

SPRING 2011

THE MAGAZINE OF GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE

the chronicle





CREATING NEW PATHWAYS TO STUDENT SUCCESS

Georgia Perimeter College strives to meet the needs of our students and our communities head-on.

That's why we are pleased that the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia recently voted unanimously to support enhancing our mission to include selected baccalaureate degrees.

As a start, the board approved two bachelor's programs: a Bachelor of Arts in Sign Language Interpreting and a Bachelor of Science in Health Informatics. GPC now will seek approval of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, our accrediting organization.

This is exciting news for our future students. These changes also are important to the communities we serve.

GPC's Sign Language Interpreting program is the largest in the state and was the second program in the country to receive national accreditation. One year ago, GPC's program won the nation's top honor in that field—The Sorenson Award. The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, which certifies interpreters at the national level, has recognized the need for interpreters to be educated at the baccalaureate level. As such, with our new BA degree, we soon will begin preparing our students to meet these new national standards.

Health Informatics educates students in the use of computer technologies to store, share, transmit and analyze clinical knowledge and health-care data. GPC's newly approved BS degree will fill a growing need in Georgia's workforce as health industries look for specialists to manage confidential data.

The Georgia Perimeter faculty, staff and administrators stand ready to take our college to the next level. In this issue of The Chronicle, you will read about the professional achievements of our faculty and the impact they have on our students. You can catch up with GPC alumni and learn about current students who are earning national and state accolades. You can discover the impact of GPC's health sciences programs and the interesting ways faculty and staff spend their time away from campus.

I hope you enjoy this glimpse into Georgia Perimeter College and the pathways to success that we are providing for our students.

Dr. Anthony S. Tricoli
President, Georgia Perimeter College

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The staff of The Chronicle would like to hear from you. We are seeking input on the types of information and articles you enjoy reading and how you prefer to receive your news. Please go to www.gpc.edu/polling_station/vote and complete our short survey. We value your opinions.

On The Cover:

Three students from GPC, from left, Joanne Butler, Natalee Dukes and Benson Nsunwara, were named to the 2011 Phi Theta Kappa All-Georgia Academic Team. Dukes also received a Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation scholarship. See story on page 22. Photo by Stephanie Nice.

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HEALTH CARE

You can find them in our hospitals, clinics, doctors' and dentists' offices. They even share their expertise on other continents. Nearby and abroad, the skills of GPC alumni, students and faculty are making a difference in the health-care industry.



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FACES OF GPC

We may know them as engaging professors or hardworking custodians. But there are other—sometimes surprising—sides to the men and women who keep Georgia Perimeter College humming along.



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UNCOMMON EXCELLENCE

Four GPC students with four distinct stories recently garnered state and national notice. Though their backgrounds vary, they share a strong dedication to academic performance and community service.



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SOUTHERN ACADEMY FOR LITERARY ARTS HITS THE GROUND RUNNING

Promising a future filled with distinguished visiting authors and programs that fully engage faculty, staff, students and the community, the new Southern Academy for Literary Arts and Scholarly Research makes its debut at Georgia Perimeter College.

“It is the mission of the Southern Academy to provide leadership and support for GPC’s many programs promoting excellence in literature, creative and scholarly writing, and service learning through the literary arts,” says Liam Madden, the Southern Academy’s distinguished chair. Programs include GPC’s Visiting Writers Series; GPC Reads, a college-wide book club; and GPC Writes, which honors GPC authors.

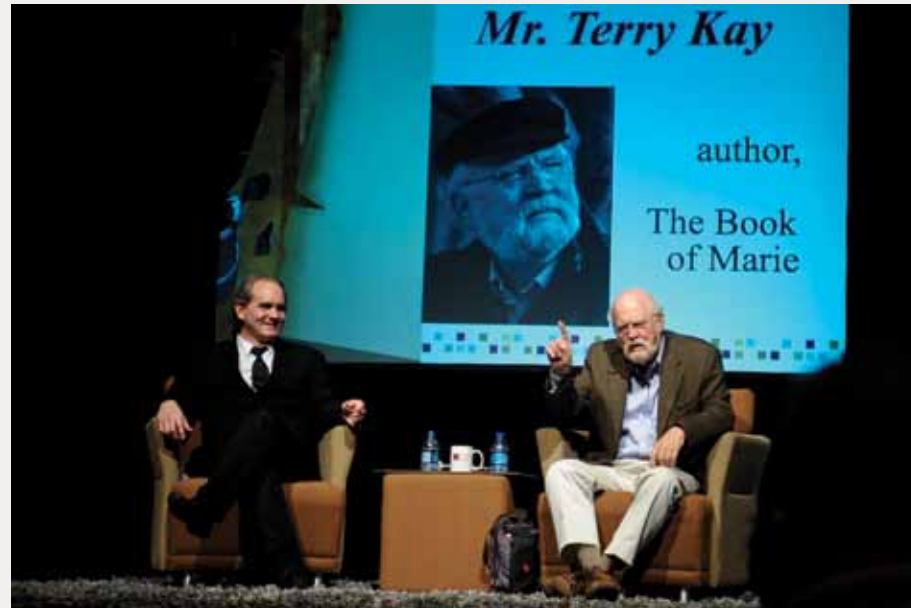
The academy’s staff already has hit the ground running with its first event. The center sponsored visits by award-winning author Terry Kay for GPC Reads and the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) conference. Kay discussed his novel, “The Book of Marie.”

Also, the academy sponsored an appearance by former GPC President Marvin Cole at the TYCA conference. Cole reprised his portrayal of author Mark Twain for the event.

In the fall, Sheri Reynolds, author of the Oprah Winfrey book selection, “The Rapture of Caanan,” will visit as the GPC Reads featured speaker. Events will include college-wide discussions of her latest novel, “The Sweet In-Between,” and master classes with faculty and students.

There is more to come. The modern South has become very diverse, and the Southern Academy looks forward to promoting literary programs featuring regional, national and global writers, Madden says.

“The Southern Academy will host



Terry Kay, right, who visited the college for its spring GPC Reads event, appears on stage with Southern Academy chair Liam Madden.

an assortment of visiting writers who will engage students, faculty and staff,” Madden says. “It will increase the number of fellowships offered to faculty each year, and celebrate all GPC faculty who publish or edit a book. The Southern Academy will expand the role of GPC students as committee members and editors. And it will host its own conference emphasizing connections between creative and scholarly writing.”

The Southern Academy also serves as home base for GPC’s award-winning literary journal, The Chattahoochee Review, and other GPC publications, such as Creative License, The Polishing Cloth, Copia and the online journal of the arts, Sinescope.

Under the Southern Academy for Literary Arts and Scholarly Research, The Chattahoochee Review returns to its former leadership structure with all editorial positions filled by GPC faculty and students.

Anna Schachner is the new senior editor of The Chattahoochee Review, while Lydia Ship is fulfilling the role of managing editor. Andy Rogers is fiction editor, Louise McKinney is nonfiction editor and Michael Diebert is poetry editor. Two contributing editors are Dr. Rosemary Cox and Tim Tarkington, both of whom worked on The Chattahoochee Review with its founding editor, Lamar York.

The second issue under Schachner’s stewardship will focus on Southern humor. “The Chattahoochee Review will not only embrace its Southern roots, but also strive to feature the best work from around the country and world, translation included,” Schachner says. “We are really interested in building a strong community of readers and writers, inside and outside of GPC, and are happy to be a part of the Southern Academy.”

According to Madden, the academy is moving quickly to plan a diverse array of literary programs for 2011-2012.



GPC students soon will be able to earn a bachelor’s degree in Sign Language Interpreting.

GEORGIA PERIMETER TO OFFER TWO BACHELOR’S DEGREE PROGRAMS

In an effort to meet the evolving needs of Georgia’s workforce and economy, Georgia Perimeter College is preparing to offer its first two bachelor’s programs.

At its May meeting, the University System of Georgia’s Board of Regents granted approval for the college to offer a Bachelor of Arts in Sign Language Interpreting and a Bachelor of Science in Health Informatics. The sign language interpreting degree will allow students to meet an upcoming baccalaureate requirement by the field’s national professional organization and certifying body. The health informatics degree will prepare graduates to answer what the U.S. Bureau of Statistics projects to be a growing need in the management of patient information systems.

GPC’s president, Dr. Anthony Tricoli, emphasizes that Georgia Perimeter College will continue its traditional mission as an access institution. “We shall remain the state’s largest access institution, providing an open door to educational opportunity for students who can benefit from a GPC experience,” Tricoli says.

The start dates for the new programs have not been set yet, as they depend on review and approval from the relevant accrediting organizations.

GPC’s Sign Language Interpreting program is the largest in the state. The new degree offering will give students more time to further enhance their skills, says Damita Boyd, program coordinator. The new bachelor’s degree program at GPC also will ensure that program graduates will be eligible for certification, which will require a bachelor’s degree beginning in July 2012.

Health Informatics is the use of computer technologies in health care to store, share, transmit and analyze clinical knowledge and data.

q & a

SEAN BRUMFIELD



Sean Brumfield

Sean Brumfield is the new executive director of Georgia Perimeter College’s Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement & Service Learning. Here he outlines some of the center’s objectives as it moves into its next phase at GPC.

