FINDING FOCUS
UNG’s newest degree program produces career-ready graduates

HEALTHCARE EDUCATION EXPANDS TO SUPPORT REGIONAL NEEDS

COTTRELL MBA EXPANDS TO GAINESVILLE
UNG TURNS PERSONAL POTENTIAL INTO SUCCESS, AND SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE INTO LEADERS.

The Corps of Cadets at the University of North Georgia has existed since the institution was founded in 1873. UNG is one of only six senior military colleges in the nation and is designated as The Military College of Georgia.

UNG has produced 50 general officers, including 10 currently serving around the world. This year, UNG will commission a record-setting 83 cadets – a group that includes the top-ranked cadet in the nation.

UNG offers many scholarships opportunities for cadets, including the Georgia Military Scholarship. The university also offers many federally-funded language and study abroad opportunities for cadets, including the Chinese Language Flagship Program and Project Global Officer.

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Pictured on cover:
Clay Brandon, left, and Ben Olagoke, both students in the University of North Georgia’s Department of Communication, Media & Journalism, look through the department’s RED Scarlet, a high-end digital camera that shoots images four times more detailed than high definition.

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Our students are the best measure of our success

I opened our Faculty-Staff Convocation this year by sharing a comment Henry Ford once made. He said, “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.”

Of course, our success at UNG is not measured by the production of cars or widgets. The best evidence of our success is found in our students, who are mentored by world-class faculty and staff to ensure they are regionally and globally competitive. Through student-focused experiences both in and out of the classroom, we turn personal potential into success, and successful people into leaders.

Throughout this publication, you will find stories about our amazing students and the opportunities they have at UNG to prepare for fulfilling careers or advanced education programs. We are fortunate that our alumni and community partners understand the value of higher education and its impact on our students. With your generous support, we increased fundraising for scholarships by 35 percent this year, and those gifts will have a profound impact on the lives of our students.

As I write this, we are preparing for six commencement ceremonies to celebrate the graduation of more than 1,300 students. Upon graduation, they will join generations of alumni who comprise a network of civic, professional and military leadership across this region and throughout the global community.

This spring, our new UNG Alumni Association held its first meeting, becoming the first of Georgia’s consolidated universities to merge its alumni associations. This is a significant milestone, but, most importantly, it is an indication of the strong alumni leadership we have and their commitment to supporting UNG.

I hope you will take a moment to reflect on your college experience, on the mentors who helped you succeed, and what that foundation means to you today. If you’d like to share your story, write to us at alumni@ung.edu.

Sincerely,

Bonita C. Jacobs, Ph.D.
President
Thanks to the efforts by its two former alumni associations, the University of North Georgia is the first of the recently consolidated schools in the University System of Georgia to create a new, unified alumni association.

The Board of Directors of the new UNG Alumni Association submitted bylaws to create the association on Jan. 10. Comprising 30 members, the board will steer the new association in its mission to engage UNG alumni, encourage financial support, and serve as a conduit between alumni and the university.

“Our primary focus this year will be engaging alumni by educating everyone about the UNG Alumni Association and encouraging active participation,” said Chris Stenander, association president. “This will ensure that we have strong representation from across the university, putting in place a firm foundation for the association’s future, which has already been started by the Alumni Council Steering Committee’s hard work. I am confident we have a great start in all these areas based on the leadership in our executive committee, board members, ex-officio members and the committees we are putting in place to get the work done.”

The new association represents recent alumni from UNG, as well as alumni from Gainesville State College and North Georgia College & State University, which consolidated in January 2013 to form UNG. The inaugural board includes members from the former alumni associations and will seek new board members.

Ex-officio members of the board include several UNG administrators: Dr. Bonita Jacobs, president; Dr. Patricia Donat, provost and senior vice president of academic affairs; Dr. Al Panu, senior vice president of university affairs; Mac McConnell, senior vice president of business and finance; Bruce Howerton, interim vice president for university advancement; Dr. Janet Marling, vice president of student affairs; COL (re-tired) Tom Palmer, commandant of cadets; Lindsay Reeves, director of athletics; and Phil Collins, executive director of the UNG Alumni Association.

Following this transitional year, board members will serve two-year terms. After serving their first term, board members are eligible for re-election for one additional term; after serving two consecutive terms, a board member must wait one year before becoming eligible for election to the board for another term.
The University of North Georgia will open a campus this fall in Blue Ridge, Georgia, to increase college opportunities for students in northeast Georgia. Funding for the new facility was approved by the University System of Georgia (USG) Board of Regents in April.

“Access to quality, affordable higher education is vital to creating jobs in today’s economy,” said Speaker of the House David Ralston, who represents Fannin and Gilmer counties and a portion of Dawson County. “Having a permanent, first-rate institution of higher learning in our community has long been a goal of mine. This campus will mean great things for generations to come in our part of Georgia.”

The state’s Complete College Georgia goals are based upon a 2011 study by Georgetown University that indicates Georgia needs to add 250,000 postsecondary graduates to the state’s workforce by 2025. Census data indicate that individuals with a college degree may earn $1 million more over their lifetime than those with only a high school diploma, and nearly half of the counties in the UNG’s immediate service area have a college completion rate of less than 20 percent.

“The health of the U.S. and Georgia economies depends upon citizens obtaining meaningful degrees at a higher rate than they do today,” said USG Chancellor Hank Huckaby. “This new instructional site, with funding from the state legislature, supports our mission to graduate more students to meet workforce demands, which, in turn, supports economic recovery and development.”

Though the location of the instructional site has not been finalized, the university will begin offering courses in fall 2015. Initially, the program will build upon the university’s existing dual-enrollment courses that are offered in collaboration with the Union and Fannin County school systems and allow students to earn both college and high school credit at the same time. One benefit of dual-enrollment is that college tuition is funded by the state’s Accel program.

“We know that, particularly in the northernmost counties in our service area, there is need for expanded higher education opportunities that emphasize access, convenience and affordability,” said UNG President Bonita C. Jacobs. “This new instructional site will meet those needs and create the foundation for more robust opportunities in the future.”

Initial dual-enrollment courses would focus in the social sciences and humanities to complement existing advanced coursework opportunities available in the local schools. Classes may be facilitated or enhanced by real-time technology that is made possible through UNG’s participation in the North Georgia Network and Educational Exchange in the region.

By spring 2016, the university expects to enroll a cohort of approximately 100 students. Courses will be designed to lead to the completion of a baccalaureate degree, including a transfer pathway, as well as associate programs in regional high-demand disciplines.

“Blue Ridge provides an opportunity to create a unique campus that serves a broad spectrum of students and meets regional needs,” Jacobs said. “There will be a strong consideration of the needs of first-generation students, as well as high-achieving high school and college students, former students who have dropped out, and working professionals.”
UNG cadet earns top ROTC honors

Newly commissioned 2nd Lt. Jonathan Chase Strickland was the nation’s top-ranked ROTC cadet on this year’s national Order of Merit List and U.S. Army Cadet Command’s Cadet of the Year, and he was honored by Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal and both chambers of the state legislature in March.

The national Order of Merit List ranks all Army ROTC seniors across the country based on academic performance, physical fitness, demonstrated leadership, and their performance at the Army’s annual Leader Development and Assessment Course. Out of 5,617 ROTC cadets scheduled to graduate and commission during the 2014-15 academic year, five UNG cadets, including Strickland, ranked in the top 10 percent.

A native of Gainesville, Georgia, Strickland, graduated summa cum laude with a 4.0 GPA this spring with a degree in international relations with a Middle East concentration. Strickland commissioned as a military intelligence officer and plans to attend Infantry Basic Officer Leader School in Fort Benning, Georgia.

