His banking career included positions at several

Atlanta-area companies.

In 1994, he became president/CEO of Gwinnett Federal Credit Union, now named Peach State Federal Credit Union (PSFCU). Founded to serve teachers, the organization once operated out of a car trunk filled with boxes of its members' files.

From such humble beginnings, it grew to 5,000 members and \$14 million in assets. Under Boutwell's 20-year leadership, PSFCU expanded to 41,000 members, \$265 million in assets, about 100 employees and 12 branches. Its Lawrenceville headquarters has PSFCU well-prepared for future growth as the credit union continues its pattern of 15 percent annual growth. It is one of the fastest-growing credit unions in the state and in the nation.

PSFCU remains education-centric, serving employees of city and county school systems, governments and more

than 400 other employee groups across its seven county footprint.

"Credit unions are there to help people afford life," Boutwell said. "Unlike banks, we don't have investors/stockholders, we don't pay federal taxes and our board is all-volunteer. Our members are also our owners and they have expectations of service, so we have a social mission. We invest 10 percent of our profits in the community through support of education, schools and the arts."

Boutwell is enthusiastic about PSFCU's commitment to education.

"What teachers do is multi-generational," he said. "It carries on."

When Georgia Gwinnett College was established, it became part of PSFCU's commitment to education. PSFCU funds two scholarships for education majors and committed \$50,000 to the Daniel J. Kaufman Scholarship Fund.

To Boutwell, corporate citizenship is a duty, and education the most effective way to support the community.

"Companies owe it to themselves and to the community to do everything they can to support education," he said. "We get a lot more than we receive."

In addition to leading an organization committed to its corporate citizenship, Boutwell himself serves the community through board positions for several industry-related groups, Aurora Theatre and the Lawrenceville Planning Commission. He also is active in Rotary.

"I know that I have an impact on people and that I have a tendency to end up in leadership positions," said Boutwell. "I spent 25 years training for this job and didn't know it. Sometimes I have to pinch myself because it feels like I'm on vacation. I love what I do."



Go to engage.ggc.edu for the full story



"Companies owe it to themselves and to the community to do everything they can to support education."

– Boutwell



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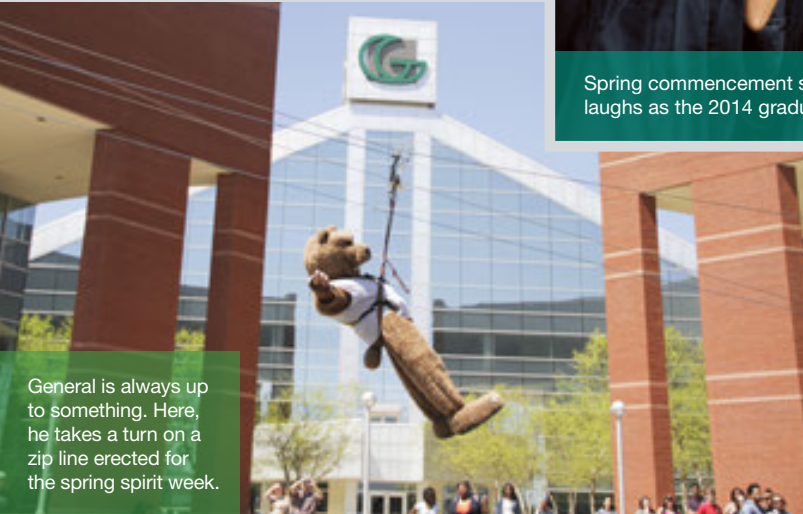
The Gallery



Graduating seniors show off their new GGC alumni t-shirts at the spring semester Senior Send Off event.



Spring commencement speaker Karyn Greer, anchor of the 11Alive Morning News, laughs as the 2014 graduates surrounding her do the Grizzly Growl.



General is always up to something. Here, he takes a turn on a zip line erected for the spring spirit week.



The GGC student chapter of the Association for Information Technology Professionals co-hosted the organization's national convention in Atlanta. They also presented a baseball-themed ice-breaker game for conference attendees.



Second Lieutenant Dennis Crutcher, GGC's first ROTC cadet to be commissioned as an officer, is congratulated after taking the U.S. Army oath of office at the 2014 spring commencement ceremony.



At left: Former Georgia Governor Roy Barnes pauses for a portrait with members of GGC's Honors Program. Barnes had a private luncheon with the group before presenting a special lecture to the campus community.



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