Q: What is your main goal for the center?

A: To create meaningful service-learning opportunities for GPC students.

Q: The center now has two service-learning coordinators. Who are they, and what are their roles?

A: Kevin Schwemmin (from Michigan State University) and Mary Elizabeth Tyler (from Berry College) are both experienced in working with community engagement. They are helping students find service-learning placements, assisting faculty in the development of service-learning opportunities and deepening relationships with community partners.

Q: Can you talk about any new community partnerships?

A: One of the most exciting partnerships is with Stone Mountain Park, where our students are “mapping” the lake and shore, conducting water quality tests, rebuilding trails and creating a flora identification guide.

Photo by Louise Fawcett



Making connections: Students from throughout the state came to Georgia Perimeter College Feb. 5 to explore STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) interests and career opportunities. Pictured are GPC students Ashton Cuttino, left, and Jonathan Young, participating in a science experiment with electrical circuits.

THREE PROFESSORS CITED NATIONALLY FOR TEACHING EXCELLENCE

Throughout her career, Georgia Perimeter College nursing professor Deborah Huntley has always been willing to learn new things—from her students, colleagues and peers at professional conferences. The payoff is successful students.

Huntley says effective teaching means looking at students as individuals. “Every flower does not bloom in the garden at the same time,” she says. “But in the end they all blossom.”

Huntley is one of three GPC professors who have been named winners of the 2011 NISOD Teaching Excellence Award from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development. The others are humanities instructors Kari Miller, who teaches online, and Elizabeth

Thornton, who teaches at Clarkston Campus.

Miller is a testament that online classes educate students just as effectively as traditional face-to-face classes.

“There’s a great misconception that online classes are less personal,” she says. “But I think they are far more individualized and interactive. It’s also my experience that online students are far more likely to be open and frank through writing. I truly believe that I know my online students better than I ever knew my face-to-face students.”

Thornton says the most interesting classroom experiences for her are the



Deborah Huntley



Kari Miller



Elizabeth Thornton

ones in which she is almost superfluous to the lesson, activity or discussion.

“By posing the question or framing the activity, I function merely as the catalyst and facilitator,” she says.

“To be recognized for my part in this process is a great honor,” she adds. “I want to be in the classroom. I am interested in what my students have to say and enjoy being a part of their process of discovery.”

GPC PRESIDENT CHOSEN FOR NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ROLE



Dr. Anthony Tricoli, Georgia Perimeter College’s president, has been tapped for membership in the Presidents’ Trust.

The goal: to make student learning more meaningful and relevant in today’s society.

To achieve that goal, Georgia Perimeter College President Dr. Anthony Tricoli has long championed varied learning opportunities for GPC students. Now he will have the opportunity to play a national role in this arena as a member of the Presidents’ Trust, a select group of college presidents advocating that approach nationwide.

The Presidents’ Trust is a leadership group of the national Liberal Education and America’s Promise initiative, also known as LEAP. The Association of American Colleges & Universities launched LEAP in 2005 and formed the Presidents’ Trust in 2008 to communicate the value of an education that helps students develop skills needed in work, life and citizenship.

“Business and civic leaders tell us that

college graduates need more than a deep knowledge in a specific field,” Tricoli says. “They need problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. They need communication skills and a strong sense of ethics. They need to know how classroom learning applies to real-world settings. Georgia Perimeter College’s goals share these objectives.”

LEAP defines a liberal education as an approach to learning that prepares students to deal with complexity, diversity and change. It provides students with broad knowledge of the world (science, culture and society), as well as in-depth study in a specific area of interest. It helps students develop social responsibility plus intellectual and practical skills. The phrase “liberal education” differs from “liberal arts,” which refers to specific disciplines, such as the humanities, social sciences and sciences.



Georgia Perimeter College President Dr. Anthony Tricoli and Syracuse University Vice President Donald Saleh celebrate the new transfer agreement between the two institutions.

GPC SIGNS TRANSFER AGREEMENTS WITH SYRACUSE, WALDEN, GAINESVILLE

Georgia Perimeter College’s number of Transfer Admission Guarantees now tops 40.

The TAG agreements allow Georgia Perimeter students to transfer seamlessly to select four-year colleges and universities, in-state and out-of-state, public and private. While requirements differ from program to program, all students complete their core courses at GPC.

The latest signed agreements are TAGs with Syracuse University in New York and Walden University, headquartered in Minnesota, and an articulation agreement with Gainesville State College specifically for Sign Language Interpreting majors.

“The partnership that Syracuse and Georgia Perimeter have established offers a tremendous opportunity to students looking for a diverse institution of higher education,” says Syracuse Chancellor Dr. Nancy Cantor. “Through partnerships such as this one, our students reap the benefits of a world-class education.”

Walden University is a private, accredited online university serving 42,500 students.

Students participating in the Gainesville program would earn an associate degree from Georgia Perimeter in Sign Language Interpreting and then transfer to Gainesville to study for a bachelor’s degree in Human Services. That major at Gainesville focuses on improving or maintaining the physical and mental health of individuals and groups and prepares students for careers in government, business and non-profit organizations.

Other popular TAG choices for GPC students include Georgia State, Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia. Visit www.gpc.edu/tag for more information on GPC’s transfer and articulation agreements.

get to know

ALAN JACKSON



Dr. Alan Jackson

Job: Vice President for Academic Affairs

Educational and work background: Three degrees in English: bachelor’s from University of Southern Indiana, master’s from University of Dayton and doctorate from University of Tennessee. I have been at Georgia Perimeter for 19 years, working as an English professor, dean and now vice president.

Favorite thing about working at GPC: The people—students, staff and faculty—who I have met along the way.

Favorite childhood memory: Spending time with my grandfather on his farm—fishing, picking pawpaws and finding sassafras roots to make tea.

Leisure activities: I like to watch sports. And I will watch any zombie movie, even though most are terrible, which is part of the appeal.

Who is your hero? I cannot say I have a hero. If one studies classical literature—and everyone should—one learns that a hero is a flawed human who does something remarkable and brave. It is the act, not the person, that is admirable.



Learning proper business etiquette: Why do I have so many forks? Where does my napkin go after I’ve finished my meal? These and other questions were answered during a business dinner etiquette class taught by GPC business professor Debi Moon. More than 50 students, dressed in business attire, participated in the full-course dinner sponsored by the SGA Lyceum Committee.

Making a difference in health care

GPC alumni, students and faculty share their care and expertise with the community and the world.

BY REBECCA RAKOCZY AND ROGER BARNES



Dr. Diane White, dean of GPC's health sciences, oversees the college's programs.

The young mom was distraught. Her toddler was vomiting and seriously ill. As Dietrice King and her husband raced to the Children's Healthcare of Atlanta emergency department with their son, they didn't know what to expect. But King's encounter with two nurses at the hospital not only calmed her fears; it inspired her to seek a new career.

The nurses who comforted King and her child were graduates of Georgia Perimeter College's nursing program. Their compassion and clinical knowledge so impressed King that she decided to change careers. The nuclear analyst became a nurse.

"After they calmed me down, I asked them where they went to school, and they said they were graduates of the nursing program at GPC. I thought, 'if I could do anything to help others the way they helped us, I would go to nursing school,'" recalls King.

King graduated from GPC's nursing program in December 2010, just a few years after that episode. She knows, on a uniquely personal level, the impact that the skill and professionalism of GPC health science graduates wields.

She is not alone in her impressions.

Since the nursing program began in 1967, more than 3,400 students have graduated and moved on to work in the health-care community, in Georgia and around the world. In May, more than 120 new GPC nursing graduates were poised to enter the workforce.

Nursing is not the only way GPC answers the public's health-care needs. The college has built an impressive dental hygiene program and a radiologic technology program.

The college also offers four health sciences associate degrees with concentrations in health information administration, medical technology, radiological sciences and respiratory therapy. These programs of study fulfill the first two years of requirements for a four-year Allied Health degree that can be completed at Georgia Health Sciences University, formerly the Medical College of Georgia.

Recently, the Board of Regents voted to support GPC in establishing a bachelor's degree in health informatics to meet community needs.

GPC's emphasis on a rigorous curriculum, clinical training and community service provides a solid preparation for its health science graduates.

The impact is noticeable. GPC's dental hygiene graduates can be found in dental offices across the state. And in May, the first graduates of the college's radiologic tech program, a partnership between GPC and DeKalb Medical School of Radiologic Technology, moved out of the classroom and into a highly valued profession.

In metro Atlanta, nursing graduates of Georgia Perimeter and its predecessor, DeKalb College, are employed at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, DeKalb Medical, Gwinnett Medical Center, Grady Health System, Emory Healthcare, Atlanta Medical Center, Eastside Medical Center, Newton Medical Center, Northside Hospital, Rockdale Medical Center, North Fulton Regional Hospital, Piedmont Hospital and Emory Johns Creek Hospital, among other locations.

Ask Jan Gannon about GPC nurses, and the DeKalb Medical chief nursing officer will deliver a litany of reasons why she regularly hires the



college's nursing grads.

"We like to hire Georgia Perimeter nurses," Gannon says. "We look for empathy, great skills and a nurse who is dedicated to the bedside. Recently we hired 45 nurses, and 50 percent were graduates of Georgia Perimeter."