“We’re here today to pay tribute to an exceptionally outstanding young cadet – Jonathan Chase Strickland,” Deal said in a ceremony to honor Strickland. “Chase, you bring great credit to your family, to the University of North Georgia, to the state of Georgia and to our nation as a whole. I want you to know that you have the well wishes and best regards of the people of our state and we all will watch with pride as your career progresses.”

Strickland received a the commendation at a ceremony hosted by Gov. and Mrs. Deal in the North Wing of the Georgia Capitol. Resolutions also were presented by Sen. Steve Gooch, a UNG alumnus, in the Senate and by Rep. Carl Rogers of Gainesville in the House of Representatives.

“This has been a special opportunity. I’m honored to be here and to have the chance to speak to the Senate and the House and recognize my family, the University of North Georgia, the Army and the National Guard,” Cadet Strickland said. “It’s been a proud moment in my life and a big stepping stone in my career.”

One of only six Senior Military Colleges in the United States, UNG is designated as The Military College of Georgia and as a University System of Georgia leadership institution.

UNG’s Corps of Cadets has more than 800 students and commissioned 83 officers in the 2014-2015 academic year, a record-high number. Nearly a third of those cadets are ranked in the top 20 percent of their class, nationally, and earned the status of Distinguished Military Graduate.

Ranger Challenge team excels at Sandhurst competition

The University of North Georgia’s Ranger Challenge team earned an impressive second-place finish among ROTC teams at the prestigious Sandhurst Military Skills Competition held in April at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

“I saw numerous competing teams shout motivation and encouragement for UNG, and I heard from many instructors and cadets that they were impressed with UNG’s professionalism, tactical and technical knowledge, motivation, and overall conduct,” said Capt. Donovan Duke, an instructor from UNG’s Department of Military Science who helped the team prepare and accompanied them to the competition.

The team earned a Sandhurst invitation in October by defeating other military teams at the Bold Leader Challenge at Fort Knox, Kentucky. The Sandhurst competition included 59 teams, including 36 from West Point, one from each of the other U.S. service academies, nine ROTC teams, and teams from Great Britain, Germany, Canada, Chile, Japan, South Korea, and Qatar.

Cadet 1st Lt. Ryan Deits, the officer in charge of UNG’s Ranger Challenge team, was pleased with his team’s performance.

“Every member of the team utilized everything they had learned throughout the year and were able to react to the many challenges that the competition presented,” he said. “Every single member of the team really surprised me with their incredible endurance throughout the competition.”
Through two new construction projects, the University of North Georgia will add a residence hall on the Dahlonega Campus and instructional space on the Oconee Campus.

Construction is expected to begin in early summer on a new, four-story residence hall with approximately 536 beds at the intersection of West Main Street and Walker Drive in Dahlonega – across the street from UNG’s Dining Hall. The new residence hall will be open for students in fall 2016.

Dr. Janet Marling, vice president for student affairs at UNG, said the unique architecture and landscaping of the two-building residence hall will complement the west side of campus.

“The showstopper will be a rooftop programming space with amazing mountain views,” Marling said. “More important to the students, the buildings are designed to foster community and will include creative meeting and study spaces. I am excited about the opportunities to enhance our residential campus experience which this new residence hall provides.”

On the Oconee Campus, work began in March on a $2.5 million annex that provides much-needed classroom and laboratory space.

“The addition will provide greatly needed relief in terms of classroom, tutoring and study space,” said Dr. Eric Skipper, CEO of the Oconee Campus. “It will also give us some breathing room in terms of faculty and office space.”

Enrollment at UNG’s Oconee Campus has been at capacity for the past few years and space has been at a premium. Though enrollment has previously been as high as 2,400 students a semester, enrollment was limited to 2,300 a semester this year to help alleviate issues with space and give students more flexibility for scheduling classes, Skipper said.

The University System of Georgia recommends space utilization – a measure of how frequently a space is used and whether it is at full occupancy – at its 30 universities range from 50 percent to 70 percent; the Oconee Campus has been operating at 90 percent.

Most of the nearly 13,000 square feet in the annex will provide additional instructional space for students, including three classrooms, a language lab, a multi-use science lab, a learning commons for tutoring and supplemental instruction, and two study rooms. Other spaces include a restroom, break room, and offices. The floor plan includes 10 new offices for full-time faculty and additional cubicle work space for part-time faculty.

The annex, which is expected to be completed in fall semester 2015, will not mean enrollment will be raised on the Oconee Campus, Skipper said, but could mean increased course offerings.
UNG’s Cumming Campus shows steady growth

UNG’s Cumming Campus opened in 2012 just off Georgia Highway 400 and has shown steady growth ever since, highlighting the demand for higher education programs in that community. UNG offers both undergraduate and graduate courses, as well as a range of continuing education and professional development programs on the Cumming Campus.

“Our Cumming Campus is a tremendous example of collaboration between the University System of Georgia, government officials and community leaders to expand opportunities for higher education in this region,” UNG President Bonita C. Jacobs said. “The combination of price, functionality, attractiveness and partner collaboration has established a new template for how to provide higher education in areas that are underserved.”

Most of the undergraduate courses offered in Cumming are the general education or core curriculum courses required of all students, regardless of their chosen field of study. Two UNG graduate programs also are offered on the Cumming Campus: the Cottrell MBA program and the Master of Arts in Teaching.

The number of dual-enrolled high school students taking classes at the Cumming Campus has tripled since 2012, and accounts for nearly 120 students from 17 area high schools. Dual enrollment allows high school students to earn high school and college credit simultaneously by taking college courses. Tuition is usually paid by Georgia’s Accel program and does not count against potential HOPE Scholarship awards. A high school student who begins taking courses in his or her junior year could enter college as a sophomore, saving a year of time and college tuition.

Jason Pruitt, executive director for UNG’s Cumming Campus, expects the dual enrollment program to grow to 150 students in fall 2015.

To support the growing student body, a pavilion and casual indoor and outdoor seating have been added recently to give students places to relax and study between classes. As the campus continues to grow, long-term plans include adding a second classroom building.

Pruitt added that he’s been pleased with the lasting relationships the faculty and administrators have forged as UNG has been welcomed into the area. This year, he’s working on establishing a community council involving members of the Cumming and Forsyth County community.

“A big thing for us is the involvement with the community and the partnerships that we are developing and have developed in the community, and not only the high schools,” Pruitt said.

UNG e-texts projected to save students nearly $1 million

Three UNG faculty teams have earned state grants totaling nearly $62,000 to create no-cost digital textbooks that are projected to save UNG students more than $988,000 in the 2016 academic year.

The grants to create digital texts for a combined 10 courses in education, mathematics and chemistry were awarded by Affordable Learning Georgia, a University System of Georgia (USG) initiative to promote student success by providing affordable textbook alternatives. The biggest benefit would be felt by students using all three math texts, with an estimated $605 savings per student. Students using all three education texts would save an estimated $224. Students using the chemistry text would save an estimated $280. Overall, an estimated 2,800 students would benefit during the 2016 academic year.

Receiving the grants were:

- College of Education: $30,000 to Drs. Sheri Hardee, Kelly McFaden and Linda Reece, and Lauren Johnson and Pat Nodine
- Department of Mathematics: $21,100 to Michael Goodroe, John Williams and Drs. Berhanu Kidane and Julian Allagan
- Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry: $10,800 to Drs. Jim Konzelman and Greta Giles

The projects are the three newest to join several other successful digital textbook projects at UNG, which were recognized by USG Chancellor Hank Huckaby during his budget presentation to state lawmakers in 2014. UNG has also produced a digital world literature textbook and is working on another 10 digital texts for online core curriculum classes for use by students throughout the USG.
A wild throw to second base skipped into center field, and Cailen Rundles sprinted home to win the game for the UNG baseball team. The fourth-grader’s rare, walk-off win was celebrated at home plate by a cheering crowd of his fellow UNG Nighthawks during an April 7 Make-A-Wish event at the university.

