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# SPOTLIGHT

Summer 2019

On South Georgia State College

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## SGSC Theatre Productions

Makes A Strong Comeback With Its 2018-2019 Season



➤ **SGSC's James M. Dye Foundation** Raises Funds For Students at Inaugural "Birdies for Bucks" Golf Classic



South Georgia  
State College

## SPOTLIGHT

Issue 7 Summer 2019

SPOTLIGHT is produced for alumni and friends of South Georgia State College by the Office of Institutional Advancement.

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## From The Editor Greetings!

Welcome to the latest issue of the South Georgia State College SPOTLIGHT magazine! In the past year, we have celebrated the inauguration of Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, the eighth president of our college. As one of her first initiatives, and with the support of faculty, staff and students, a five-year strategic plan was created and introduced with the theme of *Moving Forward*.

South Georgia State College (SGSC) is definitely on the move with new bachelor degree programs on the horizon and several projects in the works to build on the foundation of student success while focusing on the mission and values of SGSC.

There is much to celebrate at South Georgia State College. As we look to the accomplishments of the past, we celebrate the events of the present and await the future to see what opportunities exist. As you explore these pages, I am sure you will be as impressed as I am by the far-reaching effects our current and past students have had on our campus community and the communities in which they live.

I welcome your ideas and suggestions via e-mail at amy.hancock@sgsc.edu or by phone at (912) 260-4461. I want to provide an opportunity for you to engage and reminisce, be reminded of your own time here, and celebrate what South Georgia State College represents today to our alumni and our valued friends of the college.

Enjoy this issue of SPOTLIGHT, and keep in touch!

Sincerely,  
Amy Hancock  
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From The Editor



Dear South Georgia State College Alumni and Friends,

As always, I am delighted to share with you the many happenings that are going on at South Georgia State College (SGSC). Since our last publication, we have welcomed new members into the Hawk family, graduated our largest commencement class in the college's history, conferred the first SGSC honorary degree on a well deserving community member and released our 2019 – 2024 new strategic plan entitled, *Moving Forward*. Though not a comprehensive list of our achievements, we are very proud of these and other accomplishments. Irrespective of the challenges that we may face in the future, our plan is to keep *Moving Forward*.

Over the next five years, we will focus our efforts on maintaining our core mission of serving our students and community through our academic and extracurricular programming. We will keep our vision of being a regional leader in higher education in sight. All of our plans will be accomplished by maintaining our true

values of Leadership, Engagement, Affordability and Diversity (LEAD). I invite you to join us on this journey, because we will need your support to keep *Moving Forward*.

Thank you for being a part of the SGSC family. No matter if you are a recent graduate or an established alumni, SGSC will always be your home. There are many newsworthy items about our SGSC family in this issue. Please let us know about some of the interesting things that are going on in your life. And, always remember, "Hawks Fly!"

Sincerely,

Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, Ph.D.  
President

## Symposium Highlights Undergraduate Research Efforts At South Georgia State College

By: Dr. Frank Holiwski and Dr. Rosa Guedes

A visitor to Stubbs Hall on the Douglas Campus of South Georgia State College (SGSC) during the week of April 15th could be forgiven for being overwhelmed. A striking Harlem Renaissance-inspired painting catches the eye as soon as one enters room 143, a student presents on the ecology of the Sumatra tiger in room 142 and the hallway is lined with students standing by poster presentations detailing a plethora of facts about fungi. And that's just a snapshot in a week-long Undergraduate Research (UR) Symposium that saw dozens of presentations viewed by over four hundred attendees.

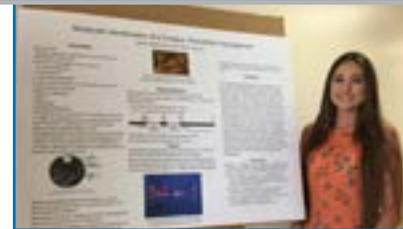
The SGSC UR Symposium has been held, in one form or another, since 2011. Created by one-time SGSC sociology professor Dr. Leonard A. Steverson, and now coordinated by Dr. Frank Holiwski, professor of psychology, the Symposium is a special event meant to celebrate student research efforts and promote the college's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), infusing research across the curriculum.

Originally a one day event held once a year, the symposium is now a week-long event in both fall and spring semesters. It has grown from an original slate of four presenters to over 50 at the most recent event. And, while the first symposium was attended by a dozen or so curious on-lookers, the spring 2019 symposium was attended by a record 402 faculty, staff, students and community members.

Students presented on everything from rabies and the global decline of the insect population to labor strikes during the gilded age and theories of human development. There were presentations from disciplines such as biology, history, sociology and psychology.

The spring 2019 symposium also featured a special presentation by three elite student-researchers, Carrie Griffin, Mureed Hamdani and Travis Simmons. The three intrepid researchers shared with the audience their experiences of being presenters at a conference at the University of Georgia the previous week. Griffin and Hamdani, both in the Bachelor of Biological Sciences program, and Simmons, a recent graduate, supplemented the content-oriented presentations with their reflections on the process of conducting and presenting research.

While students are the focus of the symposium, faculty mentors are essential to the event; each student is guided through the research process by a faculty member. This semester, the faculty mentors were Dr. Rosa Guedes, associate professor of biology/ecology; Dr. Robert Potter, assistant professor of biology; Dr. Yoga Sundram, associate professor of anatomy & physiology/microbiology; Dr. Dana Caldemeyer, assistant professor of history; Dr. Julie Havens, assistant professor of sociology; and Dr. Frank Holiwski, professor of psychology. Past semesters have seen participation from other faculty members as well. And those faculty members who do not mentor students also contribute in a host of ways, not the least of which is encouraging their students to attend one or more days of the symposium. Also, over the years, community partners have taken a special interest in the UR Symposium. Generous donors, such as Sunbelt Greenhouses, continue annually to make contributions as a way to sustain the program that has benefited the students at SGSC.



Laken Tanner from Willacoochee, Ga., participated in the poster presentation session at the Symposium.



Dr. Robert Potter, assistant professor of biology, along with his class prepares and practices for the Research Symposium.



Christina Robinette from Hazlehurst, Ga., is one of the many students who presented at SGSC's Undergraduate Research Symposium over the years.

## SGSC Celebrates The Inauguration Of Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers By Honoring Its Legacy And Sharing The Vision For Future Success



South Georgia State College (SGSC) celebrated the next chapter in the life of the 112-year-old institution September 17-21, 2018, with a week-long inauguration celebration, culminating with the installation of Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers as the eighth president of the college. University System of Georgia Chancellor Dr. Steve Wrigley provided the official presidential charge, presenting Dr. Thompson-Sellers with the college medallion.

## New Strategic Plan, *Moving Forward*, Launched by SGSC



President Ingrid Thompson-Sellers shared with the campus community of the formation of a strategic planning committee to begin development of a new five-year strategic plan for the institution. The committee included faculty, staff, a student and community partners. The committee was facilitated by a Chancellor Emeritus of the University System of Georgia and co-chaired by one faculty member and one member of the staff. During April 2018, the Mission and proposed Vision and Values were made available for public review on the SGSC Strategic Plan webpage.

In January 2019, the new SGSC Strategic Plan, *Moving Forward*, was officially launched. The plan is established on the mission and vision of the college and addresses four overarching goals relating to academic programs, faculty and staff, student success and regional and economic development. (Continued above)

Building upon SGSC's LEAD core values of leadership, engagement, affordability and diversity, the strategic plan will be a guide to foster a culture of academic and student success, diversity and engagement between faculty, students and the community at large.

## SGSC Student Hailey Furman To Pursue Ivy League Education In The Fall



Hailey Furman, a student on South Georgia State College's Waycross Campus, has been accepted into the online campus of Harvard University for Fall 2019. Furman's plans are to earn a doctoral degree in English through Harvard and teach students who have overcome adversity and want to learn.