Gannon says the great relationship that the 600-bed medical health system has with GPC's faculty has helped foster DeKalb Medical's hiring practices. "We have a familiarity with the instructors," she says.

"Georgia Perimeter understands the population we serve and the highly diverse and multicultural community we live in," Gannon says. "Plus, GPC graduates are empathetic and have great skills—and a high passage rate on the (nursing) boards. They are very well prepared for the population we are going to take care of. You'll find GPC nursing program graduates in our ICU [intensive care unit], in mother-baby, in labor and delivery and behavioral health. They are well represented across the continuum of patient care services," she says.

Elaine Smith feels the same. The clinical nurse specialist works with GPC nursing students and graduates at Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth.

"GPC graduates have a sense of confidence that I don't always see in other schools' (nursing graduates). They seem to have a shorter learning curve."

Janet George, a clinical manager in a 31-bed medical unit of GMC-Duluth, echoes Smith's sentiments, adding that it's the close collaboration with Georgia Perimeter nursing faculty member Rosemary Robertson that helps them find the best

nurses for the job.

The positive impressions GPC nurses are making are not only found locally. The college's graduates are making their mark around the world.

When Ginny Lipke graduated from the DeKalb College nursing program in 1995, the forerunner of GPC's program, she had no idea what adventures awaited her. Her first job as a nurse was doing clinical trials with AIDS and HIV-positive patients at the Grady AIDS clinic on Ponce de Leon Avenue.

These days, as an infection control practitioner with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Lipke spends more than a day on a plane to get to her destinations in Africa. When she arrives in Uganda, Zambia, Ghana or South Africa, she dodges animal carts instead of cars to reach clinics in remote villages, where she works to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

"The villages where I work are very rural and poor, with no access to water unless it's trucked in, and hygiene is rudimentary—yet they get it done. It's amazing how resourceful some people are, and it's a testament to good nursing that they try," she says of her African nurse colleagues.

Lipke often speaks to the World Health Organization about her experiences in the field. She now has her baccalaureate in nursing and master's in health care administration, but credits the excellent instruction she received at GPC with motivating her to succeed in her career. And, when she is not overseas, Lipke helps recruit other GPC nursing alumni to the college's



(Top, left) Ginny Lipke travels the world as an infection control practitioner for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (Top, right) Three GPC dental hygiene alumni, from left, Kelly Meyer, Sharon Price and Erin McMahon, work for Dr. Josh Levenson at Imaging Dental in Suwanee. (Above) Cindy Couture discusses research protocols with her nursing colleague, Norah Keeley, at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.



(Top) GPC nursing professor Rosemary Robertson, far left, discusses clinical check-off procedures with nursing students: from left, Michelle Jarrett, Kate Thomas, Sam Reyes and Tuyen Tran. Thomas and Jarrett also serve as nurse externs at Gwinnett Medical Center-Duluth. (Above) Debra Davis, GPC Dental Hygiene department chair, speaks to dental hygiene alumni.

Nursing Alumni Association, of which she is president.

Like Lipke, many of GPC's nursing graduates appreciate the program's challenging curriculum—even after they have worked for years in a hospital environment.

For more than 25 years, Cindy Couture was a licensed practical nurse at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, working as a bone marrow transplant clinical researcher in the hematology/oncology unit of the hospital. After her sons were in college, she returned to school and recently received her associate degree in nursing at GPC. Even with her experience in health care, Couture says she was challenged by GPC's program.

"I was very well prepared for the NCLEX test (the nursing boards). The program is very demanding—they let you know up front, that if you don't get the grades, you're out."

Couture continues to build her career and has received accolades for her work. She recently was honored with a continuing education award from the Aflac Cancer Center and Blood Disorders Service of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. Couture is now working toward her bachelor's degree in nursing.

The impact of Georgia Perimeter College's nursing program is reflected in a recent American Association of Community Colleges report, which was based on federal data from the 2008 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses.

The report cites that more registered nurses across the nation received their initial degrees from community colleges than from four-year bachelor's degree nursing

programs. Nursing students can earn their degree from a community college at less than a fourth of the cost students pay at a four-year institution, and community colleges produce more registered nurses for rural areas and for underserved ethnic and minority populations, the report says.

Registered nurses educated at community colleges have similar pass rates on national licensing exams as their four-year counterparts, the report says (GPC's ranges from 97 to 100 percent), and they are an investment in the local economy because more of them remain in the state where they were educated. The report also points out that community colleges are increasingly creating pathways for students to earn higher degrees.

While GPC's associate-degree nursing graduates are in high demand, Dr. Diane White, GPC's dean of health sciences, is looking ahead and preparing nurses for the next phase of their education—their Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

White recently served on the planning committee for the first Georgia Nursing Summit, which brought together key health-care stakeholders from nursing, public health, clinical services, education, government, business and patient advocacy groups. These leaders gathered to discuss the implications of the "Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health" report from the Institute of Medicine and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Summit representatives will determine if Georgia health-care leaders should implement the report's



(Above) As part of their educational experience, GPC dental hygiene students, from left, Parul Doshi, Cathy Kim, Holly Litt and Sana Aziz, provide free dental hygiene care to underserved populations at the Ben Massell Dental Clinic in Atlanta.

recommendations statewide.

White is part of the leadership committee considering the recommendations of the report, which calls for an 80 percent increase in the number of U.S. nurses with baccalaureate degrees by 2020. Those recommendations will affect nursing education at Georgia Perimeter, as more hospitals demand baccalaureate-prepared nurses. GPC is looking into the possibility of offering a way for its associate-degree nurses to get a bachelor's at the college.

"We would like to offer a 'BSN (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) Completion' program here at GPC," White says. No official proposal has been submitted yet, she says, but it is clear such a program will be needed in GPC's future.

"Diane is fabulous, working with us to create a bachelor (nursing) bridge program for their RNs," says Susan Grant, chief nursing officer of Emory University Hospital. "GPC is an ideal partner—it's easily accessible for RNs who will be seeking their bachelor's degree, and it's affordable."

"Emory has worked with GPC for a while," notes Grant. While the hospital is now hiring only baccalaureate-prepared nurses, its experience with GPC has forged a long-lasting partnership.

A rigorous curriculum is not the only trademark of GPC health science programs. Students also serve the community as part of their studies. Nursing and dental hygiene students volunteer in schools and health clinics, providing health screenings and tests.

The dental hygiene program requires each student to perform community service prior to graduation.

Students visit elementary schools and travel into the community to promote good dental hygiene through education, screenings and referrals.

That's experience that GPC dental hygiene graduate Sharon Price uses frequently in her job as a hygienist for Imagix Dental in Suwanee. Price visits schools in her community and talks to youngsters about good oral hygiene.

"A hygienist is someone who educates, motivates and communicates. Dental hygiene is about people skills and hand techniques, and these are things that are important," the 2009 graduate says.

"Community service helps student dental hygienists translate what they learn in the classroom into good service for the general population," says Pamela Cushenan, GPC dental hygiene instructor. "If I can help to light a spark for community service in our students, they have the capacity to do this for the rest of their careers."

Georgia Perimeter College's dental hygiene program began in 1975 with roughly 16 students. Debra Davis, department chair, estimates that the program has graduated more than 1,000 dental hygienists over its 36-year history. It has grown each year, and in 2011, has 28 sophomores and 26 freshmen training and studying.

The students also work in the college's Dental Hygiene Clinic on GPC's Dunwoody Campus. This combination of service, education and training has a huge payoff in the workforce and community.

Manoj Maggan, a dentist at the Center for TMJ Therapy in Alpharetta, has hired GPC dental hygienists. "The clinical faculty at GPC has enabled me to see the high standards and requirements these future hygienists have to go through, and because of this, I feel that a GPC dental hygiene graduate is thoroughly prepared to meet the various challenges found in treating and educating patients about oral health on a daily basis."

Others agree.

"The hygienists we have had from GPC have added greatly to our practice, both in clinical skill and in their communication abilities," said Dr. Jeffrey Priluck of Dentistry with a Difference in Dunwoody.

"I am certain many dentists in this community have in their offices graduates of GPC," Priluck said. "They may take for granted how well trained these people are, but we should be very thankful to have such a fine teaching facility in our community." ❀

PERSONALITIES

JON JASPAN PRIME TIMER EXERCISES MIND AND BODY

by Roger Barnes

Being energetic and productive has been a way of life for Jon Jaspas, so it's little wonder that the 73-year-old keeps his mind stimulated by taking courses at Georgia Perimeter College.

Returning to college yields substantial benefits, says Jaspas who graduated from Yale in 1958. "With the same mindset I do push-ups and head stands for my body, I'm taking college courses to strengthen my mind. It's trite but true. You get out of something what you put into it."

Jaspas is enrolled in GPC's Prime Timers program, which allows Georgia residents older than 62 to take college courses with tuition fees waived.

Jaspas started work early and hasn't stopped. At the age of 9, he manned the cash register in his father's pharmacy. By the time he retired in 2004, he'd had four careers: sales for a family business; a 25-year sales and marketing career with IBM; translating epidemiology into Russian for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention; and, after teaching himself to program computers, developing software for 10 years. He now occasionally does volunteer database development.