The game-winning run was part of a special day, “A Field of Dreams,” planned by UNG and the Make-A-Wish Foundation, to reveal a wish for a critically ill child. Through a joint collaboration between the national Make-A-Wish office and the NCAA, five Division II schools nationally are part of a wish reveal each year.

Cailen, a student at Mount Vernon Elementary School in Gainesville, received a police escort to UNG’s Bob Stein Stadium and signed a one-day contract to play for the Nighthawks. Cailen and his family also travelled to the Atlantis Resort in the Bahamas to fulfill his wish, which was made possible by the Make-A-Wish foundation and thousands of student-athletes across the nation.

“[Our program is] all about adversity; we pride ourselves on having fighters and competitors, and Cailen fits that mold perfectly,” Tom Cantrell, head coach for UNG’s baseball team, said during a news conference announcing Cailen’s signing to the team. “Character is the most important thing to us. What a person stands for makes all the difference in the world.”

UNG’s Athletic Department raised more than $21,000 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation during the 2013-14 year, marking the highest total ever from a single institution in the history of the NCAA Division II initiative. UNG has donated more money to the Make-A-Wish Foundation than any other institution in three of the past four years.

“It’s such an honor to have Cailen here,” Brandon Agar, starting pitcher for the Nighthawks, said. “The athletic department believes in Make-A-Wish, and to see firsthand where the support is going and the joy it brings to Cailen and his family is amazing.”

Before the evening’s official match-up between the Nighthawks and the University of West Florida Argonauts, the teams staged a special “halted” game, a continuation from a game in the previous season that was rained out. As Cailen crossed the plate to score the winning run, his teammates enveloped him in a shower of high-fives, hugs and spray from water bottles as the crowd roared.

“That was a rush,” Cailen said. “Coach kept telling me to watch the pitcher, and when he told me to run, I just felt adrenaline.”

During the pre-game ceremony for the evening’s regular match-up, Cailen was presented with a commemorative bat to honor his winning run and a football signed by his favorite athlete, quarterback Matt Ryan of the Atlanta Falcons. An audio message recorded by Ryan for Cailen was also played over the stadium speakers.

Cailen and his family, including parents Emily Burnett and Royce Rundles, had a catered meal next to the Nighthawks dugout during the evening’s game. Coincidentally, the Nighthawks also won that game in walk-off fashion at 6-5 in the bottom of the 10th inning.
University of North Georgia student Kayla Farmer is honored to lead Delta Phi Epsilon – the first new social sorority at the university in a decade. The addition brings the total number of Greek organizations at UNG to six sororities and nine fraternities.

“It feels incredible to be a part of founding an organization at UNG. Delta Phi Epsilon has given me a home and a place to better myself outside of academics,” Farmer said.

“I loved this semester and being able to serve my sisters and grow alongside them. Being a leader isn’t always about being the face of the organization, but being a servant to those around you.”

The search for a new sorority began during the fall 2014 semester when UNG’s existing sororities expressed the need to add a group, said Jessica Brown, Panhellenic extension and recruitment coordinator. She and Dustin Cheek, UNG’s interim Greek advisor, helped guide the process.

“The growth of the University of North Georgia in recent years also has fed the growth of the Panhellenic Council and membership was getting quite large,” Brown said. “It was really important to the groups to keep the close-knit feel of their organizations because it reflects the atmosphere of UNG as a whole.”

Inquiries were sent out nationally, and when several groups expressed interest, an extension committee was formed of members representing UNG’s existing groups. The committee invited three finalists for campus visits, which included campus tours, presentations, and meetings with Greek organizations and UNG administrators. After the campus visits in September, Delta Phi Epsilon overwhelmingly was selected.

The sorority’s international headquarters sent two collegiate development consultants, sorority members Merynda Rensimer and Ashley Kerbel, to spend spring semester helping “colonize” the new sorority.

“Being at the University of North Georgia was a great experience. I could really see the closeness between students and between students and faculty,” Rensimer said. “The school is so rich with history … I have never been to a military school, so I was astounded at the traditions that date so far back. UNG is an impressive university and I am so happy to say that Delta Phi Epsilon is now part of their Greek community.”

Eighty-one women were initiated in April to form the new chapter. UNG is the fourth school in Georgia to have a Delta Phi Epsilon chapter; the organization, founded in 1917 at New York University Law School, plans to add a fifth chapter at the University of Georgia this fall.

“Our Panhellenic community was incredibly encouraging and inviting and welcomed this new organization with open arms,” Brown said. “They helped make the transition for this new group very smooth.”

UNG’s current Panhellenic Council includes the sororities Alpha Gamma Delta, Delta Phi Epsilon, Delta Zeta, Kappa Delta, Phi Mu, and Sigma Kappa. The university’s current Intrafraternity Council includes the fraternities Alpha Phi Alpha, Delta Chi, Kappa Sigma, Pi Kappa Alpha, Pi Kappa Phi, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi, Sigma Nu, and Sigma Omega.

Greek Life at UNG is located at the Dahlonega Campus, but any student enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate program who meets the minimum criteria can seek membership.
In 2014, the University of North Georgia acquired the only hand-painted, full-size replica of the 224-foot-long Bayeux Tapestry, which depicts historic events leading up to the Norman conquest of England. Created in the 1070s, the original, embroidered Bayeux Tapestry is considered a masterpiece of medieval art.

The painted-canvas replica was commissioned in the 1980s by Dr. E. D. Wheeler, a retired judge and former dean at Oglethorpe University. Only 25 yards shorter than a football field, the tapestry is one of only a few full-size replicas in existence. Two full-size, stitched versions have been completed, one in England and one in Canada; since 2000, a Danish group has been working on a third. A half-scale, mosaic version on display in New Zealand took 20 years and 1.5 million pieces of steel to complete. Various modern artists have replicated panels of the Bayeux Tapestry.

Dr. Tim May, professor of history and associate dean of the College of Arts & Letters, said the accuracy of the replica makes it useful for studying the era’s historical events and everyday life.
“The Bayeux Tapestry reveals the biases and perspectives of the creators and their audience, so in order to fully understand events, we need to compare it with other sources that can fill in gaps,” May said. “It also provides us with an illustrated history of the era – clothing, daily life, weapons and armor. This gives us insight into what life was like and what kind of events, no matter how mundane, were considered important enough to be committed to the tapestry.”

UNG’s facilities staff and art faculty built a wooden box with a big wooden spool that the piece winds around for storage. JoMarie Karst, who teaches weaving and textile art at UNG and was tasked with cleaning the replica, has been creative, but careful, in handling it. She and her students spooled it from the wooden box, across 10-foot tables and onto a gigantic loom, then used a vacuum to clean away the dust.

Laura Beth Tuttle, a senior majoring in art marketing at UNG, spent hours helping clean and photograph the replica.

“I feel like I’ve learned a lot about preservation of fine arts,” Tuttle said. “Also, I’ve done samples of embroidery and I know how tedious and time-consuming it is and the patience you have to have. When I think of the process the original artists used to create an embroidered piece that’s 225 feet long, it just amazes me.”