## SGSC's Phi Theta Kappa Chapter Named Top Distinguished Chapter For The Georgia Region And Received National Awards



SGSC's two chapters, Kappa Sigma and Alpha Rho Omega, earned numerous awards and recognitions at the Georgia Region Spring Conference and National Catalyst Convention. The Kappa Sigma chapter received top distinguished chapter for the Georgia Region. They also earned the award for Distinguished Honors in Action project, Distinguished College Project and Distinguished Honors in Action Issue Award – Theme Six. Alpha Rho Omega was given the Distinguished Honors in Action Issue Award – Theme One and recognized for being named a REACH chapter for showing exemplary growth in chapter membership.

Alexandra Cardiel, SGSC advisor, received the Horizon Award for Chapter Advisors and Kappa Sigma's chapter president Kristen Davis was selected to attend Honors Institute in San Diego, CA. California, this summer on a scholarship from the Georgia Region.

At the National Convention in Orlando, the SGSC chapters earned prestigious awards for Distinguished Honors in Action Project, a top 100 chapter and a Distinguished Chapter meaning they are one of the top 40 chapters out of approximately 1,300 chapters in the international organization.

## South Georgia State College Academic Quiz Team Competes At National Championship Tournament



The South Georgia State College (SGSC) Academic Quiz Team competed at the National Academic Quiz Tournaments' (NAQT) Community College Championship Tournament (CCCT) spring semester. The top 24 teams in the nation were invited, with SGSC earning the

number 22 seed. SGSC's team finished the two-day tournament with a record of five wins and seven losses, receiving 14th place. SGSC's Josh Thomas (pictured above) finished 11th out of the 104 players, earning a trophy from NAQT for his efforts.

## Second Annual Student Film Fest Held On The Waycross Campus Of South Georgia State College



Sixteen original films highlighted the Second Annual Film Fest held on the Waycross campus of South Georgia State College (SGSC) Thursday, May 2nd, before an audience that filled the auditorium and watched as the formally dressed filmmakers entered on a red carpet, according to Mrs. Elaine Stephens, assistant professor of English and teacher for the two classes involved: World Literature 1 and 2.

"For the assignment, students selected works of literature covered in their respective courses and then presented an analysis in film form," said Mrs. Stephens. All participants received Oscar awards for their hard work and innovations.

## SGSC School Of Nursing Boasts 95.12% Pass Rate For 2018 NCLEX Exam

The 2018 graduating class from the School of Nursing scored a 95.12% pass rate on the NCLEX-RN exam administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing. This standardized exam is given to registered nurse graduates in order to determine whether or not they are qualified to practice entry-level nursing. Graduates are required to pass the exam before they are considered eligible to work as a Registered Nurse (RN). SGSC currently offers three tracks leading to a professional career in nursing.



The LPN-RN Bridge and Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) programs prepare students to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses. The School of Nursing also offers a hybrid RN to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN).

Application to the program is competitive and the nursing curriculum is very rigorous. Many SGSC graduates enjoy great career opportunities in the profession of nursing and continue their education journey to become nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, nurse midwives and nurse anesthetists.

## Coming Soon To SGSC...

**Bachelor of Arts in Professional Business and Technical Writing** - This degree promises to fill a need in the workplace for individuals who can communicate clearly and effectively to internal and external business stakeholders. The intent is to prepare students for careers in business, industry, government, various types of media, education, healthcare, fundraising, public relations, marketing, hospitality, advertising, legal professions, non-profits and numerous other professions requiring expertise in document design, production and management.

**Bachelor of Science in Long-Term Healthcare Management** - This degree will provide students with the skills and knowledge to be managers of long-term healthcare provided in patient residences and long-term care facilities. It focuses on serving the aging, as well as individuals of any age who suffer from debilitating physical and mental disorders.

**Bachelor of Science in Elementary/Special Education** - The program will be an intensive, hands-on experience for students, and involves the Professional Development Community model, where students learn not only from SGSC faculty, but also spend time in the schools from day one, where they learn from school teachers and interact with students. By the time the student completes the program, he/she is ready to step into the classroom. The program is initially a collaboration with the University of North Georgia, and the curriculum comes from UNG's Elementary/Special Education program.

# SOUTH GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE'S JAMES M. DYE FOUNDATION RAISES OVER \$20,000

## At The Inaugural SGSC "Birdies for Bucks" Golf Classic



The winners for 1st Place Gross were (L-R) Randy Howell, Dr. David Morton, Greg O'Brien and Joe Skinner



The winners for 1st Place Net were (L-R) James Willis, Henry Russell, Bobby Tippins and Randy Grantham



sincerely appreciate the support of the sponsors and participants," commented Dye Foundation President Adam Ferrell. "Because of their support, we will be able to provide needed financial assistance to many students at SGSC's Waycross Campus. I also would like to thank our Board members, the SGSC staff and students and other volunteers who worked so hard to organize and staff this event."

### SPONSORS:

Gold sponsors were BYRT, Drs. Thomas and Barbara Losty and Memorial Satilla Health. Bronze sponsors were Adam Ferrell, Georgia Power, LANG BBQ Smokers, Lewis & Raulerson, Inc., PrimeSouth Bank, Southern Eagle, Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, Walmart and Rev. and Mrs. David White.

Driving range sponsors were Callaway Advertising, Clayton Homes, Coca-Cola, Crossway Realty, Gibson & Associates, P.C., Music Funeral Home, Southeastern Credit Union and SGSC Faculty.

The hole sponsors were Ankle Foot and Associates, Bacon County Hospital and Health System, City of Homerville, Clinch County Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, Elite Primary Care, Howell Roofing Company, Joe, Janice & Jade Skinner, Robbie Roberson Ford, Roger E. Collins, Ware County Tax Commissioner, United 1st Federal Credit Union, United Community Bank, WAYCROSS Magazine and Waycross Urology Clinic.

The Hole Contest sponsors were Applebee's, Dr. Michelle DiBiase, LANG BBQ Smokers, Dr. John Lefand, Jr., Lowe's, Terrell McCall, Howard Meadows State Farm, Dr. David Morton, DDS, Satilla Marine, Sparky "D" Sharpton, Walker Jones, Walmart, Whitaker's Golf Carts and Wilson Insurance.

The Silent Auction sponsors were Hildegard Amspacher, Cory Baldwin, Martin Bell, Designs Unlimited Josh Fowler, Friendly Express, Gil Gibson, Susanne Gibson, Gopher Plantation, Donnie Griffin, J. Green & Co., Jake & Ed's, Jorja's Nails and Hair Salon, K.D.'s, L.L. Creek, LANG BBQ Smokers, Lee Hardware, Lowe's, Greg Martin, Megan's Boutique, EB Price, Mike Ranew, Pat Reid, Robbie Roberson Ford, Staples, Jimmy Stewart, Tiffany Goggin Photography, Patti White, Michael Winge and Yancey Brothers.

South Georgia State College (SGSC) students will reap the benefits from the first annual "Birdies for Bucks" Golf Classic held February 8, 2019, at the Okefenokee Country Club in Blackshear, Ga.

"Birdies for Bucks" was created by the James M. Dye Foundation on South Georgia State College's Waycross Campus to support SGSC's Gap Funding Project. The project provides grants to students on SGSC's Waycross Campus who experience financial limitations after all financial aid options have been exhausted.

The event raised over \$20,000 and will enable the Dye Foundation to put financial resources in place so that future students have the opportunity to realize their academic dreams.

"We are very thankful to everyone who supported SGSC's Inaugural Golf Classic Tournament and silent auction event," says SGSC President Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers. "Because of your generosity, many more South Georgia State College students will realize their dream of attaining a college education. This is a gift that will keep on giving for many years and generations to come."

The kickoff for "Birdies for Bucks" was a sponsor reception and silent auction Thursday evening, Feb. 7 with activities continuing Friday morning at breakfast and a shotgun start for the 4-man scramble. A lunch and awards ceremony was held following tournament play.