After retirement, Jaspas became active in local hiking groups. In August 2009, he hiked Machu Picchu in Peru. Last September, he hiked Mount Washington in New Hampshire.

He also took up ballroom dancing, white-water kayaking and rock climbing, and he mentors a high school sophomore.

Jaspas deliberately stays physically active. He sprints eight floors in an office building, or climbs 50 floors carrying free-weights—usually five times per week. This is in addition to his "morning exercises," which include a headstand.

"Those exercises energize me," he says. "When I don't do them, I notice a difference. I also hike 5.5 miles at Kennesaw Mountain on weekends, with free weights. Sometimes I am asked if I am in training. I say yes—for old age. I want to be in good shape when I get there."

Jaspas has two sons, one who graduated from Georgia Tech and Cornell with a doctorate in electrical engineering and works with lasers and cryptography, the other an MIT computer engineering graduate who is the senior software engineer for a web development company.

"Of my successes, my two sons are what I am most proud of," he says.

Jaspas said he enrolled in Georgia Perimeter College's Prime Timers program because someone special in his life decided to go back to college.

"I chose to enroll as her study buddy," Jaspas says. "We took Ancient World History last semester and both got A's. This semester, it's Statistics; then History of Art. There's no reason to quit. Next, I plan to study Chinese. Why not?"

Samuel Kwakye, Jaspas's statistics professor at GPC, says he knew he would have an enthusiastic and hard-working student when he received an e-mail from Jaspas more than a month before his class was to start, asking for input so he could get a head start on the material.

"Jon's active learning, good work habits and good quantitative skills make me proud of non-traditional students," Kwakye says.

Jaspas says he is "happy to share my 'lessons learned' as a senior with other GPCers. I believe it is critically important to stay both physically and mentally active. It doesn't matter what you do. It's good to experiment. Do things that help others. And keep smiling!" ❀



Chris Baker



Marilyn Burnett



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Susan Eppley



Tim Fleming



Zaire Fletcher



Stacy Franklin



Kitty Gold



Scott Hardy



Linda Karr



Rahim Mawji



Mike Sullivan

2011-2012 GPC ALUMNI BOARD MEMBERS

The Georgia Perimeter College Alumni Association Board of Directors is under new leadership for 2011. The new board, which currently comprises 14 members, is responsible for the direction

and planning of GPC's alumni programming.

"Simply stated, it's my turn to give back to an institution that has given me so much," says board member Stacy Franklin, '01, who joined the

board in 2010.

Board officers will be elected later this year.

Please visit www.gpc.edu/Alumni to learn more about the GPC Alumni Board members.

Alumni Association plans full calendar of events

For times, ticket information and additional details, please visit www.gpc.edu/Alumni.

July 20

Sign Language Interpreting Alumni Luncheon

Reconnect with alums and faculty members during the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Conference. Conference attendance is not required. Luncheon is noon to 2 p.m. at Ray's in the City, 240 Peachtree St., Atlanta. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased online before July 9 at www.giving.gpc.edu/SLIPI

Aug. 11

Alumni Enrichment Series: Personal Financial Management
Dunwoody Campus

Get expert tips on managing your personal finances in this inaugural session of the

Alumni Enrichment Series. Tickets are \$12 for one session or \$30 for all three, and lunch will be provided.

Sept. 7

Alumni Enrichment Series: How to Network
Dunwoody Campus

Learn how to use your people skills to advance your career in the second session of the Alumni Enrichment Series. Tickets are \$12 for one session or \$30 for all three, and lunch will be provided.

Sept. 17

GPC Night at Turner Field

Join the GPC family as we cheer on the Braves. Event tickets are \$37 and include a pre-game dinner at the Golden Moon Casino Patio and game admission.

Oct. 2

Third Annual Baseball Alumni Reunion
Newton Campus

Former baseball players and coaches are invited to join GPC's current team for lunch and a scrimmage game.

Oct. 4

Alumni Enrichment Series
Dunwoody Campus

Mark your calendar for the third session of the Alumni Enrichment Series. Topic will be announced this summer. Tickets are \$12 for one session or \$30 for all three, and lunch will be provided.

Nov. 7-12

Homecoming
Various Locations

This year's alumni-focused Homecoming activities will include a DeKalb College first graduating class reunion, a theatre alumni reunion and Alumni College. Please check www.gpc.edu/Alumni for details in the coming months.



GPC's Office of Alumni Relations staff members, front to rear, Collins Foster, Liani Swingle and Jenn Mason, scrape paint off windows at the Knowledge is Power Project: Renaissance High School in New Orleans' Ninth Ward.

ALUMNI STAFF ROLL UP SLEEVES IN NEW ORLEANS' NINTH WARD

Volunteers couldn't help but notice the large sign above the driver of the school bus in which they rode: NO WEAPONS. As the bus wound through New Orleans' infamous Ninth Ward, the scene that unfolded outside was one of despair—even six years after Hurricane Katrina decimated the neighborhood.

Once colorful shotgun houses sat boarded up and rotting, shelters for squatters and illicit activity. The streets seemed eerily quiet, deserted.

But the bus was headed for a place dedicated to making a difference in a neighborhood that needs a little hope—Knowledge is Power Project: Renaissance High School. The school, opened in 2010, seeks to empower its students to become first-generation college students. More than 7,000 volunteer hours went into preparing the school for its opening day last fall, but more work is needed.

When the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, an association for educational advancement professionals, decided to hold its district conference in New Orleans in February, more than 100 members volunteered to roll up their sleeves to paint the school. Members of GPC's Office of Alumni Relations—Collins Foster, Liani Swingle and Jenn Mason—were part of that effort.

"As we were working, I was thinking about my daughter's classroom and how grateful I am that she has a clean, safe and stimulating learning environment in which she has thrived. I also was thinking how unfortunate it is that not every child has access to a classroom like hers," Foster, director of Alumni Relations, says.



ALUMNI MEMBERSHIP: YOUR PASSPORT TO POSSIBILITIES

Get ready to go places this year with the Georgia Perimeter College Alumni Association. The association launched its 2011 membership campaign in March with a theme of Your Passport to Possibilities. Here, Alumni staff explain the campaign.

Q: Why was Your Passport to Possibilities chosen as this year's theme?

A: DeKalb College and GPC alumni consistently tell us that their experience at the college provides them with opportunities they didn't realize they had. The Alumni Association wants to continue to create those kinds of possibilities for our former students and to allow alumni to open doors for current students.

Q: What kinds of new possibilities will be available to alumni in 2011?

A: This year, our alumni may participate in new events such as Alumni College during Homecoming week and the Alumni Enrichment Series in the fall. Former students who are interested in taking on a leadership role can consider joining one of the Alumni Association's committees to help plan events, increase membership or develop scholarships. We've launched new interactive features on our website to give alums the ability to connect with the association and with each other. And members of the Alumni Association will receive a brand new benefits package this year.

Q: What benefits do members of the Alumni Association receive?

A: In addition to knowing they are making a difference at their alma mater, this year's Alumni Association members will receive a gift card at Fleming's Prime Steakhouse, a free coffee at Panera, discounts at Joseph A. Bank and the GPC bookstore and more. We're always adding new partners, so visit www.gpc.edu/Alumni for the latest updates.



A winning combination—Shakespeare and Legos:

Brandon Bragg and Heather Cook won the 2011 Alumni Sweethearts contest with their unique YouTube video using Legos to depict how they met at Georgia Perimeter College. Cook's father, Todd Cook, is an architect for the college, and the two met in his office. Bragg and Cook are engaged to be married on July 9. Visit www.gpc.edu/Alumni and click Past Events to see their winning video.

FACES OF GPC

We may know them as engaging professors or the custodians who keep the campus tidy. But there are other sides to each of the hard-working faculty and staff members who keep Georgia Perimeter College humming along. The Chronicle shares a few of their stories here.

by Carol Lynn



^ TRUNG PHAM

Before there was “Dancing with the Stars,” Trung Pham was a master of ballroom dancing. During the day, Pham works quietly as custodian on the Decatur Campus. But at night and on the weekends, he hits the floor as an accomplished ballroom dancer in venues across metro Atlanta. From the foxtrot to the cha-cha to salsa, the movements seem effortless to Pham, who—with his dance partner, Hallie Nguyen—performs in exhibitions and contests. The Vietnam native has been dancing since age 12 and in 1990 won a gold medal in ballroom dancing.

FAY KILGORE >

Ah, the thrill of the open road. Nursing instructor Fay Kilgore was a teen when her grandfather taught her the art of motorcycle riding. Today she climbs aboard her Honda VFR 800 sport bike and takes off for “ride-ins” sponsored by the Women on Wheels national organization. She also enjoys solo biking: a favorite memory is crossing the Sunshine Skyway Bridge over Tampa Bay on a trip to Florida. “It was so much fun, I rode over it three times,” she remembers.



^ BECKY THURMAN

You may not know Becky Thurman, secretary and lab supervisor for Georgia Perimeter’s sign language program. But you might know the words to some of the songs she’s written. She spent 18 years in Nashville, writing songs for contemporary Christian musicians. Her creations include two No. 1 hits for Christian group Point of Grace. Plus, she penned lyrics for country artist Glen Campbell and bluegrass musician Ricky Skaggs. Now, Thurman composes music mostly for her own pleasure and also actively mentors up-and-coming songwriters.