Dr. Chris Jespersen, dean of UNG’s College of Arts & Letters, said he would like to take UNG’s replica to schools and other locations, but the length means it requires a lot of space. A one-day-only unveiling in March drew dozens of curious on-lookers and a visit to a metro-Atlanta school is scheduled, but no other displays are planned at this time. The university plans to put the Bayeux replica on permanent display, but has not yet finalized a location due to funding constraints.
At the University of North Georgia’s Oconee Campus, a strong partnership with the local community is helping to enrich the educational experience for students and widen opportunities for members of the community.

In October, UNG raised nearly $18,000 in the first OconeeFest, a fundraiser to support scholarships for Oconee County students attending any of UNG’s four campuses.

“This semester we have about 350 Oconee County residents as students at our campus, and there are nearly 500 UNG students total who list Oconee County as their county of origin,” said Dr. Eric Skipper, CEO of the Oconee Campus.

Scholarships may be used for tuition, study abroad opportunities, undergraduate research, and other expenses and scholarly opportunities.

Nathan Toburen, president of the Student Government Association at the Oconee Campus, says the scholarships benefit the community and students, as local businesses and philanthropists can see a very real impact they are making in students’ lives.

“Being a scholarship recipient myself, I can attest to just how beneficial these donations can be,” Toburen said. “These kinds of scholarships very much lift weight off of a student’s shoulders.”

Skipper said the increased funds will also help the Oconee Campus keep more students at UNG.

In January, UNG and the Oconee Cultural Arts Foundation (OCAF) opened renovated classroom facilities at the OCAF art complex, marking a continuation of the partnership between the university and Oconee County’s vibrant arts community. OCAF was founded in 1994 and is a non-profit art center run entirely by volunteers. OCAF provides art exhibits, classes, festivals and performances to educate the community and increase the interest in the arts.

UNG President Bonita C. Jacobs told OCAF members, “We are very thankful to you for being such a valuable partner as we seek to serve the needs of students. You have embraced our students, faculty and staff by giving them a place to pursue and exhibit their work and also an opportunity to interact with the community.”

Stacy Koffman, an art professor on the Oconee Campus and OCAF member, is excited about the new facilities, which were officially opened on Jan. 23.

“Students on the Oconee Campus benefit from the partnership between OCAF and UNG by gaining access to state-of-the-art studio spaces and getting opportunities to work with OCAF members and the local community,” Koffman said.

UNG and the UNG Foundation Inc., which raises private funds to support student scholarships and university needs above and beyond state funding, contributed $50,000 to OCAF for the facility renovations to support art education. Due to lack of facility space on UNG’s Oconee Campus, OCAF has provided classroom space for UNG students in their art education facilities for several years.

“The support OCAF has received from UNG is remarkable,” said OCAF Executive Director Cindy Farley. “Our new ADA accessible classroom, made possible through a substantial gift from UNG, offers a bright and creative learning environment. With the addition of this space, we will reach a broader student audience and enrich many lives on a much deeper level through the arts.”
Regional leaders honored at Celebrating Inspirational Leaders event

Jim Mathis, Lynn Jackson and Grace Fricks were honored at the Celebrating Inspirational Leaders event held April 2. Sponsored by the Center for the Future of North Georgia in UNG’s Mike Cottrell College of Business, the event celebrated the inspirational efforts of regional leaders.

“It is an honor to recognize these outstanding individuals in our community,” said Dr. Donna Mayo, dean of the Mike Cottrell College of Business. “Each of the 2015 recipients is an excellent role model, and they will inspire our graduates to develop their careers and live in ways to make our regional businesses and communities stronger.”

During the event, Mathis, CEO of the North Georgia Community Foundation (NGCF), was honored as the first recipient of the Mike Banks Lifetime Achievement Award, named in memory of a UNG development officer and community volunteer. Mathis joined the NGCF after a 25-year career in banking. During his tenure, NGCF has grown from $3 million to $50 million in charitable assets and $200 million in total invested assets. Mathis has served as a trustee of Brenau University and a founding board member of the Georgia Mountain Food Bank. He also led Gainesville-Hall ‘96, the local organizing group responsible for the 1996 Olympic rowing and canoe/kayak competitions held on Lake Lanier.

Lynn Jackson, administrator of Northside Hospital-Forsyth, received the Inspiration in Business Award. During Jackson’s tenure as administrator, Northside has grown from 600 to 1,500 employees and added a women’s center, surgery center, two medical office buildings, and two new floors to an existing building. She is a former trustee of the UNG Foundation and is a current board member for Lanier Technical College and the Georgia Hospital Alliance.

Grace Fricks, president and CEO of Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs Inc. (ACE), received the Inspiration in Community Award. Fricks, who founded ACE in 1997, was recently named one of the “100 Most Influential Georgians” by Georgia Trend Magazine, and the Small Business Administration Georgia District’s Financial Services Champion of the Year. She serves on several nationally-recognized boards for entrepreneurship and UNG’s BB&T Center for Ethical Business Leadership Advisory Board.

Elana Meyers-Taylor, 2015 World Champion and two-time women’s bobsled Olympic medalist, served as the event’s keynote speaker. A former college softball player, Meyers-Taylor is the first woman ever to win a World Championship in bobsledding for the United States and one of the first women in the world to lead a mixed-gender bobsled team.

Corps, college to sponsor Honor2Lead, featuring John Maxwell

This fall, the Corps of Cadets and the BB&T Center for Ethical Business Leadership in the Mike Cottrell College of Business will team up to sponsor Honor2Lead: Military Values in Business – an event that will be simulcast around the world.

The first global military leadership and business simulcast of its kind, the event will feature Dr. John Maxwell, best-selling author and worldwide leadership expert, and UNG alumnus Lt. Gen. James Terry, who is leading the U.S. response against ISIS.

The simulcast will offer a unique approach and proven strategies for building ethics, trust and core leadership skills into the culture of modern-day business. In addition to Maxwell and Terry, other business innovators will examine why we lead and how to improve the way we lead.

Honor2Lead will be presented as a live simulcast around the world to more than 700 military bases, 1,100 ROTC college campuses, and thousands of veteran-owned businesses, Department of Defense contractors and Fortune 1000 companies.

The event is planned for Sept. 25 on UNG’s Dahlonega Campus. For more information, visit www.Honor2Lead.com.
IESA creates economic development tool for city

Faculty and students in UNG’s Lewis F. Rogers Institute for Environmental & Spatial Analysis (IESA) have created a web-based map that enables the City of Gainesville to promote downtown business space and support the community’s economic development efforts.

“This map is an invaluable tool as it helps us visually communicate with and market to prospective downtown business owners, which is very important to economic development,” said Regina Mansfield, manager of Main Street Gainesville, an organization charged with promoting the downtown area. “We could never have done this without the help of the UNG instructors and students — their help has made this aspect of our job so much simpler.”

Three UNG faculty and two students collaborated with Main Street Gainesville to build the map using geographic information systems (GIS). Mansfield said the map is superior to using spreadsheets and similar tools.

“Most managers have a downtown map and inventory so that when a potential business is interested in opening, they know what’s available, including building specs,” Mansfield said. “We wanted something more interactive, and we came up with the idea for a virtual tour. However, we didn’t know how to relay this information through an interactive program, so we reached out to UNG personnel for their expertise and GIS knowledge to see if they could help us tie everything together.”

Dr. J.B. Sharma, professor and assistant head of UNG’s Department of Physics, collaborated with Mansfield initially to develop the idea of the map and its features, but students created it.

“This project was really a continuation of the knowledge and experiences that I gained through my classes,” said Will Cox, one of two UNG students who worked on the project. “There were a few things that were different, such as writing a user guide for someone who doesn’t know the software. Also, finding open-source software that could be used in the long term to edit or make a new map was a bit of a challenge.”