The event would not have been possible without the tournament committee and the many generous donors and sponsors. "The inaugural 'Birdies for Bucks' golf tournament was a tremendous success. On behalf of the Board of Trustees of the James M. Dye Foundation, we

# SGSC THEATRE PRODUCTIONS MAKES A STRONG COME BACK!

*A look at the 2018/2019 season... Doubt, A Parable, KCACTF,  
Doubt Encore & Journey, A Multimedia Production*

*"Victoria's involvement in the South Georgia State College Theatre Program for the 2018/2019 season has been immeasurable. As her parents, we are excited and proud that she is a part of such a wonderful program. Victoria has gained self-confidence and learned how to work collaboratively with other students as a team. She has been able to continue in her passion for the arts; all while starting her education at SGSC and saving us lots of money. We are truly grateful for the hard work and efforts to bring back the arts to SGSC!"*

– Wes and Tami Highsmith

It has been a number of years since the last fully produced theatre show happened on either the Douglas or Waycross campus of SGSC. In August of 2018, Katherine LeRoy-Lawson began as a temporary assistant professor of theatre for SGSC. LeRoy-Lawson has been with the college as a part time adjunct instructor since 2015. She is no stranger to the world of theatre, film or television. LeRoy-Lawson has been a professional actor since 2003. She has performed on a number of regional theatre stages and has been seen on television and in film.

## Doubt, A Parable

When given the opportunity to come on board as a full-time instructor at SGSC – she didn't hesitate to give a resounding yes. She leaped into action and selected John Patrick Shanley's *Doubt, A Parable* as the first show of the season. *Doubt, A Parable* is set in the Bronx in 1964. In this brilliant and powerful drama, Sister Aloysius, a Bronx school principal takes matters into her own hands when she suspects the young Father Flynn of improper relations with one of the male students. "*Shanley's message about the challenges of living with conviction in an uncertain world feels eerily relevant alongside today's headlines as it did when the play premiered in 2004,*" explained LeRoy-Lawson.

### Q: Why Doubt?

*It is a Pulitzer Prize and Tony award winning play. The show has a manageable cast of four, and I knew it would not be extremely difficult to cast four student actors or at least this was my hope.* – LeRoy-Lawson

Auditions were held in August of 2018, and LeRoy-Lawson (LL) was astonished by the number of students that came out to audition. She was beyond thrilled with the amazing talent and turn out by SGSC students from both the Douglas and Waycross campuses. So much so she decided to double-cast some of the roles.

Victoria Highsmith (of Waycross) and Evie Woodward (of Douglas) were double-cast in the lead role of Sister Aloysius. The two are dynamic actors and brought very different portrayals of the character to the stage.

The role of Father Flynn was played by the very talented Hunter Moore of Waycross. It should be noted Moore was not an original member of the cast and was brought on late in the rehearsal process. The original Flynn had to back out of the role for personal reasons. LL told her cast "the show must and will go on!" At this time Moore was a student in LL's Theatre Appreciation course on the Waycross campus. Although Moore did not audition for the show, LeRoy-Lawson has a knack for spotting talent and immediately thought of Hunter Moore to fill the role of Father Flynn.

Moore and LeRoy-Lawson both look back and share a laugh at how the



Tristan Buckhalter as Mrs. Muller in *Doubt*.



Victoria Highsmith as Sister Aloysius and Tristan Buckhalter as Mrs. Muller in *Doubt*.



Hunter Moore as Father Flynn in *Doubt*.



Ivee Cole as Sister James and Victoria Highsmith as Sister Aloysius in *Doubt*.



Isaiah Smith (Scenic Designer for production) paints set for *Doubt*.



Hunter Moore as Father Flynn and Evie Woodward as Sister Aloysius in *Doubt*.



Victoria Highsmith as Sister Aloysius and Tristan Buckhalter as Mrs. Muller in *Doubt*.



Hunter Moore and Ivee Cole rehearse for the *Encore of Doubt* on the Waycross campus.

events unfolded for the very successful production. Audience members typically never know all that happens behind the curtain to make a great show. LL's students have a running joke about their mentor/director/instructor ... she volun-tells us what she wants or needs us to do and of course we oblige her. "*Because it always leads us to really wonderful and unique experiences,*" shared Victoria Highsmith.

Tristan Buckhalter and Ivee Cole rounded out the all-star cast playing Mrs. Muller and Sister James respectively in the show. Both are declared theatre majors attending classes on the Douglas campus.

*Doubt* rehearsed for approximately two months prior to opening in November of 2018 in the Black Box Theatre located in Peterson Hall on the Douglas campus.

### Q: Why not McGouirk Auditorium?

Well... the Black Box reminds me of the New York theatre scene and offers an intimate setting that easily connects its audience with the world being presented to them. -LeRoy-Lawson

*"When I see my daughter, Ivey, on stage it makes my heart smile. When I see her doing what she loves, it just makes me feel great as a father."* – Fred Cole

The show received rave reviews during its run in Douglas – so much so -- that LeRoy-Lawson asked her Dean, Dr. Jodi Fissel, if an encore performance could be given in the spring on the Waycross campus. Fissel wholeheartedly agreed with LL's idea of an encore performance and gave her blessing to the cast and crew to take the show on the road.

The encore performance of *Doubt* went extremely well on the Waycross campus. Victoria, Hunter, Tristan, Ivey and Haley (as the stage manager) did a phenomenal job drawing in the audience and holding their attention with their rock star performances.

*"The play was most entertaining!!!"* – Dr. Rusty Gibson

## Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF)

**Q: In the printed program for *Doubt*, there is a page dedicated to the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF). What exactly is KCACTF?**

*Great question! KCACTF is a national theatre program involving 18,000 + students from colleges and universities nationwide which has served as a catalyst in improving the quality of college theatre in the United States.*

The national festival is made up of eight regions, and Georgia is a part of region four.

As a college student (many, many moons ago), LL remembers being a part of region five for the festival and how awesome the experience was for her as a theatre major. LeRoy-Lawson wanted the theatre students of SGSC to have this same experience – if not an even better one. So, LL reached out to Dr. Greg Tanner (Dean of Students at the time) and asked how they can make this idea come to fruition. Tanner was very instrumental in helping to find the funding necessary for the trip. Walda Kight and Taylor Herford also recognized how beneficial an experience like KCACTF would be for the students and helped through the SGSC and Dye Foundations to contribute to the participation expenses.

Seven very talented students of South Georgia State College from the Douglas and Waycross campuses attended the Region IV Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KCACTF) in Spartanburg, SC.

The students participated in professional development workshops, competed in the Irene Ryan Acting Competition and attended several live theatre productions. In addition, more than a few of the students were cast in the very popular 10



SGSC Students shine in Broadway Dance Boot Camp led by Broadway celebrity James Gray. Dance Bootcamp at KCACTF in Spartanburg, SC.



SGSC Students (L-R) Haley Dixon, Tristan Buckhalter and Bamaan Grady dance with Broadway Legend James Gray.



Ivey Cole working with Pratik Motwani, actor, theatre maker and educator of Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre.



SGSC Theatre Students pose with Master Instructor and Broadway legend - James Gray and student peers from other colleges and universities after an intensive Broadway Dance Boot Camp.



Top, L – R: Bamaan Grady, Hunter Moore, Anthony Davis, Ivey Cole, Haley Dixon. Bottom, L – R: Tristan Buckhalter and Victoria Highsmith



Ivey Cole, Hunter Moore and Anthony Davis are enjoying the Upstate College campus between workshops.



Ivey Cole working with Pratik Motwani, actor, theatre maker and educator of Dell'Arte International School of Physical Theatre.



SGSC Theatre Students are waiting anxiously to see Georgia Southern University's production of *Emilie*. L-R Hunter Moore, Haley Dixon, Victoria Highsmith, Tristan Buckhalter and Anthony Davis.