ELIZABETH LATHROP >

If you’ve ever struggled to get your dog to “sit” or “stay,” then you’ll appreciate film instructor Elizabeth Lathrop’s hobby: training her dogs to run agility courses. Joey, a mutt, and Recon, a Chihuahua, follow her commands as she directs them through a series of obstacles, including jumps, tunnels, chutes, tables and weave poles.



< MICHELLE GOLDEN

When she’s not teaching English, Michelle Golden is in perpetual motion or, more accurately, on deck of Perpetual Motion, a sailboat she helped skipper to victories in several race series and regattas last year at Lake Lanier. “My primary job is to help on the mast and trim the spinnaker—that’s the big colorful sail!” she says. Golden was introduced to the sport in part by another GPC sailboat-racing enthusiast, history professor Dr. Thomas Graham. He was one of her instructors in a sailing class two years ago. “Tom looked at me and said, ‘I can already tell: you’re a racer.’ He was right.”



Photo provided by Michelle Golden

ANTHONY TRICOLI >

GPC President Dr. Anthony Tricoli may seem to spend every moment on college business, but he actually has carved out a bit of time for a hobby. Tricoli, who has a home woodworking shop, has become known for his driftwood snowmen and Santas. Using various woods, he has made other items, too, from a 6-foot-tall nutcracker to a pen for statesman Andrew Young. “When I’m working on the wood, I have to give my complete attention to the lathe,” he says. “At 3,500 rpm, I can’t be thinking about anything else.”



FACES OF GPC

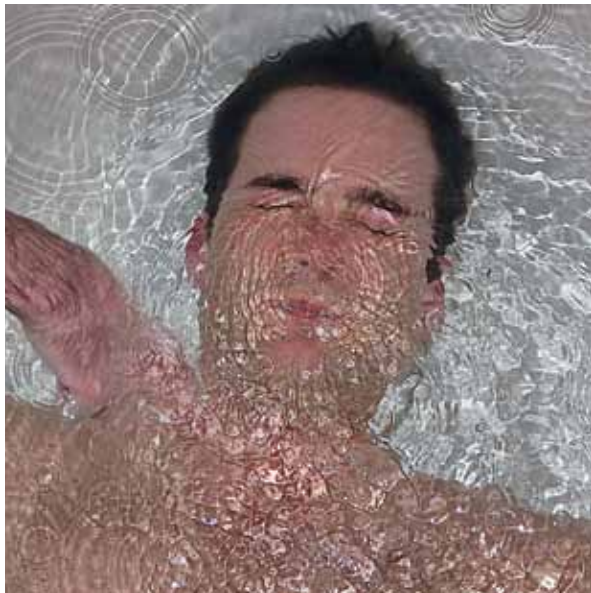


Photo provided by Maury Gortemiller

^ MAURY GORTEMILLER

Maury Gortemiller, who works in GPC's MediaSpot labs, grew up listening to stories of the amazing feats his father performed while working as an underwater clown at the now-defunct Aquarena Springs amusement park in Texas. Then at about age 12, he discovered he could hold his breath for a much longer period than his friends. Thus an apneist—or competitive breath holder—was born. Though he has yet to win a sanctioned apnea or free-diving event, Gortemiller is an enthusiastic competitor and promoter of the sport. His personal best time is 8 minutes, 58 seconds.



< AMY COLEMAN

English instructor Amy Coleman has been in and out of children's hospitals since her daughter was born prematurely 12 years ago. While there, she saw a need. "I've been hand-crafting baby hats and blankets for years but only recently began sending the excess to hospitals," she says. "Prior to this, I was in the hospital enough of the time to individually gift my wares to children in need. Happily, we haven't been in the hospital for the past three years, so this year I mailed my excess to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta."



< DON TURK

We've all experienced a lift in mood while listening to a certain tune or watching a sunset. GPC communications professor and sound and light therapist Dr. Don Turk takes that several steps further, using audio-visual technologies to create more balanced brain-wave patterns. That allows individuals to lead more positive lives, he says, adding that light-and-sound therapy also may assist with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and insomnia. Turk also plays quartz crystal sound bowls for hospice patients. "Dying persons often want an aesthetically appealing soundscape playing in the ambient during their final days or hours," he explains.

< SHARON TOPPING, BECKY OWENS, KATHY POWELL

Combine the technology of today's sophisticated GPS devices with the fun of an old-fashioned treasure hunt, and you've got GeoCaching. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online. Who hides these treasures? Why, the 5 million or so registered geocachers worldwide. Among them are Georgia Perimeter's Sharon Topping and Becky Owens, both Plant Operations, and Kathy Powell, campus event scheduler at Dunwoody.

PERSONALITIES

DR. PAMELA LEGGETT-ROBINSON ALTERING REACTIONS TO STUDY OF SCIENCE

by Susan Gast

What's the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the words "organic chemistry?"

Did you say "fun?"

No?

Dr. Pamela Leggett-Robinson is out to change your perception.

It shouldn't be surprising from a professor who was once known as "the singing TA" (teaching assistant), who explains "radical reactions" by likening them to prenuptial agreements and who labels her exams "parties," providing food and drink for the occasion.

Her strategy is not a gimmick, but a heartfelt approach. Leggett-Robinson, who chairs the Decatur Campus Science Department at Georgia Perimeter College, sees science and the other STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) majors as having gotten a bad rap in terms of how fun and relevant they can be.

"The biggest barriers to STEM majors is that people don't realize all of the different

things you can do with them," she says.

"With a chemistry degree, for example, people think mostly of medicine or teaching. But you can go into patent law, the cosmetic industry; you can design fragrances, be a food chemist; you can work in packaging and even art history. There are a host of things you can do."

Leggett-Robinson, known as "Dr. Rob" to her students, is not only an academic leader at GPC. She is a 1991 alumna who worked as a lifeguard at Decatur Campus while earning her associate degree in chemistry from the college, then called DeKalb College. She continued her education, earning her bachelor's degree at Georgia State University, followed by a master's in Bio-Inorganic Chemistry from Tennessee Technological University and a doctorate in Physical Organic Chemistry from Georgia State.

A love for teaching and a love for science have been with her since childhood, Leggett-Robinson says. But she credits former professor Judy Johnson, who taught organic chemistry at Clarkston Campus, for taking her interest to the next level. "She made it come alive," says Leggett-Robinson.

Leggett-Robinson returned to GPC in July 2008 after five years at Tuskegee University, where she taught undergraduates and graduates, co-authored three laboratory manuals, supervised a research group and

started a grant-funded, non-profit program called Science on Saturdays (SOS) Inc. Through SOS, she spent one Saturday a month teaching science to elementary and middle school students in underserved schools in Alabama.

Though her SOS work declined with her move back to Georgia, she continues her commitment to service through the Science Fair Academy—judging local, regional, and state science fairs—and helping Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts meet their science badge requirements.

Leggett-Robinson lives in Clayton County with her husband, Mike Thomas, and their blended family of four children. When not working at the college, she enjoys reading, cooking and dancing and often tries out interesting classes, such as horseback riding.

GPC 2010 graduate Justin Kyei-Frimpong says his experience in Leggett-Robinson's class was one he will carry with him for a lifetime.

"Dr. Rob's lessons were not limited to just solving chemical equations and naming structures, but she also equipped me with the tools to solve real-life problems," he says. "She was not only my teacher but a counselor and a friend. ... The skills and knowledge she has passed on to me will definitely help me in life's journey, and to fulfill my goal to be a pharmacist." ❤️

Photo by Bill Noa

RETIREES SPONSOR 'AN EVENING TO REMEMBER' TO SUPPORT SCHOLARSHIP

The Georgia Perimeter College/DeKalb College Retiree Association is inviting the GPC community—and public—to a festive fundraiser for the organization's scholarship fund.

"An Evening to Remember," planned for 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. June 24 in the Clarkston Campus Student Center (CN Building), will feature a silent auction, music by Sentimental Journey Barbershop Quartet, hors d'oeuvres and door prizes—not to mention a chance to mix and mingle with old friends or make new ones.

"Members of the GPC / DeKalb College Retiree Association are excited about the fun evening we have planned," said Janet Barron, who is coordinating the event for the retiree association. "We hope that current employees, friends and family will come out for 'An Evening to Remember' and support the students of GPC via this scholarship fundraiser event."

Tickets are \$25 per person or \$40 per couple and may be purchased online at <https://giving.gpc.edu/sslpage.aspx?pid=331> (major credit cards accepted). The deadline for online purchases is June 22. Tickets also will be available at the door for \$30 per person and \$50 per couple. For information, contact Deborah Factory by phone at 678-891-2560 or by email at Deborah.Factory@gpc.edu.

Ron Swofford, president of the retiree association, said the fundraiser will help

generate money to match an anonymous challenge grant of \$2,500 for the scholarship fund.

"That is our short-term goal," Swofford said. "Our long-term hope is to endow the scholarship, which means reaching a level of \$25,000. Endowing the scholarship assures that an award can be made each year."