Cox and fellow student Laura Conner collaborated with IESA faculty members Chris Strother, geospatial technology researcher, and Zac Miller, GIS lecturer.

“The students who participated in this project garnered valuable knowledge regarding working with a ‘real-world’ client with specific goals and expected deliverables,” Strother said. “We are hopeful that this will lead to future projects involving IESA students and the city.”

Main Street Gainesville received assistance from UNG graduate Jeremy Rylee, who is now GIS manager for Gainesville Public Utilities.
University Press builds partnership with Liaocheng University

A new agreement between the University of North Georgia Press (UNGP) and Liaocheng University in China creates an exchange of publications between the two universities that will include marketing of UNG publications in China. The agreement, which also includes an opportunity for UNG students to work as interns at Liaocheng, further strengthens a partnership that began in 2009.

“What began as a student exchange has grown into something remarkable insofar as how many students, faculty, and administrators have met, visited each other’s campuses, and grown both professionally and personally,” said Dr. Chris Jespersen, dean of UNG’s College of Arts & Letters. “Everyone benefits from this latest agreement. UNG students benefit through spending time working with Liaocheng faculty in China and Liaocheng students benefit from working with an American university press. The faculty at both institutions benefit through the scholarly collaboration that will result in new and path-breaking research reaching a wider audience.”

UNGP will publish an annual collection of peer-reviewed articles selected from the Journal of Liaocheng University, a monthly academic journal. UNGP will approve the translated articles and publish them to make them available to UNG students, faculty and staff, said Dr. B.J. Robinson, director of UNGP and professor of English.

“We will help select articles based on interest in America,” Robinson said. “We will select areas of interest such as economics, literature and translations of contemporary fiction.”

Liaocheng faculty have requested books from UNG, such as “Basics of American Government” written by UNG faculty, and offered to translate them into Chinese.

For four weeks, two UNG students will work as interns with Liaocheng’s College of Foreign Languages to edit translations of Chinese works into English. Also, Liaocheng will send two graduate students and an instructor to UNG to work with the press.

“The more specialized a subject is, the more difficult the language is,” Robinson said. “Having the students on hand to do the editing with the people doing the translations will be a huge help because they will be able to ask questions and figure out what is really intended, as there are many English words that have no conceptual equivalents in Chinese.”

While the interns will pay regular UNG tuition for the course, their travel will be paid by the College of Arts & Letters and accommodations will be supported by a UNGP stipend.

University Press builds partnership with Liaocheng University

UNG language education efforts honored

Two UNG administrators were honored by the Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG) for dedication and leadership in foreign language education.

Dr. Billy Wells, UNG’s vice president for executive affairs, was presented with FLAG’s Leadership in Foreign Languages (Post-Secondary) Award, which recognizes those who have taken an active role in promoting foreign language through professional or academic endeavors.

“Our reputation for innovative language learning both at the state and national levels is a reflection of the dedication and teamwork of all our faculty and staff over the years,” Wells said. “Any award to an individual should be considered a tribute to the efforts of all.”

Dr. John Wilson, associate vice president of international programs and director of UNG’s Center for Global Engagement, was presented with FLAG’s President’s Award. The award recognizes the FLAG member who has had the greatest impact on foreign language learning during the year through efforts to promote language study, cultural understanding and a general advocacy for languages.

“With the expansion of our language programs and international opportunities, student achievement remains our focus at UNG,” Wilson said. “A 21st-century education requires language competencies and cultural understanding, and UNG is constantly working to ensure our students have these skills.”

FLAG is an association of instructors, administrators, and others involved in foreign language teaching and the promotion of cultural understanding. The awards were presented in March at the 50th anniversary conference of the Southern Conference on Language Teaching in Atlanta.
Ayres named dean of College of Education

Dr. Susan Brandenburg-Ayres, a faculty member at the University of North Georgia since 1994, is the new dean for the university’s College of Education.

“My goals include focusing on student learning through ongoing data-informed program improvement at the undergraduate and graduate levels, supporting faculty, serving our region, and expanding internationalization through both curriculum and exchange experiences for students and faculty,” Ayres said.

Ayres served as interim dean of the college since July 2014; she previously had been an associate dean. UNG’s College of Education has been at the forefront of innovative program creation, while maintaining an awareness of the college’s responsibility to the communities it serves.

“The College of Education has a social responsibility for improving the lives of the children and families who will be served by the teachers and health and physical education professionals that we prepare,” Ayres said. “The commitment to advocacy and service is a key tenet in the newly developed conceptual framework of UNG’s College of Education.”

Ayres helped develop the highly successful professional development communities model to increase the length and intensity of field experience for student teachers. Student-teachers in the program take their college courses at the public school, providing a more integrated experience that includes pre-planning activities and parent-teacher conferences.

UNG’s teacher preparation program was commended in 2012, when the College of Education earned full accreditation from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education for its undergraduate and graduate-level programs. The national accreditation includes a seven-year review of its programs and effectiveness measures.

Ayres also helped develop UNG’s undergraduate program with dual certification in early childhood and special education – the first in the state. The program was designed to prepare teachers to support student achievement in a diverse classroom.

The College of Education recently added a master’s concentration in instruction and curriculum, and Ayres plans to increase international partnerships to develop new study abroad and exchange opportunities.

Ayres earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees in education from the University of Florida and earned a doctoral degree from the University of Northern Colorado. She has published and presented extensively on education topics such as special education, collaborative teaching of general and special education students and teacher education methods and programs.

New master’s concentration provides flexibility for k-12 educators

UNG’s College of Education has added a concentration in curriculum and instruction to its Master’s of Education program that offers current teachers location flexibility, making it ideal for working professionals.

The curriculum and instruction concentration is designed for a k-12 certified teacher with an undergraduate degree in education. The degree represents a unique opportunity for educators to bridge educational theory and classroom practices, said Charles Burrage, assistant dean and coordinator for graduate programs in UNG’s College of Education.

“There is a close connection between what we teach and what actually happens in the classrooms and schools,” Burrage said. “We have partnerships with schools in many counties across the region, so we are practitioner-friendly and can offer extensive field experiences. Students in these courses will experience high-quality instruction and involvement in educational research.”

The flexibility of time, location and modes of delivery will allow teachers to more easily balance their education with their personal and professional commitments. Classes may be offered on UNG campuses in Cumming, Dahlonega or Gainesville, online, or in a hybrid program that combines the two. Courses will be offered in the late afternoon, evening and during the summer.

Burrage added that the program was developed specifically to conform to the expectations of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission.

Additionally, students can add an endorsement to their teaching license by choosing a focus area of study, including English to speakers of other languages, gifted education, international teaching, reading, or special education.

For more information about UNG’s College of Education and admission requirements, visit ung.edu/college-of-education
Rachel Glazer, a junior majoring in psychology at the University of North Georgia, has been selected as a 2015 Newman Civic Fellow, a national award that recognizes individuals who demonstrate leadership and problem-solving abilities within their community. This is the third year in a row that a UNG student has been recognized as a Newman Civic Fellow.

“In more than 20 years as a faculty member, I have never seen someone come in and establish themselves as a leader – and a respected one – as quickly as Rachel has,” said Dr. Stephen Smith, who nominated Glazer for the award and directs UNG’s Honors Program. “She founded the Interfaith Alliance and the Improvable Odds performance group, served on the Women’s History Month committee and the Honors Council, directed ‘The Vagina Monologues,’ presented and won at the MLK Day Oratorical Contest, and served as emcee for the first UNG Spelling Bee. She did all this in her first two years on campus.”