### Minute Play Festival.

Victoria Highsmith, Tristan Buckhalter and Ivey Cole were all Irene Ryan nominees for their performances in *Doubt*, *A Parable*. This prestigious nomination is sought out by thousands of theatre students throughout the country. Irene Ryan, a professional actor best known for her role as "Granny" from *The Beverly Hillbillies* television series, generously left an endowment that supports student actors across the nation through the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

*"This conference has been monumental in my life,"* said SGSC student Victoria Highsmith. *"If I could go back in time and be accepted into some prestigious theatre program straight out of*

*high school, I think I would decline. This is where all of us are meant to be in this moment and I wouldn't want it any other way."*

Anthony Davis, a graduate of SGSC as a communications major with plans to pursue a career in the film industry says, "This trip was by far the best time I have ever had in my life. During the festival, I was able to learn so much about theatre, not just as a subject, but as a culture. I would do this trip over a million times more if I could."

## Journey, A Multimedia Production

*Journey* is an original piece that is a collective creation -- which follows the compelling story

of a little boy named Travis from a young age to adulthood. *Journey* takes a look at the realities of our American history as Travis witnesses a heinous and untimely death (*lynching*) of a stranger. This occurrence challenges young Travis to seek a different path in life...and ultimately a brighter future. This production was our response to the Justice for Victims of Lynching Act of 2018 – passed unanimously in the United States Senate on Dec. 19.

*Journey* was a tremendous undertaking for the SGSC theatre program and the first and largest multi-media production to date. It included a short film, documentary, a live show and an audience talk-back ... experienced all in one evening by community, staff, faculty and students.

*The beauty of this production was the intergenerational collaboration that happened behind the scenes, states LeRoy-Lawson.*

**Q: What made the production an intergenerational collaboration?**

The script for the short film was written by Anthony G. Davis (a student at the time at SGSC) and LeRoy-Lawson. Anthony directed the film and Francisco Contreras (another student at SGSC) served as the assistant director. Dr. Kit Carson (Chair of Education & Professor of Education at SGSC) worked closely with LeRoy-Lawson as the director of cinematography, editor, and producer. Ivey Cole served as the production manager. The cast of the short film included students from both the Waycross and Douglas campuses, faculty, staff and community members. The youngest members of the cast were Marzell L. Usher, Jr. (a 6th grade student at J.L. Newbern Middle School in Valdosta, GA) and Kingstyn Cook (a 2nd grade student at Westside Elementary). Even the President of the college, Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, made a cameo appearance as herself in the short film.

For the documentary portion -- Tristan Buckhalter served as the film research assistant and conducted each of the interviews; Dr. Dana Caldemeyer (assistant professor of history at SGSC) and Dr. Rick Reiman (professor of history at SGSC) both served as historians and writers.

And *Journey Live* was an abstract version of the short film with dance, music and spoken word, directed and choreographed by the super talented Jordan Anstee Clark (who graduated in the spring with her associate of arts in theatre), Katelyn Worley (student at SGSC) served as an amazing technical director, and the superstar cast included: B. Grady, Crystal Francis, Madison Gruber, Noah Hughes, Kerrington Hollis, Noah Rouse, Tristan Buckhalter, Victoria Highsmith, Bryan Jackson, Princess Haugebrook, Joshua Green, Zane Adams (students from both the Waycross and Douglas campuses) and LeRoy-Lawson.

*“Another great production! So much more than just a performance, it is what art should be ... provocative, brave, creating opportunity for posi-*



*Members of the American Legion Post and Unit 515 attended the premiere of Journey, A Multimedia Production and pictured below or above is a small fraction of the group in attendance. L-R Dr. Carl McDonald, Louis Duncan, Charles A. Smith, Angela Lane, Tanya Simpson, and Jerome Loving.*

*tive change.” – Gary Evans (season subscriber)*

*“I thoroughly enjoyed last night’s presentation of ‘Journey.’ In fact, I found it to be extraordinary in all respects. Not only did the multimedia format create an interesting momentum, but the multi-storytelling styles and the overall message itself were quite compelling.”*

– Dr. Carl McDonald

Theatre is highly collaborative, and the audience members for the 2018/2019 season had the wonderful opportunity to see the *magic* of the SGSC theatre program. From the outstanding performances of the actors to the behind the scenes phenomenal crew members such as Bamaan Grady (stage manager for *Doubt, A Parable*), Isaiah Smith (scenic designer for *Doubt, A Parable*), Haley Dixon (stage manager for *Doubt Encore*), Marissa Dixon (box office manager for *Doubt Encore*), Savannah Sparks who served as an exceptional box office manager for *Doubt, A Parable & Journey* and Dr. Kit Carson who filmed *Journey* the short film and *Journey* the documentary.

**Q: Would you say the 2018/2019 season was a success in your eyes?**

*“Oh, most definitely! And I am so grateful for the love and support SGSC Theatre Productions received from our president Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, our community, both -- Mr. Jerome Loving of American Legion Post & Unit 515 & Gary Evans (for promoting our season), our audience members, Dr. Greg Tanner, Sandra Adams, Dr. Jodi Fissel, Walda Kight, Taylor Hereford, Dr. Kit Carson, Dr. Dana Caldemeyer, Dr. Rick Reiman, Officer George A. Wilkerson, Mike Smith, Stanley Williams, Nancy Taft, Walida Swaggard, Paul & Hayley Scheeser, Wes and Tami Highsmith, John Kirkland, Jimmy Harper, Susan Brantley, Amy Hancock, Becky Wehmeier, Cathy Hand, Caity Barber, Sarah Braswell, Dr. Robert Page, Autumn Prescott, Yolanda Crosby, Avery Lewis, John Leistner, Rhonda Blount, Sonja McCulloch, Greg J. Lawson, our season sponsors (LRY Media Group, Gibson Animal Clinic, The Grill Doctor, Surcheros, Fetch Grooming & Boarding, Douglas Sign & Company, Tip Top Deli), and last, but definitely not least, all of my wonderful students for allowing me to ‘volun-tell’ them this revival season.” –LeRoy-Lawson*



*Pictured are some of the cast and crew from Journey, A Multimedia Production.*



*Kingstyn Cook who starred as Young Travis in Journey the short film is pictured with the President of SGSC, Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers after the premier of Journey, A Multimedia Production.*



*Cast and crew on set on the Waycross campus. L-R Dr. Kit Carson (Director of Cinematography), Walida Swaggard, Marzell Usher, Jr., Alfred Moore, Francisco Contreras (crew) and Anthony G. Davis (Director).*



*Journey Live rehearsal on the Douglas campus. Pictured: L-R B., Jordan A. Clark (director), Noah Rouse & Madison Gruber.*

For more information about SGSC Theatre Productions and how to support the 2019/2020 season, please contact Katherine LeRoy-Lawson at [Katherine.LeRoy@sgsc.edu](mailto:Katherine.LeRoy@sgsc.edu) or 912.260.4352.

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# HISTORY MADE AS SGSC CELEBRATES *Graduates At Spring Commencement Ceremonies*

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SGSC President Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers, is shown with JoAnne Lewis, recipient of the first SGSC Honorary Degree.



SGSC President Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers with Ms. Sarah Rettker, Waycross campus commencement speaker.

The 2019 Commencement exercises were held at South Georgia State College (SGSC) amid celebration and significance. The Douglas campus ceremony took place on the front lawn of Peterson Hall on Wednesday, May 8 at 8:30 am, and the Waycross campus ceremony was held on Thursday, May 9, in the gymnasium at 7:00 pm.

The commencement ceremonies marked a milestone for SGSC as the graduates represented a record number of 370 having their degrees conferred from this academic year, including 58 receiving bachelor degrees and 11 dual enrolled students graduating from college and high school within days of each other.