Already the association, which has reached a membership of 94, has made significant progress. Though it only established the scholarship in 2010, it quickly built donations and presented its first award earlier this year.

Buffy Leann Davis, the inaugural recipient of the scholarship, is a GPC nursing student. She holds a master's degree in social work and is a former medical social worker at the Medical College of Virginia. Davis said in her applicant essay that while working in Virginia, she "discovered I yearned for the technical piece of patient care and knew that someday, I would take things to the next level and become a nurse."

Davis, who has a 4.0 GPA and is member of Phi Theta Kappa honor society, also has experience as a drummer in a



The retiree association's inaugural scholarship was awarded to GPC nursing student Buffy Leann Davis. From left, Howard Silverstein, association member; Davis; Barbara Nipp, association program committee chair; and Ronald Swofford, president of the association, socialize during a recent meeting.

touring band, and she owned a restaurant before returning to school to become a nurse.

"At the age of 41, I am not afraid to reinvent myself, and I look forward to helping people in one of the most trusted and important roles, a nurse," Davis wrote.

The scholarship is designed to assist a GPC student who is in good standing, is 35 years of age or older, is in a career change and has a financial need. The award is limited to tuition costs for one full semester for each winner. The value of the first award was \$1,239.

"The scholarship has allowed me to take off work for my clinical rotation," says Davis, who supports herself by working in a restaurant when not in class. "Clinical days are so important. That took a big load off of me."

GPC SUPPORTERS NOW CAN MAKE DONATIONS ONLINE

Georgia Perimeter College Foundation has unveiled a new way to support the college: online giving. Now, students, faculty, staff, alumni, retirees and external partners can visit giving.gpc.edu to donate to Georgia Perimeter.

Friends of the college also can log onto <http://www.gpc.edu/Foundation/> and click "Give to GPC" to access the new online giving page. The site allows

constituents to give securely through a credit card processor, and donors can direct their gifts to specific programs.

"Private donations support GPC's mission to transform the lives of our students," says Vicki Carew, director of Institutional Advancement for the college. "The site also provides a virtual experience for our retirees and alumni to register for events, get up-to-date

information and find out what's new at GPC."

The new site is a way to keep up technologically, says Daryl Jeffries, advancement services coordinator.

"We wanted to meet our donors where they are and provide this secure and convenient avenue," Jeffries says.



GPC student James Hardnick participates in United Parcel Service's Earn and Learn program at GPC.

UPS DELIVERS FOR GPC STUDENTS

James Hardnick works three days a week at United Parcel Service, then drives a short distance to Georgia Perimeter College's Dunwoody Campus. Hardnick, who is in the Pre-Pharmacy program at GPC, says the partnership between the shipping company and the college is crucial to his future.

"One of the factors that drew me to UPS was the Earn and Learn program, which pays my tuition as long as I work for the company," says Hardnick, who has worked as a package handler for the company since 2007. "It would be extremely difficult for me to attend school if I didn't have the help of UPS. This company plays a really important role in my education at GPC."

Since 1999, UPS has teamed up with Georgia Perimeter College in a partnership that yields rich results.

UPS, the world's largest package delivery company and a global leader in supply chain and freight services, is headquartered in Atlanta and serves more than 200 countries and territories.

Chris Franzoni, a UPS manager and member of the GPC Foundation Board, says the company is proud of its investments in Georgia Perimeter. For example, UPS sponsors the George Fellows Memorial Golf Tournament, a major fundraiser for the GPC Foundation and the programs it makes possible.

UPS also actively recruits participants for its Earn and Learn program, which provides part-time employees up to \$3,000 a year toward tuition at GPC. Part-time supervisors can earn up to \$4,000 a year toward tuition assistance.

The 12-year partnership works for several reasons, Franzoni says. "We get the best quality applicants at GPC. There is a focus on education in our workforce, and Georgia Perimeter creates the foundation that the new employee needs to excel within our company."

"With its locations conveniently located near our Atlanta hubs and the offer of a quality education, we foresee our partnership with Georgia Perimeter lasting well into the future."

why I give

DR. COLIN RICHMAN



Colin Richman

Dr. Colin Richman, a periodontist in Roswell, knows the value of a good education. That's why he actively assists students studying to be dental hygienists.

The Roswell dentist has established two scholarship funds to help dental hygiene students at Georgia Perimeter College. The Colin Richman DMD Scholarship Fund and The Seattle Study Club of Atlanta Fund each awards \$300

to a student in GPC's dental hygiene program annually. Richman helped establish the study group, and guided the money raised by club members to Georgia Perimeter College.

"It's a question of giving back, of needing money when I went to school," Richman explains. "The dental profession has been so good to my family and myself. Plus, these are trying times, and a little money can make a big difference to someone trying to get through school."

Richman started his philanthropic efforts by first establishing the family foundation fund. He then convinced members of his study group of the benefits of helping dental hygienists succeed.

Richman has assisted two of his dental assistants in attending and graduating from Georgia Perimeter's dental hygiene program.

"I give to GPC because the program produces outstanding graduates," he says, "and because giving back is the right thing to do."



A Tradition of Support: Lani Wong, right, chair of the National Association of Chinese-Americans, presents Georgia Perimeter College President Dr. Anthony Tricoli with a check of support at the organization's fundraising banquet and Chinese New Year celebration in February. Since 2003, NACA has invested close to \$100,000 in Georgia Perimeter.

NEW MILITARY OUTREACH CENTER STREAMLINES SERVICES FOR VETERANS

After serving two tours of duty in Iraq, Joseph Lewit was sure of one thing: He wanted to kick start his education by enrolling at Georgia Perimeter College. To do so, however, required the former U.S. Army military police officer to visit so many offices on campus that his head spun.

“It would have been so much easier if access to all the services were under one roof,” says Lewit, who is attending GPC’s Clarkston Campus and pursuing a history degree.

Lewit’s wish is coming true: a center will streamline access to all services at GPC available to current and former service members and their families.

Georgia Perimeter College has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia to create a Military Outreach Center that provides centralized services to armed services veterans, current service members and their families. GPC is the first two-year institution chosen to participate in the College Access Challenge Grant Program, which includes seven other schools, said Col. Robert Knowles Jr., GPC’s military outreach coordinator. Georgia Perimeter created a task force to establish the center and organize its services.

“GPC has taken a significant step forward to assist our enlisted men and women in gaining an education from our institution, says GPC President Dr. Anthony Tricoli. “We look forward to offering our veterans and their dependents an opportunity to succeed at Georgia Perimeter.”

“The basic idea is to provide support services for our men and women who are currently serving their country, and those who have served and who will be

returning in record numbers to pursue higher education,” says Dr. Rufus Larkin, principal investigator for the GPC Military Outreach Center. “Similarly, we want to lead college-wide efforts to implement or improve outreach and services to members of the military, including active duty, reserve, National Guard, and veterans and dependent family members,” Larkin says.

The center will offer special orientations, service projects, a student veterans club, first-year experience seminars and academic support,” Knowles says.

The project addresses a growing need, Knowles says. GPC has one of the largest populations of veterans of the USG’s 35 member schools. Counselors see almost 800 veterans each year.

During his first year at GPC, Lewit participated in the play “Candide” and took advantage of other GPC activities. But he says the center will make it easier for veterans to connect with campus opportunities and become active students.

While in Iraq, Lewit was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) and sustained a traumatic brain injury. Now, the recipient of the prestigious Combat Action Badge battles memory cognition problems.



GPC student Joseph Lewit, shown here with “Officer Eichman,” is a former military police officer with two tours of duty in Iraq. He says veterans will benefit from the new military outreach center.

“The faculty at GPC have been great about my brain injury. They give me extra time to take exams and really accommodate my disability while still making sure I get an outstanding education,” Lewit says. “Nevertheless, a Military Outreach Center would give combat veterans a chance to talk to one another about their experiences. Plus, with all of the information on available services that veterans need in one center, it will be harder for us to get lost in the crowd.”

“The center and all of its services will make the educational experience richer and more meaningful,” Lewit says. “It will guide fellow veterans to have the best experience possible while at GPC.”

Photo by Rod Kelly



David Clark addresses First-Year Seminar students who study integrated lessons as a learning community, thanks to a Project DEgree grant.

PROJECT DEGREE PREPARES STUDENTS

Students gather nervously as David Clark’s First-Year Seminar prepares to deliver final exam presentations. As each student takes the podium, nutrition emerges as a common theme. That’s as it should be.

Thanks to a grant from the Gateway to College National Network, the Georgia Perimeter College students have learned how one issue—in this case, nutrition—can be studied across different courses. Participants have examined aspects of nutrition in each class they’ve taken this semester. This integration of lessons—as well as building of a learning community—makes the education more meaningful.

GPC is one of only nine colleges in the country to receive a Project DEgree grant from Gateway to College National Network. Project DEgree is designed for students who have earned a high school diploma or GED but require developmental education to be ready for college-level coursework.

The program offers a project-based curriculum within a learning community and helps students build and maintain the momentum to complete a college degree. GPC’s grant of \$187,500 over two years helps students accelerate through developmental education and move on to success in transfer-level classes.