Glazer, who is from Gainesville, Georgia, works with Rape Response, a community group that helps rape victims, as a victims’ advocate, and applies her training to educate peers about consent, Title IX, and safe sex. Her goal in founding the Interfaith Alliance was to unite religious minority students to create mutual understanding and encourage open discussion and dialogue.

“My passion for women’s rights led me to serve on the Women’s History Month committee and host UNG’s first Who Needs Feminism booth, opening up conversations about the importance of gender equality,” Glazer said. “I hope to continue applying the leadership lessons I have learned in a way that will establish a legacy of positive change in my community. The skills and opportunities I have been afforded can be used to help and empower others.”

Glazer is one of only 21 students selected worldwide to be a Nachshon Fellow and is studying at Hebrew University of Jerusalem during spring semester. She’s taking classes in her minor of gender studies and is travelling throughout Israel to learn about the nation’s politics and culture.

“The goal of the Nachshon Fellow program is to help young Jewish adults strengthen their understanding of the greater Jewish community and their skills as educators, advocates and leaders so that they may step up and stand out in their fields,” Glazer said.

UNG is designated by the University System of Georgia as a state leadership institution and fosters students’ leadership development through academic and co-curricular opportunities. The Newman Civic Fellow Award is in memory of Dr. Frank Newman, a leader in higher education who dedicated his life to positive change through education reform in a career spanning more than 50 years.
Through an expanded internal grants program created in 2013 to encourage innovation and the pursuit of scholarly and creative activities, University of North Georgia President Bonita C. Jacobs awarded more than $300,000 to fund 32 faculty and staff proposals for professional development and research projects in the 2014-15 academic year.

“This past year’s projects resulted in significant professional development experiences around the globe, research, authored books and presentations to professional organizations,” Jacobs said. “The impact on our faculty and staff, and, in turn, on our students, has been incredibly meaningful and has moved us forward in a number of ways.”

Grants totaling $500,000 in the past two years have supported professional engagement, summer scholarship and academic innovation.

FACULTY AND STUDENTS COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN INDIA

Aided by a Presidential Academic Innovation Award, Dr. Carly Redding and Anjana Freeman took students to a community in Goa, India, that is plagued by human trafficking. For five weeks in summer 2014 and two weeks in December, the groups conducted research and provided services as part of a five-year cooperative agreement between UNG and a local, non-governmental organization.

“For most of the generationally impoverished children in India, the only chance to avoid becoming victims of human trafficking is to increase the length of time in school. Therefore, our research has the primary objective of increasing the potential of children from this community to stay in school beyond the average dropout age of 7,” Redding said.

Students worked actively with children, taught them English, and played with them using toys the students had previously researched to gauge their value in increasing neural connections.

“The Indian government doesn’t pay for education unless a child reaches fourth grade and can demonstrate some ability to speak English,” Redding said. “Also, children are not as encouraged to play, so our students demonstrated to parents how play can benefit children down the road.”

The students also worked with mothers and infants in community play groups, educated community members and children about human trafficking, and conducted research with Freeman and Redding by filming family interactions and household activities.

Freeman and Redding also are assessing the educational outcomes of students participating in a study abroad program by analyzing the impact of their experiences.

“Between our research and our work in the preschools, the things we are starting this month could set many children on track for a better life than they would likely be able to achieve on their own,” UNG student Ben Darnell wrote in a blog post while in...
“The Presidential Academic Innovation Award also helped us build reciprocal relationships with our community partners, and we are moving beyond playing games to developing more programs that are mutually beneficial,” Havill said. “For example, the Senior Life Center indicated a need for monthly nutrition presentations, exercise programs, and arts and crafts activities. Students enrolled in psychology of aging courses developed some lessons and activities using evidence-based practices and their own skills and shared them with the center.”

STUDENTS CONNECT TO LITERATURE THROUGH MAPS

Dr. Anastasia Lin, assistant dean of student research and scholarship, is collaborating with students of the Lewis F. Rogers Institute for Environmental and Spatial Analysis to build maps of novels that she uses in the classroom. Lin, also an assistant professor of English, said the maps allow students to read novels spatially, and they can see it as a social argument, not just a literary work of art. Supported by one of UNG’s Presidential Professional Engagement Awards, Lin traveled to the American Comparative Literature Association Conference in New York City to present a paper on this pedagogical strategy.

PROFESSOR WEAVES EAST ASIAN STUDIES INTO LITERATURE COURSES

Students in several of Dr. Shannon Gilstrap’s literature courses are studying content enriched by the Infusing Institute, a three-week intensive course that Gilstrap attended during the East-West Center’s Asian Studies Development Program in Hawaii. The program is designed to provide teachers with broad-based knowledge needed to help them incorporate East Asian studies into their respective disciplines. Gilstrap was supported by a Presidential Professional Engagement Award.

LITERARY FESTIVAL DRAWS 20 SOUTHERN COLLEGES

More than 100 students and faculty advisers from approximately 20 southern colleges and universities attended the 2015 Southern Literary Festival, hosted by UNG March 26-28. The event, which is an undergraduate writing conference that includes writing workshops in fiction, poetry, creative nonfiction and playwriting, was supported by a Presidential Innovation Award.

The festival was founded in 1937 by an organization of southern colleges and schools to promote southern literature, and features competitions in each area and readings by well-known authors.

English faculty Gloria Bennett and Drs. B.J. Robinson and Leigh Dillard spent two years organizing the event. Bennett, who is the 2014-15 president of the Southern Literary Festival executive council, said the festival also featured a student and faculty panel on the Bayeux Tapestry, workshops by local authors that included UNG faculty, and an open mic night hosted by the staff of UNG’s award-winning literary magazine, The Chestatee Review.

India for the project. “Some of these kids are smart, outgoing, inventive, and beautiful; here, these traits are trouble and children are punished for it. This scares me, and all I can do is take the bus to work and hope that what we accomplish will be enough to change the courses of these lives.”

STUDENTS CONNECT WITH OLDER GENERATIONS THROUGH GAMING

UNG students engaged with older adults under the guidance of Drs. Valerie Havill and Diane Cook during a project designed to measure students’ perceptions of senior citizens at the beginning and end of a semester. Supported by a Presidential Academic Innovation Award, the service-learning project enabled students to spend time with the older adults in interactive gaming.

“We have now completed three semesters of data collection that includes students enrolled in our human growth and development program on all four UNG campuses, and will soon produce statistical analyses from the data,” Havill said.

Havill said that most students find the experience to be quite impactful and lose some of their ageist stereotypes and fears, and find themselves much more comfortable interacting with older adults.

As part of a research opportunity in Gao, India, UNG students taught young children.
The University of North Georgia has hired Dr. Andy Novobilski as associate provost for research and engagement and chief research officer.

UNG President Bonita Jacobs announced the new position in the fall as part of an overarching effort to encourage and facilitate scholarship and academic engagement opportunities for students and faculty that support and enhance the educational experience.

Novobilski previously served as department head of computer science and engineering, assistant provost for research and engagement and chief research officer at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga; dean of the College of Sciences and Mathematics and interim associate vice chancellor for research and technology transfer at Arkansas State University; and provost and vice president for academic affairs at Gannon University in Pennsylvania.

In addition to 15 years in higher education, Novobilski used a $3,000 initial investment to start a software design and development consulting firm that grew to $900,000 in annual income with clients such as GTE, General Electric, Lockheed-Martin Aerospace, IBM, and others.

Q: As the first to fill this new position at UNG, you have an opportunity to shape it. What’s your vision for the position?