History was also made at the Douglas campus ceremony as President Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers made a presentation to the 2019 Commencement speaker, Ms. JoAnne Lewis, as the recipient of an honorary degree from South Georgia State College. “JoAnne, we are honored today to have a first for South Georgia State College. Throughout your career, you have worked with many industries, governmental officials, managed teams of folks, helped create marketing programs to sell our community and held a number of other business-oriented roles,” said President Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers. “I am excited to share with you that the University System of Georgia has authorized and approved for South Georgia State College to award you an Honorary Bachelor of Science Degree in Management for your countless contributions to the business, education and economic components for Coffee County.” Ms. Lewis was then presented with an SGSC diploma, cap and gown to commemorate the momentous occasion.

SGSC’s 2019 Commencement speaker on the Waycross campus, Ms. Sarah Rettker, encouraged graduates to keep learning and evolving in order to succeed and for them not to think graduation is a final step in their education process.

Ms. Rettker currently serves as Vice President of Investor Engagement for the Georgia Chamber of Commerce where she manages business and community relationships across the state. With over 47,000 members,

this statewide organization works to keep, grow and create jobs to make Georgia a better state for business.

“Never stop learning, unlearning, and relearning,” Rettker stated. “We are moving into an unprecedented and unpredictable future where you must challenge yourself to continue to gain new skills, to meet new people, and to embrace positive discomfort in order to evolve and to advance your career. Your skills, your perspective and your disposition are important and will help you become a success not only in your career, but also in your life.”

Also during each ceremony, Dr. Thompson-Sellers shared some highlights from this academic year. “Much of this past year was focused on shaping our new strategic plan. Entitled *Moving Forward*, the strategic plan is built on the college’s legacy and articulates key goals for the next five years. Our commitment to strengthen the economic health of the region remains one of the core goals. This commitment comes in many forms--from providing strong academic programs delivered by talented faculty and staff to establishing and maintaining relationships through collaborations with our community and region.”

She also shared information on the three new bachelor’s degree programs that will launch in fall 2019, recognized several students, athletic programs and college clubs that received state and national attention and honored two faculty members retiring, Mr. Bill Webster and Dr. Glen Maul.

Dr. Thompson-Sellers reflected, “This was a landmark celebration for our college, and I am delighted to have been a part of celebrating the hard work of our students, faculty and staff as well as honoring Ms. Lewis.” She further stated, “I appreciate our many educational, governmental, Foundation and industry partners who have played a role in our accomplishments this year, and I look forward to working together to continue a bright future for our students and our region. Congratulations to all our SGSC graduates!”

# SGSC Highlights



South Georgia  
State College



## SCHOOL OF ARTS AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

### Dr. Jodi Fissel, Dean

The first Business Club at South Georgia State College was started spring 2019 under the guidance of **Dr. Charles Smith**, department chair of business/assistant professor of management.

**Mr. Frank Pridemore**, associate professor of political science, coordinated the annual SGSC Constitution Day Observance in September, 2019.

**Mr. Jeremy Petrella**, assistant professor of history at the Valdosta Entry Program, continues to be involved bringing history to life with programs and presentations for the public across South Georgia and North Florida. This includes organizing an event in Lakeland, Ga., that brought nearly 50 re-enactors to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of World War II and educate the community about this pivotal period in American history. Spectators were immersed in displays teaching about the lives of American and German soldiers as well as the struggles of the American families back home. The weekend included a recreated USO show at the Threatte Center that featured and benefited the Lanier County Jazz Band.

**Ms. Paula Fales**, associate professor of English, **Ms. Sara Selby**, professor of English, and **Mrs. Elaine Stephens**, assistant professor of English, combined their English 1102 classes with a project called Unclaimed Baggage. Students analyzed characters in their readings, discovered issues the characters dealt with, made brochures and documented sources, then packed a suitcase for each character. In the suitcases were items that were keys to the character's issues and struggles. The projects were housed in the Waycross campus writing center, which students decorated elaborately to resemble an airport and classes were to look at brochures, suitcases and contents, to determine which literary personality was involved with each.

**Dr. Charles Smith**, department chair of business/assistant professor of management, was recognized as a 2019 National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Excellence Award recipient.

As president of the SGSC Faculty Assembly, **Mr. Frank Pridemore**, associate professor of political science, represented SGSC at the University System of Georgia (USG) Faculty Leadership Council meeting in October, 2018, and then again in April, 2019.

The first Photography and Video Club at South Georgia State College is slated to begin fall 2019 under the guidance of **Dr. Kit Carson**, department chair of education/professor of education. **Katherine LeRoy**, assistant professor of theater; **Elaine Stephens**, assistant professor of English; **Yolanda Crosby**, technical services and library assistant III; and **Becky Sims**, associate professor of political science, will serve as co-advisors.

**Mrs. Elaine Stephens**, assistant professor of English, was commissioned by the magazine "Okefenokee Living" to do a story on our President, Dr. Ingrid Thompson-Sellers. Copies of the magazine are available on both campuses.

## SCHOOL OF NURSING | Dr. Jaime Carter, Dean

**Dr. Susan Clement**, associate professor of nursing, presented at a conference, "Meaningful Living and Learning in a Digital World" in Savannah, Ga. (February 2019). Dr. Clement also graduated with an EdD in Nursing Education (May 2019) from the University of West Georgia.

**Kasey Strickland**, associate professor of nursing, and the **SGSC GANS** (Georgia Association for Nursing Students) nursing students on the Waycross campus participated in the cancer walk in Blackshear, Ga.

**Lauren Thornton**, assistant professor of nursing, graduated from the Valdosta State University Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Program (May 2019).

**Dr. Bobby Jean Musgrove**, associate professor of nursing, graduated from Albany State University Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Program (May 2019).

**Dr. Scott Thigpen**, professor of nursing, presented "Code E for Ethics" at Coffee Regional Medical Center to the Medical staff/Ethics committee.

**Melaina Nail** joined as the academic advisor Fall 2018.

**Shanda Jowers**, assistant professor of nursing, joined as faculty January 2019.

**Kim Sutliff** joined as the Administrative Assistant January 2019.

## SCHOOL OF SCIENCES

### Dr. Charles Johnson, Dean

Over 400 students attended the Regional Science Fair in February on the Douglas campus. The fair was led by **Dr. Charles Johnson**, dean of the School of Sciences and **Dr. Bryson Dye**, assistant professor of chemistry.

The Douglas campus hosted four schools during the Middle School Science Olympiad, led by **Dr. Charles Johnson**, dean of the School of Sciences.

Over 100 students from area high schools participated in the annual Waycross campus mathematics tournament. The tournament was coordinated by **Dr. Lisa Howell**, professor of mathematics and **Ms. Becky Griffin**, associate professor of mathematics.

Over 120 students from local high schools attended STEM Days on the Douglas and Waycross campuses. Students were led through hands-on science activities by **Dr. Badr Abdalla** (Physics), **Dr. Bryson Dye** (Chemistry), **Dr. Rosa Guedes** (Ecology), **Dr. Kimberly Hunt** (Genetics), **Mr. Bernard Majdi** (Chemistry) and **Dr. Molly Smith** (Biology). STEM Days are funded by a STEM grant through the University System of Georgia.

**Mr. Bernard Majdi**, associate professor of chemistry and biology; **Dr. Rosa Guedes**, associate professor of biology and ecology; **Dr. Robert Potter**, assistant professor of biology; **Dr. Kimberly Hunt**, assistant professor of biology and the Biological Sciences Coordinator and **Sarah Braswell**, STEM Center Coordinator – Waycross hosted hands-on science activities at the Boys and Girls Club of Coffee County.

**Dr. Kimberly Hunt**, assistant professor of biology and the Biological Sciences Coordinator attended the Chair Academy in Atlanta, where she attended sessions on leadership in higher education.

**Dr. Rosa Guedes**, associate professor of biology and ecology and **Dr. Robert Potter**, assistant professor of biology, presented a talk entitled "Environmental Science: An Interdisciplinary Course for a Diverse Student Audience" at the Oxford University Symposium on Population, Migration, and the Environment in Oxford, England in August 2018.