“The point of having learning communities is not only to have the same students taking the same classes, but to also integrate the lessons,” says Ted Wadley, chair of GPC’s English Department at Dunwoody Campus. In the case of nutrition, “students learned the benefits of sleep and exercise, and they wrote about a proper diet. In math class, they figured out what it takes to maintain a proper weight and how much each person should eat based on his or her size.”

Nutrition was the first integrated assignment using the Project DEgree grant. Another is a brochure containing advice to high school students on the differences between high school and college.

“Integrated learning helps students more deeply investigate and reflect on different subjects,” says Clark, a Project DEgree resource specialist. “It really does reinforce critical thinking skills.”

get to know

TRICHELE
DAVENPORT HARRIS

Trichele Davenport Harris is director of TRIO Student Support Services at Clarkston Campus.

Educational and work background: I spent eight years working with TRIO Upward Bound, a college preparatory program for high school students. Most recently, I was an academic advisor/intervention specialist at Southern University in New Orleans. I worked

Trichele Davenport Harris

at GPC Lawrenceville from 1999 to 2002 as an academic advisor/counselor. I have a Master of Arts in Counseling from Xavier University of Louisiana and a bachelor’s in business administration from the University of Southwestern Louisiana at Lafayette.

Professional goals: To see the Clarkston Campus TRIO Student Support Services program reach full capacity. The more students participate, the more that student success will be accomplished. I also want to continue to mentor young adults who are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Leisure activities: I love the arts, listening to jazz music, traveling and visiting family and close friends. I’m also a very active member of World Changers Church International.

Family: I’ve been married six years to my husband, Don Harris.

One of my favorite memories: I had an Upward Bound student who wasn’t sure how she was going to pay for college and really doubted herself. I mentored her, and she went on to receive a Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation scholarship, a scholarship from Dell Inc. and one from the Magic Johnson Foundation. She went on to graduate summa cum laude from high school and now attends Howard University.



Gateway to College Academy: Student Michael Crosbie, right, receives information about the Gateway to College program during an open house at GPC. Established through grant start-up funds, Gateway to College Academy offers students a way to finish high school education and get ahead in college.

Uncommon Excellence

Four GPC students with four distinct stories earn state, national recognition.

BY ROGER BARNES

Photo by Bill Kea



Four Georgia Perimeter College students recently recognized for outstanding academic performance and community service share little in common but uncommon excellence.

Three of the students were named to the 2011 Phi Theta Kappa All-Georgia Academic Team. A fourth was selected to receive the highly competitive and prestigious national Jack Kent Cooke Foundation 2011 transfer scholarship.

The four students bring with them varied backgrounds and circumstances, but their stories all carry a willingness to explore new paths or overcome difficulties. They are stories of commitment to success and dedication to service.

JACK KENT COOKE FOUNDATION UNDERGRADUATE TRANSFER SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Chiemeka “Richard” Ugochukwu came to the United States from Nigeria, where his parents are struggling to make a living amidst the country’s economic and political strife.

Ugochukwu passionately wants to be a neurosurgeon and has lived with an uncle while taking demanding credit loads and rigorous courses to reach his goal. He has given his time to community service yet still maintained a grade point average of 3.91. He finishes his work at GPC during the summer semester and hopes to continue his education at the University of Georgia.

In May, Ugochukwu received word that he will have some help to reach his goals. He was chosen for the nationally prestigious Jack Kent Cooke scholarship, which provides up to \$90,000—up to \$30,000 a year for three years—to continue his education.

Because Ugochukwu is not a resident, he is not eligible for the HOPE scholarship and other resident scholarships. He has relied solely on his uncle to finance his education at GPC but feels the costs have been a tough burden for his uncle to bear.

“He has children of his own, and when he paid my tuition, I could see the smile on his face, but I could also see the anguish. I knew I could not afford to continue my education at UGA, and my uncle could not afford it either. The Jack Kent Cooke scholarship makes it possible for me to continue my education.”

The scholarship is intended to cover a significant share of each recipient’s educational costs for the two to three years necessary to achieve a bachelor’s degree. According to the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation, the awards vary by individual, based on the cost of tuition as well as other grants or scholarships awardees may receive.

Students must be nominated by faculty to be considered for the scholarship. A review panel of national university faculty and admissions professionals judge the nominees based on academic achievement, critical thinking ability, financial need, will to succeed and breadth of interest and activities. In 2011,

the foundation anticipated receiving 600 nominations, out of which only 60 students would receive scholarships.

In the past nine years, Georgia Perimeter College has produced seven Jack Kent Cooke scholarship recipients.

“This is a pattern that speaks not of luck—but of excellence,” says Dr. Anthony S. Tricoli, president of Georgia Perimeter College. “This is a wonderful recognition of Ugochukwu’s efforts and the support GPC has provided him to demonstrate his potential.”

PHI THETA KAPPA ALL-GEORGIA ACADEMIC TEAM

When Joanne Butler received her associate degree in Health Sciences this month, she became the first generation of her family to earn a college degree. But the path to that goal wasn’t always straight or easy. At the end of her senior year of high school in Ohio, Butler found she was one class shy for graduation, so she didn’t march or receive her diploma. At the time, she couldn’t have imagined that today she would be a GPC honors graduate and a member of the Phi Theta Kappa All-Georgia Academic Team.

As a 16-year old sophomore at Heritage High School in Rockdale County, Natalee Dukes decided she was ready for a change and signed on as a full-time Dual Enrollment student at Georgia Perimeter. In May, Dukes, now 18, graduated from GPC with an associate degree in general studies, while also receiving her high school diploma from Heritage. Dukes not only was named to the All-Georgia Academic Team, she won a \$1,250 PTK scholarship from the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation.

Benson Nsunwara came to the United States from Nigeria in 2008 and looked for an opportunity to launch his college education.

“My mom encouraged me to go to Georgia Perimeter College,” Nsunwara says. “She said it was a good school and a good place to start. So I went to the Newton Campus, and those were three years of my life well spent.”

Nsunwara, who also was named to GPC’s All-Georgia Academic Team, graduated in December with a 4.0 grade point average and is now working on a bachelor’s degree in business administration at Georgia State University.

The induction of Butler, Dukes and Nsunwara to the 2011 All-Georgia Academic Team—a prestigious designation given to students at the highest level of academic and personal achievement—reflects the individual dedication and determination of the students. It also reflects the opportunities and education they received from GPC.

“This year’s All-Georgia Academic Team winners from Georgia Perimeter are impressive students,” says Tricoli. “They each aimed high, worked diligently and made time for community service as well. The team also highlights the academic quality GPC offers. One student was looking for an early start to college; one needed a later start. A third student



(Above) Chiemeka "Richard" Ugochukwu will receive the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Foundation scholarship for undergraduate transfer.

was new to the country and found GPC as the best place to begin his higher education. It is obvious that each of these students received a top quality education from our outstanding faculty."

Phi Theta Kappa is the official honor society for two-year colleges. Annual PTK award ceremonies and scholarships are sponsored by the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation, USA Today, community college presidents and community college state associations.

To be considered for the All-Georgia Academic Team, a student must be a Phi Theta Kappa member—which requires a GPA of 3.5 or higher—and must excel in community and campus service.

With Butler's, Dukes' and Nsunwara's selection, Georgia Perimeter students fill three of the 29 spots on the 2011 All-Georgia Academic Team.

"There are 37 college campuses in Georgia that have PTK chapters," says Kay Helms, PTK's Georgia regional coordinator. "It's quite an honor to be named to the team."

Terry Bozeman, assistant professor of English, honors coordinator and the PTK advisor for GPC's Decatur Campus, says the honor society offers individual honors, such as being named to the All-Georgia Academic Team, but also offers group awards. "Georgia Perimeter has done well this year in both group and individual honors," he says.

Nsunwara says the All-Georgia Academic honor

recognizes practices he enjoys.

"On the academic side, I've always worked hard," he says. "And for community service, I enjoyed working with PTK's recycling program and my church's community outreach service. Being named to the All-Georgia Academic Team gives me encouragement to keep up the work."

For Butler, the recognition enhances her experience of reaching an important milestone.

"It's overwhelming for me," Butler says. "I'm a first-generation college graduate. It means a lot to me to be named to the All-Georgia Academic Team. I'm being rewarded for accomplishing something I never thought was possible five years ago."

Leaving Ohio without a diploma at 19, Butler moved to Georgia, started a family and got a job.

"I worked for an attorney, but there was no growth for me," Butler says. "I knew I had to go back to school, and I had to go to college to give my children a chance. I completed a GED, and I put this vision into place that I'm going to be a nurse. Now I'm achieving it."

While at GPC, Butler served as a presidential ambassador and was active in community service.

She graduates with a 3.63 GPA and has been accepted to the nursing schools at Emory University and Mercer University.

Dukes came to GPC with a different need in mind.

In the fall of 2010, Georgia began offering high school students early access to college through a new program called Move On When Ready (MOWR). Dukes, however, had already decided to "move on" a year earlier by taking all her high school courses through the GPC Dual Enrollment program. In 2010, Dukes became a MOWR student.

"I knew I could enroll at Georgia Perimeter, and I could finish high school and two years of college at the same time," says Dukes, who leaves the college with a 4.0 GPC.