A: UNG, as an engaged university, seeks to better the lives of both the students that attend and the communities it resides in. As a first-generation college graduate, I know first-hand the tremendous impact an institution such as UNG can have on the future success of its students, and I want to be of service to that mission. Serving as UNG’s associate provost for research and engagement will allow me to contribute to the manner in which our students, staff, and faculty engage, support, and learn with the community at-large.

Q: How can formal scholarship be beneficial for faculty and students – even at an institution, like UNG, that is not classified as a research-intensive school?

A: UNG’s commitment to scholarship, both undergraduate and graduate, is an investment in our students’ futures. First, students learn to work with a mentor to grow their knowledge and experience beyond what is required in a classroom to what their natural curiosity compels them to understand. This experience places them well on the path to becoming a life-long learner. Second, the experience itself, while focused on scholarship, by its very nature requires students to reach out and communicate their ideas to others. In a world that is increasingly in need of “soft skills,” UNG is providing students with an opportunity to practice what their future employers have clearly articulated as a pressing need. For faculty, the opportunity to engage with students in developing their area of scholarship becomes a moment of reaffirmation as they continue to advance knowledge in their area of study.

Q: How have you gotten started in this direction since you joined UNG in January?

A: My initial priority has been simple, straightforward, and a critical component to success — to listen to the UNG community. As these meetings have unfolded, so has my ability to understand what is currently being done well, what resources are available to apply to new opportunities, and to gain a sense of the aspirational goals for increasing engaged scholarship opportunities for students, staff and faculty.

Q: You’ve spent many years conducting your own research in the fields of technology and higher education. What are your research interests?

A: My research interests focus on methods for improving the way we interact with each other through the use of data analytics. Many interesting questions related to effective organization can be answered by looking at historical data and organizing it in a way that turns data into actionable information. Whether it’s working with emergency room physicians to quickly identify patients at risk of a heart attack, or looking at trends related to student retention, the most interesting questions to me involve how data can benefit our quality of life. One of the great things about being at UNG is finding colleagues here who share those interests and will provide support and encouragement to me as I stay active as a scholar.
Healthcare education expands to support regional needs

Demand for healthcare professionals is skyrocketing in north-east Georgia due to a growing population, large-scale retirement communities, and expanding medical facilities and services, and UNG’s College of Health Sciences & Professions has risen to meet those needs.

UNG will expand its four-year nursing program to the Gainesville Campus in spring 2016. Applications already have exceeded the number of slots available. A national shortage of registered nurses is projected to continue through 2030, and to be most intense in the South and West, according to the American Journal of Medical Quality.

“This expansion addresses a continued and significant need for qualified nurses in the region and state and will have an immediate and significant impact on health care quality and access in our communities,” said Dr. Teresa Conner-Kerr, dean of UNG’s College of Health Sciences & Professions.

Dr. Kim Hudson-Gallogly, head of UNG’s Department of Nursing, looks forward to the addition of a Bachelor of Science in nursing program in Gainesville this fall.
Dr. Kim Hudson-Gallogly, head of UNG’s Department of Nursing, said the expansion means UNG initially will graduate 50 more registered nurses per year, with the eventual goal of the Gainesville Campus graduating 120 nurses annually, matching the current total on the Dahlonega Campus. Three more full-time nursing faculty will be added to support the expansion.

“Gainesville is a very medically-oriented area. This, coupled with projected nursing shortages nationwide and especially in the South, makes our Gainesville Campus a critical location for nursing education,” Gallogly said. “Also, the presence of so many medical facilities, including the top-ranked Northeast Georgia Medical Center, provides a number of opportunities for partnerships.”

UNG’s Gainesville Campus is about 9 miles from the medical center’s new hospital in Braselton and 8 miles from the Gainesville hospital.

Currently, students on the Gainesville Campus who seek a Bachelor of Science in nursing must transfer to the Dahlonega Campus or another institution after their first two years. The program expansion will enable students to complete a full, four-year nursing degree on the Gainesville Campus.

New health facility provides expanded opportunities

Near the Dahlonega Campus, the College of Health Sciences & Professions has partnered with Chelsey Park Health & Rehabilitation, a facility with a focus on neurological rehabilitation patients. The collaboration will provide hands-on experience for students and skilled interns and workers for the facility.

Chelsey Park is the first facility of its kind in Georgia, and only the fourth in the nation, to offer neurological care using a cutting-edge technological system based in a residential environment, rather than a chronic-care facility. Lynne King, vice president of community relations and fundraising for Community Health Foundation — an organization that raises funds in support of the center — said they are excited about having UNG students as interns and hiring UNG graduates as nurses and certified nursing assistants.

“The opportunity for our college to partner with Chelsey Park is invaluable,” Conner-Kerr said. “This partnership will be an asset to our community and students in so many ways, and will likely involve students from each department: nursing, physical therapy, and clinical mental health counseling.”

The technology used in the facility, which is set to open in late May, is customizable to each patient and will grant patients greater independence in caring for themselves. For example, patients who have little to no abili-
ty to move themselves will be able to control room features — such as blinds, doors and electronics — by moving their eyes.

Collaboration with Georgia Tech will benefit real patients

Later this summer, 14 students from UNG’s Department of Physical Therapy will partner with engineering students from the Georgia Institute of Technology for cREATe, a week-long collaboration aimed at producing new assistive devices for people with physical disabilities.

During the week, Georgia Tech students will stay on UNG’s Dahlonega Campus, and the groups will examine several real scenarios of patients with varied difficulties in movement. The students will work together to create a prototype device to assist each of the patients by the end of the week. The prototypes will be created with computer models or fabricated in the Department of Visual Arts shop. During the next two weeks, the engineering students will finalize all of the products, which will be given to the patient at no cost. The event will also feature business professionals who will discussing the patent process and steps for taking a product to market.

Counseling center open to public

In April, the Department of Clinical Mental Health Counseling in the College of Health Sciences & Professions opened the UNG Clinical Mental Health Counseling Clinic, which provides free services to clientele in the Lumpkin County area. Dr. Susan Hurley, assistant professor and director for the clinic, said that they have received a steady stream of inquiries and requests for service since taking the first client on April 7. For more information, contact Hurley at susan.hurley@ung.edu. For appointments, call the clinic at 706-867-2588.
Over the past 30 years, Pete Smith has cut his teeth in the television industry with a combination of formal studies and on-the-job training. Currently working as a photojournalist for a major Atlanta television station, he’s seen the transition of the industry from film in the early 1980s, to videotape, and then to the world of digital.

Today, the 60-year-old is enrolled as a student in the Department of Communication, Media and Journalism at the University of North Georgia. He’s balancing a full-time job, college and family responsibilities.

“I feel like I’ve been working on my degree since the early ’80s, so I’m on the 30-year plan,” Smith said. “Because my work schedule is never predictable, it’s been a challenge to complete my degree straight through. When I learned that the University of North Georgia’s Gainesville Campus established a communication program, I decided it was time to go back and finish.”

His decision, while based in part on his desire to earn his bachelor’s degree, was further influenced by the quality of the degree program at UNG and the proximity of the campus to his home in Flowery Branch.

“I’m now working nights from 3 to midnight, so I can take classes in the morning then go to the station. I’d been kicking myself for years for not doing this right out of high school, but now because of the new department, earning my degree became very do-able.”

Smith is pursuing his degree in communication with an emphasis on film and digital media, and he said the educational experience at UNG is a big change from his previous academic experiences.