**Dr. Margaret Adams**, assistant professor of mathematics, presented a talk entitled "Knowledge of Domains: Inconsistent Applications of Definition to Problem-Solving Tasks" at the 2019 South Dakota STEM ED Conference in Huron, SD.

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Education changes lives. At SGSC, we have a proud tradition of providing a high quality, affordable and supportive learning environment to create tomorrow's leaders.

SGSC is growing. Whether you're one of our alumni, a friend or a community leader, your support is now more important than ever.

Every gift makes a difference as we position SGSC and our students for a successful future.

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## For more information:

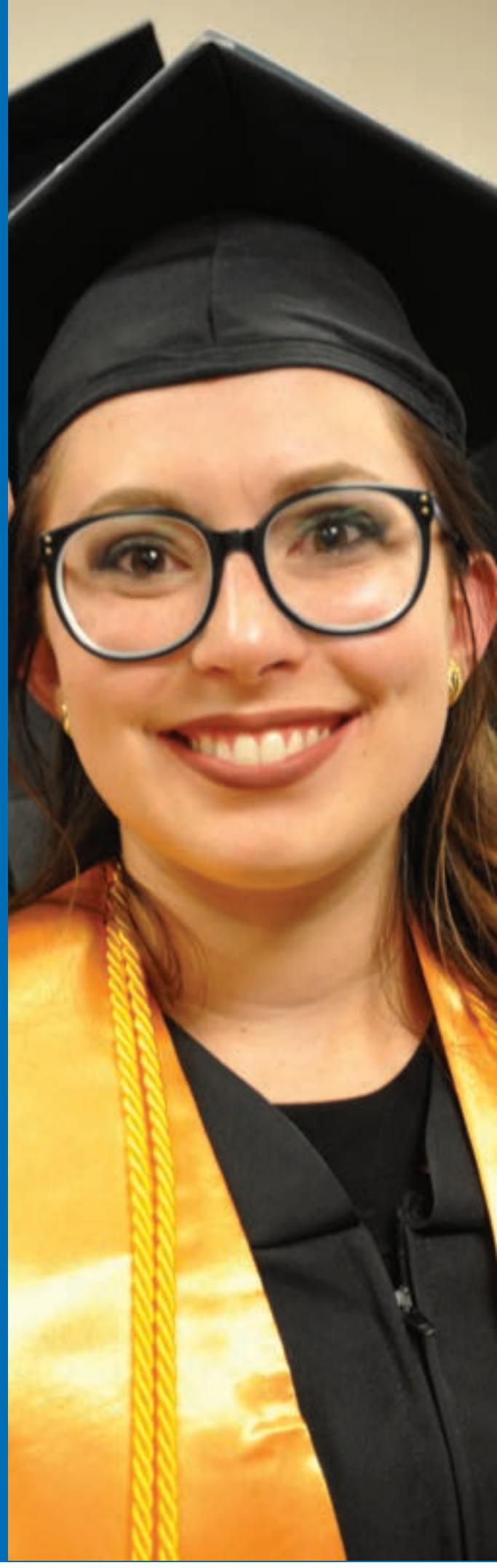
**Douglas Campus** 912.260.4274

**Waycross Campus** 912.449.7511



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## BASKETBALL:

Hawks basketball finished the season 15-14-1, which made it 10 straight winning seasons. SGSC is the only team to make the Georgia Collegiate Athletic Association (GCAA) Tournament nine seasons in a row. The team won its 200th game since college basketball came to Waycross with a total of 207 wins and an average of 20-plus wins a season. Coach Cory Baldwin won his 250th game as a National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) head coach. His last 5 seasons' win total was 112, which is an average of 22.4 wins a season.

Highlights of the season included being 19th in the NJCAA in Opponents' Field Goal Percentage 40%; 8th in the NJCAA in Offensive Rebounds per Game (15.1); 1st in the GCAA in Opponents' Field Goal Percentage 40%; and 2nd in the GCAA in Offensive Rebounds per Game (15.1). The team won four big non-conference games, "National Games", with a sweep of Florida State College - Jacksonville (FSCJ) and Denmark Technical College. This earned the Hawks their first sweep of FSCJ in school's history. They defeated regular season GCAA Champion, Andrew College, on the road and beat #21 ranked Georgia Highlands College at home.

The Hawks had three players named All-GCAA – Skyler Baggs, Charles Botchway

and Keyshaun Street (all Second Team). Skyler Baggs was named to the GCAA All-Defensive Team. Skyler Baggs, Charles Botchway and Keyshaun Street were all named to the Sophomore GCAA All-Star Game.

Will Ferguson was named to the Freshman GCAA All-Star Game. The Hawks had eight graduates this spring and two will graduate this summer. Three players were named to the President's List for receiving a 4.0 GPA this spring and Riley Melocon and Will Ferguson were named NJCAA All-Americans (3rd team).

## BASEBALL:

SGSC Hawks baseball ended the season with a ranking high enough to put the team in postseason play. After competing in the tournament at Albany State University – West Campus, the Hawks baseball team walked away with the title of National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Region XVII Division I region runner-up.

At the conclusion of the tournament, Justin Brooks, Blake Ebo and David Meadows were all named to the GCAA 2019 Base-

ball All-Tournament Team. Meadows was named to the Second Team All-Conference and All-Region Gold Glove Team. Cody Ogilvie also received a spot on the GCAA Baseball All-Region Gold Glove team.

## SOFTBALL:

Mary Tillman of the Lady Hawks was selected on the 2018-2019 All Region team for Region XVII. Two Lady Hawks earned spots on the All-Academic Team for the 2018-2019 season. In order to be eligible, a student athlete must be a sophomore with a minimum of 3 full-time terms and a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA. Chiann Watson and Larran Carter each excelled academically in order to be recognized.

## SGSC Student Athlete Four-Year Commitments

Congratulations to the following SGSC athletes who have committed to play in their respective sport at the next level! Go Hawks!

### BASEBALL

**BLAKE EBO**  
University of Kansas

**COLE ESCHER**  
Middle Tennessee State University

**SETH JOHNSTON**  
Eastern Kentucky University

**CODY OGILVIE**  
Georgia Southwestern State University

**TANNER JONES**  
Georgia Southwestern State University

**JUSTIN BROOKS**  
Middle Georgia State University

**TYLER SALOMON**  
Middle Georgia State University

**DAVID MEADOWS**  
Columbus State University

**BLAKE BRITO**  
Berry University

**BASKETBALL**  
**KEYSHAUN STREET**  
Delta State University

**DWAYNE WILSON**  
Reinhardt University

**RILEY MELONCON**  
Tennessee Wesleyan University

**KAMRON WALTERS**  
Reinhardt University

**CHARLES BOTCHWAY**  
University of Arkansas Fort Smith

**JAY SHROPSHIRE**  
Shorter University

**LUKE LAWSON**  
Young Harris University

**SKYLER BAGGS**  
Southern University

### SOCCER

**MAKENZIE MACMILLAN**  
University of South Carolina-Beaufort



### CROSS COUNTRY

In the 2018 season, Hawks cross country competed in both the men's and women's divisions in the GCAA. The teams had meets at places such as Middle Georgia State University, Georgia College and State University, Albany State University, and the Central Georgia Technical College Invitational. SGSC prides itself on helping runners achieve their potential both in the classroom and on the trails.

### SOCCER

Hawks women's soccer finished third in the GCAA for 2018-2019. This past season saw five players named to the all-conference teams: Makenzie Macmillan (So.), Kaitlyn Moore (Fr.), Yulisa Serrano (So.), Brianna Poy Fong (Fr.), and Daniela Ramos (Fr.). Macmillan has committed to play for the University of South Carolina Beaufort, an NAIA program located in Beaufort, S.C. The 2018-2019 season also

saw improvements made to the women's soccer facilities. Shannon Hall has been renovated to become the field house for the team. This facility includes coaches' offices, player locker room, team meeting room with multimedia projector, rehabilitation and recovery areas and equipment storage. There are currently 19 players rostered for the 2019-2020 season representing Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and the Caribbean.