"Being named to the All-Georgia Academic Team is a really huge honor," says Dukes, a pre-med major who attended GPC's Newton Campus. She plans to study neuroscience at the University of Georgia in the fall. "And the scholarship is a real surprise."

"We thank the Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation for their vote of confidence in community college students by investing in their futures," says Dr. Rod Risley, international executive director of Phi Theta Kappa. ❤️

PERSONALITIES



KAREN GRAHAM SIGNING ON AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE

by Jenn Mason

Few people can say that a typical workday involves petting a baby alligator, chatting with a rock star, discussing fecal matter found on shopping cart handles and handling Facebook rumors about devil symbols on local television. But for Georgia Perimeter College alumna Karen Graham, host of Fox 5 Atlanta's weekday talk show "Good Day Atlanta," that's just another day at the office.

"I'm fascinated by TV," Graham says. "No day is the same. Today my world got shaken up—that may sound strange, but I love it."

Graham, an Atlanta native, earned an undergraduate degree in communication from Vanderbilt University and a master's degree in mass communication from the University of South Florida in Tampa. She started her news career as a reporter in Tampa, then became a weekend sports

anchor in Charlotte, NC. In 2000, Graham came home to Atlanta as Fox 5's weekend sports anchor. While Graham took on her position with characteristic energy, she says being a woman in the locker room proved to be a challenge.

"It was always tough for me. I didn't wear a dress for 10 years," Graham says. "I wanted the guys to see me as just another guy in the locker room, so I needed to take away all the distractions. Now, to be able to wear the dress and the tights and the jewelry—I love it!"

While her television career has taken her from the news desk to the playing field to the talk-show couch, Graham's penchant for storytelling allows her to navigate every changing environment.

It was perhaps that gift for storytelling that drove her to enroll in GPC's Sign Language Interpreting Program in 2005, allowing her to connect with an entire community of people hungry for others who can speak their language. Graham credits "divine instruction" with leading her into the deaf community.

"I didn't grow up with anyone who was deaf. It was not a part of my culture,

but I feel like God led me to learn that language," she says. "I found out I had a gift for it. I didn't know, but I guess God knew."

Graham never intended to become a full-fledged interpreter, but the more she immersed herself in the lifestyle, the more she fell in love with what she learned. She now interprets at her church in Decatur, networks in the deaf community and has gained a large deaf viewership.

"I thought I was just going to learn a few signs, but it was so much more," she says. "It was an awareness of a culture and lifestyle I never knew about. It's intricate and beautiful."

As she says goodbye to the "Good Day Atlanta" viewers each day, Graham includes the three-fingered sign for goodbye. Rumors erupted on Facebook that Graham was showing devil or gang signs, but she simply laughs it off.

"Just those three fingers can mean the world to a deaf person," she says. "It's a lonely life because this is a hearing world we live in." ❤️

HISTORIC SEASON: JAGUARS THIRD IN NATION WITH FOUR ALL-AMERICANS

Georgia Perimeter College's women's soccer team leapt almost to the top of the nation last fall in a season the coach labeled as history-changing.

The 2010 Jaguars won region and district championships and finished third in the National Junior College Athletic Association national tournament in Topeka, Kan. The only team to defeat them all season was the eventual national champion, Paradise Valley Community College, in a 2-0 heartbreaker in the semifinals.

Beating Schoolcraft College 2-0 in a consolation match, the Jaguars finished third in the country with a 22-1-2 record. On the season, they outscored their opponents by an outlandish 151-10.

"I look back a few years, and all I can think about this season is how grateful and honored I am to have led this team to such a history-changing season," said head coach Bruno Kalonji, who was named coach of the year by his peers in Region 17 of the NJCAA.

GPC placed four players on the NJCAA All-America team, an eye-opening accomplishment, especially since three are freshmen from the same hometown—Lagos, Nigeria.

Freshman forward Esther Anyanwu, first-team All-American, also was



Coach Bruno Kalonji displays the District F Championship trophy after the Jaguars' 4-0 victory over Polk State College.

Region 17 player of the year. Her 112 points (49 goals, 14 assists) led the nation and set a single-season record for GPC.

Fellow Nigerians Linda Chukwuji and Marbel Ekwenu made the second team, while sophomore Tori Klingensmith of Loganville made honorable mention.

Other honors include: All-Region 17 first team, Anyanwu, Chukwuji, Ekwenu, Klingensmith and Taiwo Adeshigbin; all-region second team, Windsor Neal and Alison Derck; Region 17 All-Tournament team,

Anyanwu, Ekwenu, Adeshigbin and Klingensmith.

Adeshigbin, a sophomore, set GPC's career scoring record with 163 points, 66 goals and 31 assists. Next, she will play with a full scholarship at the University of Missouri.

Kalonji sees more to the team's success than statistics and trophies: "We learned a lot from each other during the season—unity, forgiveness, patience, kindness and tolerance. But above all we all learned that faith is the ultimate way to success."

MEN'S SOCCER TEAM COLLECTS CONFERENCE, TOURNEY HONORS



Boubacar Toure

The Georgia Perimeter College men's soccer team missed a seventh straight trip to the national tournament but dominated the All-Region 17 team, led by region player of the year and first team All-American Boubacar Toure.

Toure, a forward who was third in the nation in scoring (21 goals and 24 assists), was one of five Jaguar sophomores selected for the first team, joined by goalkeeper Jason Andrew

and three midfielders—Juan Arbelaez, Momodu Sanneh and Kingsley Morgan. Freshman Aaron Rygiel and sophomore Thierry Betole were named to the second team. Morgan—player of the year in 2009—was a repeat selection, as were Toure and Betole.

Sophomore Christian Ospina and freshman Jorge Torres made the all-tournament team as the Jaguars lost 1-0 to Darton College in the semifinals.



Ry'van Buchanan was named to the NJCAA All-Tournament team and led the Jaguars' balanced scoring with 10.7 points per game.

GPC RETURNS TO HOOPS NATIONALS

Fifth time's the charm for Georgia Perimeter College women's basketball.

For the fifth time in seven years, the Jaguars traveled in March to Salina, Kan., for the National Junior College Athletic Association Championship Tournament. This time they produced their best result—seventh place. The Jaguars overcame a first-half 20-point deficit to defeat Cloud County Community College (Kan.) 73-70 to finish seventh in the 16-team field.

"They battled back. It was incredible. I never stopped believing," head coach James Waldon said. His team's only loss in the tourney came in the first round to eventual champion North Idaho College.

During the season, the Jaguars compiled an 18-game winning streak, finishing 14-0 in Region 17 and 31-6 overall. They won the region tournament and District J championship, as they had from 2005 to 2008.

Sophomore forward Ry'van Buchanan was selected to the national all-tournament team. Earlier in the month, freshman guard Kayla Carter was named first team All-Region 17, and Buchanan made the second team. At the region tournament, sophomore Jamesha Willis was the most valuable player, and Carter joined her on the all-tournament team.

Waldon, voted Region 17 coach of the year, had experienced two years without a championship, but he rebuilt the program with a deep roster of unselfish talent that applied a phenomenal pressure defense. Offensively, nine players averaged between six points per game and Buchanan's 10.7.

"That's the amazing thing about this team—so many players could step up," Waldon said.

point-by-point



Musa Abdul-Aleem

Shooting guard Musa Abdul-Aleem of GPC's men's basketball team was named Region 17 freshman player of the year and member of the all-region first team by a vote of the coaches. He also made the five-player all-tournament team. Sophomore guard Jarrett Stokes earned all-region honorable mention. ... The men's basketball Jaguars advanced to the Region 17 tournament semifinals but fell to College of Coastal Georgia 89-83.

It was the second consecutive year Coastal defeated the Jaguars in the semifinals. GPC finished the season with a 21-11 record, 11-7 in the conference. ... Former Jaguar midfielder Junior Sandoval signed this spring with the Atlanta Silverbacks of the North American Soccer League. After his freshman season with GPC in 2009—in which he was second highest scorer for the Jaguars with 9 goals and 11 assists—Sandoval played his rookie season with the Puerto Rico Islanders of the NASL, making his professional debut on April 18, 2010. He is on loan from the Islanders to help Atlanta return to the NASL after a two-year hiatus. ... Midway through the spring sports season, the GPC softball and baseball teams were ranked in their respective NJCAA national polls. Five of the college's eight teams were nationally ranked during the 2010-11 academic year—baseball, softball, women's basketball and men's and women's soccer. ... Follow the Jaguars at www.gpc.edu/athletic, and listen to audio webcasts of games by clicking on the links under "Game Webcast," or "Webcast Archives."



Photo by Holly Morales

Career highlight: GPC softball head coach Ed Schutte displays the game ball, presented by his Jaguars and assistants Ken Deyton and Alli Converse on April 1, after he won his 300th college game. All of the wins were at Georgia Perimeter.



CARVED INTO HISTORY

Dr. Pamela Gore and her geology students catalog hundreds of carvings that have been etched in the granite of Stone Mountain over the centuries. Natural erosion is taking its toll, and park educators want to document the carvings, so Gore's students use GPS and digital cameras to record the positions. The project is part of a sustainability partnership forged between Stone Mountain Park and the Atlanta Center for Civic Engagement and Service Learning at Georgia Perimeter College.

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