### SWIMMING

The SGSC Hawks men's and women's swim teams once again made a post-season trip to the annual NJCAA swim meet in Buffalo, N.Y. The women's swim team earned their 4th consecutive national runner up award trailing the winning team from Indian River State College. Iowa Central placed third in the women's side of the competition. SGSC's men placed 4th in the four-day long meet. Indian River

placed 1st, followed by 2nd place Iowa Central and 3rd place Southwest Oregon College.

Sophomore female swimmers Abigail Aldridge and Lindsey Garrison competed in the 50 fly event in the finals. Aldridge had a 5th place finish and Garrison earned an 8th place spot. Jackson Bloom also placed in the sprint fly event by finishing 7th. Freshman Kristin Farless placed 7th in the 200 back, while the men's 200 back saw three Hawk swimmers earn podium spots. Sophomore Ryan Buckzowski (4th), Freshman Wyatt Dalton (6th), and sophomore Orion Bopp (7th) tailed over 40 points in the event. Sophomore Jessilyn Graham placed 6th in the 200 breast-stroke, while freshman Chris Mazier had a 5th place finish in the men's 200 breast. Milers Casey Hall and Anna Beth Deck also had top eight finishes in the 1650 yard long event. Hall finished 6th and Deck was right behind her in a very close 7th place.



## Meagan Garris ('10)



Meagan graduated from Ware County High School in 2008, right as the U.S. economy was in the thick of the recession. She saw that staying close to home and saving on tuition and room and board costs would be a good decision for her.

Meagan was very involved during her time at the former Waycross College. She was active in Drama Club and Phi Theta Kappa. She speaks highly of the student life events she attended on campus, like Waystock and skating in the Dye Building.

After transferring to Valdosta State in 2010, she completed a bachelor's and master's degree in 2012 and 2015, respectively. She has been accepted to VSU's Doctor of Education program and begins the program this fall. Meagan currently works at the University of North Georgia as their Institutional Effectiveness Specialist.

When asked what she liked about Waycross College, Meagan says, "Going to Waycross College really helped me establish a strong foundation before setting off to a larger institution. I can't stress enough how much it helped me to feel like my professors knew who I was and cared about my success."

## Gary Tanner ('82)

Gary, while preparing to graduate from Ware County High School in 1980, was considering his college options when his father mentioned South Georgia State College (formerly SGC). After a summer visit to the campus, he enrolled in classes and got his start with SGC in the fall of 1980.

During his time in Douglas, Gary studied journalism and soon became the editor of the college newspaper during his sophomore year. He enjoyed his hands-on experience in the field and finds himself still enjoying it today, as the Managing Editor of the Cherokee Tribune, Cherokee Ledger News, and Cherokee Life Magazine, serving the Cherokee County, Ga. area.

When speaking of his time at SGC, Gary commends the knowledgeable professors and the beautiful campus. He says, "I loved it there. There was a family atmosphere, and it was a really great experience for me overall."



## Tara Roberts ('92)



In the fall of 1991, Tara Roberts, a Warner Robins native, found herself headed to South Georgia State College (formerly SGC) on a softball scholarship. Tara played one year for the former Tigers and then played one year for Macon State (now Middle Georgia State University). She remembers her time at SGC very fondly.

Tara loves South Georgia, and says she found the campus peaceful and relaxing. A challenging curriculum and the small size of her classes helped her prepare for a rigorous Physical Therapy program at Georgia State, which Tara completed in 1995.

Today, Tara resides in Louisiana with her family and is the Vice President of Rehabilitation and Wound Care Services for Nexion Health Management, Inc. She oversees 39 long-term care facilities and also has opportunities to write for various health magazines on topics related to long-term care and physical therapy.

She is confident in her statement that “SGC gave me the best start I could have had.”

## Justin Lewis ('06)

Justin, a native of Douglas, knew he needed an affordable option when it came to college. He was raised by a single mother who did not have the extra funds for expensive tuition. With student loan debt in mind, he decided to attend the former South Georgia College in his hometown.

While a student in Douglas, Justin was the editor of the campus newspaper, led the College Democrats, and served on several academic committees. He says the small-feel of a community college helped him become more confident as a leader during his time at the former SGC, as well as the close relationships he formed with his professors and fellow students.

In 2008, while enrolled at Valdosta State University, Justin got an opportunity to work on President Obama’s Presidential Campaign that he could not turn down. After the successful election, Justin moved to Washington, D.C., and launched a political technology startup based on technology he had built on the campaign. His startup was later acquired by a company that builds technology for political campaigns and non-profit organizations.

Present day, Justin works on a team called R&D at The New York Times where he researches emerging technologies like artificial intelligence so that The Times is well-equipped to use new technologies in their pursuit of the truth and helping people understand the world. Even though he is a long way from Douglas, Ga., Justin continues to support SGSC and to be an inspiration for students just getting their start in their career fields.



# Class Notes

## 1984

**Eddie Taylor** and his wife, Beth (89') founded Taylor Ministry Group, an international evangelism and teaching ministry out of the Orlando, Fla., area. Eddie attended the former Waycross College before finishing his bachelor's degree at VSU.

## 1993

**Kyle Lott** completed his associate's degree at the former SGC in 1993, then obtained his pharmacy degree at UGA. He is the Director of pharmacy and the Chief Operating Officer for the Bacon County Health System.

**Ben Clenney** received his associate's degree at the former SGC in 1993 and went on to complete his bachelor's degree in Risk Management and Insurance in 1995 at UGA. The same year, he received his Property & Casualty and Life & Health Insurance licenses and joined The Clenney Agency, Inc. as an insurance agent. Ben married his wife, Jana, in 1998 and together they have two children and live in Colquitt, Ga.

## 1994

**Evan Gourley** graduated with an associate's degree in nursing from the former Waycross College 25 years ago. Today, he works at the Cardiac Catheterization Lab at Coffee Regional Medical Center in Douglas.

## 1996

**Taylor Hereford** is the Waycross Campus Director for South Georgia State College, as well as an alumnus of the former Waycross College. Taylor completed an associate's degree in Waycross and a bachelor's degree at the University of Georgia. In December 2019, he will finish his Master's of Higher Education Administration at Georgia Southern University.

## 1997

**Kerry Trapnell** didn't move to the Douglas area until he was in first grade, but he considers Douglas his hometown. Upon graduating high school, he received a scholarship to attend the former SGC where he completed an associate's degree. He then moved on to VSU and received a bachelor's degree in accounting in 1999. He currently serves as the CEO of Elberton Memorial Hospital just outside of Athens, Ga.

## 2003

**Matt Pridemore** attended the former SGC and completed a dual associate's degree in Foreign Language and Business Management. Matt resides in Leesburg, Ga., with his wife Amy, who is an officer in the Navy. He currently owns five Badcock Furniture stores in the

North Fla. and South Ga. area.

## 2004

**Brett Mizell** attended the former SGC from 2002-04 with a focus in Pre-Allied Health. He went on to Georgia Southern University where he completed a bachelor's degree in biology in 2007. In 2011, he finished a Doctor of Chiropractic program at Palmer College of Chiropractic in Florida. For over six years, Brett worked in Jesup at Advanced Healthcare Center as an Associate Chiropractor. In October 2017, Brett and his wife Candace opened Southern Chiropractic in Douglas.

## 2006

**Mark Carter** started attending the former SGC when he was just 16 years old, while he was still in school at Jeff Davis High. While a student at SGC, Mark was active in many clubs and was even voted "Best All-Around Student" during his last year. He went on to Georgia State University where he completed his bachelor's and master's degrees. Mark now lives and works in the Atlanta area.

## 2007

**Nikolaos Hutto** obtained an Associate of Arts degree from the former South Georgia College in 2007. Following SGC, he continued his studies at Valdosta State University and eventually completed graduate studies at VSU and Mercer University. He previously worked at South Georgia State College in a number of roles and is currently a financial analyst at the Beasley Group, a leader in the forest products industry.

## 2008

**Jesse Davis** came to the former SGC in 2006 on a soccer scholarship and played under Coach Al Horner. He received an associate of science degree and then continued his soccer career at Georgia Southwestern in Americus where he completed a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 2010. In 2015, Jesse obtained his PhD in Polymer Science from the University of Tennessee. He is now a Senior Development Chemist at Henkel Corporation in their Loctite division of adhesives.

## 2010

**Erika Wyatt** attended the former SGC and eventually transferred to VSU. She obtained her master's degree from Auburn University in Foreign Language and now teaches Spanish at Thomas County Central High School.

**Gerald Jonah** is currently pursuing an MBA from Georgia Tech while working as a claims overpayment and recovery analyst with Lincoln Financial Group. Gerald completed his associate's degree

in business at the former SGC in 2010.

## 2012

**Sarah Snipes** completed an associate degree in sociology at SGSC before attending Valdosta State and then UGA School of Law. She takes the BAR Exam this July. Sarah is employed with insurance defense firm Speed, Seta, Martin, Trivett, & Stubley, LLC in Lawrenceville, Ga.

**Herb Thomas** came to the former Waycross College in 2009 to play basketball for Coach Cory Baldwin. He went on to Lynn University in 2012 where he continued to play basketball. Herb is now a Branch Rental Manager for Enterprise Rent-A-Car in Jacksonville, Fla.

## 2013

**Travis Wehmeier** completed a BS and MS in Mathematics at Georgia Southern after obtaining his associate's degree in mathematics from SGSC in 2013. Travis has been hired as an assistant professor of math at SGSC and begins teaching this coming fall.

## 2015

**Halei Varnadore** completed her associate's degree in nursing from SGSC in May 2015. She went on to get her BSN from Georgia Southern

in May 2017 and will finish her MSN-FNP degree this coming December. She currently works at Bacon County Hospital as a Registered Nurse.

## 2017

**Liz Hutto** recently opened the brand new Smooth Spa & Brow Bar in Alma, Ga. Liz received an associate's degree from SGSC in 2017 and took classes on both the Waycross and Douglas campuses.

## 2018

**Maggie King** is the cashier and accounting assistant on SGSC's Waycross campus. Maggie completed her bachelor's degree last May and is pursuing a Master's of Business Administration through Georgia Southwestern University.

**Chelsea Kneeland** completed her bachelor's degree in biological sciences at SGSC in 2018. Chelsea then moved to Jackson, Wyo., where she is a Wildlife Guide in Grand Teton National Park and in Yellowstone National Park. She is pursuing her master's degree online through Miami University in Wildlife Conservation. This summer, Chelsea will be traveling to Borneo with Project Dragonfly to study Orangutans in the wild for a primate conservation course.

## In Memoriam

**Ms. Norma Gillis Wheeler ('49)**

June 12, 2018

**Ms. Regina Jordan ('92)**

June 20, 2018

**Ms. Betty J. Nettles**

August 11, 2018

**Dr. Jeffrey A. Cauley ('76)**

November 2, 2018

**Mr. William Mason Adams ('54)**

November 19, 2018

**Mr. Harry Brown ('59)**

December 21, 2018

**Mr. Victor Z. Spooner Jr. ('51)**

SGSC Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee, Fall 2018

January 21, 2019

**Ms. Doris Taft Tew ('45)**

April 2019

**Mr. Don Sellers ('55)**

May 5, 2019

**Mr. Stephen (Steve) A. Brown ('73)**

May 19, 2019

## RECENT EVENTS

### SOBU Continues To Support SGSC Students



On Saturday, April 27, members of the Student Organization for Black Unity, known as SOBU, returned to South Georgia State College's Douglas campus for an alumni reunion. This group of attendees were students at the former South Georgia College between the years of 1971-1980.

During the day on Saturday, alumni enjoyed a campus tour. Many of them had not seen the campus in decades and were impressed by the residence halls, dining hall, and renovated Engram Hall, which served as their student union while they went to SGC.

Saturday evening, the group gathered in the Alumni House for a dinner and guest speaker, Dr. Oscar Street. Dr. Street is the first African-American graduate of South Georgia College and is close friends with several members of the club. Dr. Street, now retired from the education field, led an extremely successful career in the Douglas area and is a very well-respected member of the local community.

For the past ten years, SOBU members have funded a scholarship to sponsor a student at South Georgia State College. They are dedicated to helping students have a positive educational experience at SGSC, much like they did themselves. The members of the group, who now have careers, spouses, children, and even grandchildren, have never forgotten that their friendships began in Douglas, Ga., and they love coming back to their alma mater.

Ms. Walda Kight, SGSC Vice President for Institutional Advancement, states, "SGSC is so fortunate to have supporters like our SOBU alumni who understand how lives are transformed by education. Their past support has positively impacted several students already, and we look forward to the benefits this gift will bring to our future recipient."

### Classes of 1969-72 Baseball Team Reunion

On Friday, October 12, 2018, a group of nearly 30 former SGC baseball teammates and their wives gathered at Jekyll Island. The team has been doing so for several years, and they look forward to the next trip as soon as the current one is over. Friday night, the teammates enjoyed dinner at Tortuga Jack's on Jekyll. After dinner, they gave out awards for various accomplishments that certain players were recognized for during their playing days.

After dinner at the Jekyll Island Country Club on Saturday night, the team played "SGC Baseball Trivia" where they tried to identify players who held impressive stats, such as the most hits one season, or the most strikeouts during another. While they did remember their on-field accomplishments fairly well, their memories of their statistics were not nearly as clear as their memories of pranks they played or stories on the bus to and from away games.



*The former South Georgia College World Series Baseball team gathers at Jekyll for a reunion.*



*Pete Bragan, Donald Norris, Gary Fulmer, Steve Wilson and Mason Bean at the JUCO World Series in Grand Junction, CO. — (Photo courtesy of Grand Junction (Colo.) Daily Sentinel)*

On the weekend of May 24, 2019, five of the former SGC players headed to Grand Junction, Colorado where the Junior College (JUCO) World Series is held. At the Alpine Bank Junior World Series Pre-Tournament banquet, the men were recognized in honor of it being the 50th anniversary of their own World Series appearance. The Daily Sentinel, the local paper in Grand Junction, even included an article on the five men who made the trip.

This alumni group is a testament to the bonds that have been formed at SGSC. With 50 years of friendship behind them, the former teammates never get tired of getting together and reliving their days together in Douglas, Ga.

### Bowden Reunion Still Going Strong

For the 13th year, a very special group has once again gathered in Douglas to celebrate their times at the former South Georgia College. These former students attended SGC between the years of 1955-1958 and played football for the legendary Bobby Bowden. During the weekend of May 31-June 2, 2019, the former teammates revisited the Douglas campus.

Few people know that Coach Bobby Bowden, iconic former head coach of the Florida State University football team, got his start in Douglas. Over six decades ago, Coach Bowden received a call from Dr. Smith, a former president of SGC, offering him a job as Athletic Director as well as

head coach of football, baseball and basketball for the school. At just age 25, Coach Bowden and his wife, Mrs. Ann Bowden, moved to South Georgia for him to begin his career as a collegiate coach.

Until 1958, Coach Bowden led the former SGC's various athletic teams and made an incredible impression on the young men he coached. This group loves to get together and talk about their time playing under Coach Bowden. The friendships they started in the 1950's have endured through today and are as strong as ever.



### Upcoming Events:

Classes of 1969-72 SGC Baseball Team Reunion  
September 27-29, 2019  
Savannah, Georgia



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