“At UNG, we have a number of faculty members with real-world experience, and they’re able to relate what we learn from our textbooks in class to what we run into in the workplace,” he said. “I have immense respect for them.”
David Smith, center, an associate professor of media studies at UNG, talks with students Ben Olagoke, left, and Clay Brandon, right, about footage shot with the department’s RED Scarlet high-definition camera. (Bottom left) Students from the Department of Communication, Media & Journalism: Front row, from left, Frank Guest, John Amofah and Austin Oller; second row, from left, Angelica Beltran, Britt Fowler, Collin Osbo, Holly Jones and Audrey Williams; and third row, from left, Chase Thomas, Elise Perkins, Katie Kaege, Amanda Kennedy, David Chandler, Mary Hamilton Wall, Nicole Bader, Matt Hobbs, Alex Morris, and Steve Shields, communication instructor at UNG. (Bottom right) Students, from right, Holly Jones, Audrey Williams, Austin Oller, and Mary Hamilton Wall discuss a project.
The Department of Communication, Media and Journalism, located in the Martha T. Nesbitt Academic Building, also has top-of-the-line equipment, state-of-the-art labs with production and editing facilities, and the latest technology for its students to use. For instance, the department’s RED Scarlet, a high-end digital cinema camera that shoots images four times more detailed than high definition, is used by cinematographers around the world to shoot feature-length movies and documentaries.

“It’s incredible that we’re getting to work with the latest equipment, equipment that’s the industry standard,” he said. “Because of this, we’re already up to speed, so it gives us a leg up on making our next career move.”

Also, getting hired after graduation is a driving objective for students, especially with the growing film industry in Georgia.

“The film industry is a powerful economic generator and is creating jobs for Georgians as well as new opportunities for a highly skilled workforce,” said Chris Carr, commissioner of the Georgia Department of Economic Development. “Since 2008, more than 90 companies have located in Georgia to support the industry. These new businesses are generating jobs and ensuring the industry’s sustainability in Georgia well into the future.”

According to a report published by the Motion Picture Association of America, the movie and television business in Georgia, either directly or indirectly, results in nearly 78,000 jobs and $3.8 billion in wages. Of that number, more than one-third are working directly in the industry in the state.

“Our goal is to develop students who can meet the needs of the growing communication labor market, especially Georgia’s film, television and media production industry,” said Dr. Jeff Marker, head of UNG’s Department of Communication, Media and Journalism. “It is obvious that there is a demand for these programs, and in some ways, we underestimated what the need would be, because less than two years into it, our enrollment is nearly double what we had predicted.”

Marker explained that the department’s mission is to expose students to all aspects of communication. “In today’s world, all of these disciplines have converged, and the students who will land the jobs and do them better are those who have an understanding of all aspects of the industry. We set the department...
up to mirror the converged nature of the industry, because all of these disciplines – communication, cinematography, screenwriting, journalism, special effects, and public relations – are so intricately intertwined.”

The department offers a Bachelor of Arts degree with three areas of concentration: film & digital media production, multimedia journalism and organizational leadership. Within those disciplines, students learn about print and broadcast journalism, audio production and recording, public relations and the business side of media, communication, and filmmaking. A student-run streaming radio station, Vanguard student news publication, recording studios, production and editing labs, off-site assignments using the university’s equipment, and clubs for debate, forensics and mediation allow all-out immersion in the disciplines.

“Our goal is to develop students who can meet the needs of the growing communication labor market, especially Georgia’s film, television and media production industry”

“Our program is one of the most comprehensive in the state,” Marker said. “And when our students graduate, they have at least three to five short films, video projects or other tangible accomplishments to show to prospective employers. We’re proud of the fact that our students get to create things. That’s not true of all undergraduate programs. It’s very much a learn-by-doing atmosphere, and I’m always impressed by what our students are able to accomplish.”

Award-winning Native American musician Ryan Molina, 23, found his educational niche in this department.

“I started college as a pre-veterinary student, but then switched to music,” he said. “But with music there were basically two ways to go in a career: become a performer or teach. I wanted more than that, to be challenged, stretch my creativity and broaden my knowledge in music production.”

Molina, a champion debate-team member at UNG, decided to study film and media production with a focus on audio.

“My goal is to help Native American artists become more established and successful, so I’ve gone into music production,” Molina said. “Right now, there’s only one major Native American recording studio in the U.S., so I want to offer more options for developing Native American musicians and to help them get good quality recordings.”

Molina spends his spare time between classes and assignments in Decibel Radio, the university’s streaming radio station. He and several other students at Decibel have also formed a band called “State of Law,” a diverse folk pop band. A professional Native American flute player, Molina plays drums for the group. Band members are currently laying down tracks – and using what they’re learning at UNG – for a five-song CD.

“That’s one thing that’s really important to me in my education,” he said. “When I can see how what I’m learning fits into the real world, then I get excited. And I enjoy what I’m doing a lot more when I’m able to use what I’m learning immediately.”

Molina also speaks about the sense of camaraderie and mutual support among the students and faculty in the department.

“First we’re all part of this big community, but through our similar interests we also become sub-communities – not cliques – and truly support each other,” he said. “Since enrolling at UNG, I’ve developed a great network of people who support me and show me what I can do. It has given me confidence and helped me focus on what I want to do with the rest of my life.”

Students, from left, Will Pitt, Angelica Beltran and Ben Ologoke listen to critique from David Smith, associate professor of media studies at UNG.
The Mike Cottrell College of Business at the University of North Georgia will expand its Cottrell Master of Business Administration (MBA) program to Gainesville – an area that continues to experience economic growth – this fall, offering the business community and professionals a new educational opportunity with a leadership focus.

“The University of North Georgia’s expansion of the MBA program to the Gainesville Campus will certainly be an asset that we can offer to businesses and industries in Gainesville and Hall County,” said Kit Dunlap, president and CEO of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce. “There are many that would find this location convenient to attend an MBA program.”

According to the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, the Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Statistical Area is among the 50 fastest-growing metro areas in the U.S. Total population is nearly 200,000, and the community is a hub of regional business, healthcare and educational services. The area is home to 47 Fortune 500 firms, more than 300 manufacturing and processing concerns, and 42 international companies representing 18 countries. From 2010-14, more than 98 industry locations generated 4,100 new jobs and produced $548 million in capital investments.

With the university’s MBA expansion, classes will be offered two nights each week on the Gainesville and Cumming campuses. “There has been a great deal of discussion and interest regarding an MBA degree program on the Gainesville Campus,” said Dr. Donna Mayo, dean of the Mike Cottrell College of Business. “We see this expansion as an opportunity to meet the needs of our region and execute the vision of our college in developing strong graduates and strong communities. The Cottrell MBA, like our undergraduate degree programs, is accred-
ited by the AACSB, an honor less than 5 percent of the world’s 13,000 business programs have earned.”

According to the Graduate Management Admission Council (GMAC) 2014 Corporate Recruiters Survey, 80 percent of companies planned to hire an MBA graduate in 2014, up from 50 percent in 2009 and 73 percent in 2013. GMAC also stated that employers are seeking graduates with communication and leadership skills, strategic focus and business acumen.

“New technology makes it possible for us to expand the MBA program,” Mayo said. “With this format, Cottrell MBA students will have direct, in-person access to faculty on a weekly basis. Personal attention and peer support have been a hallmark of the Cottrell MBA since its inception, and we will maintain this focus and quality of delivery on the Gainesville Campus.”

Instruction on each campus will alternate between in-person and a live video feed from the alternate campus.

Jordan Hester, operations manager for Fan Creations in Cumming, is entering his second year of the Cottrell MBA program and is excited about the prospect of working with students from a new location.

“We will be doing joint work between cohorts, which means a greater collection of experience and broader business networks,” Hester said. “We’ll also be on the cutting-edge with collaborative equipment, and there will be new opportunities for our capstone projects. This is really going to enrich the program for all of us.”

The two-year, part-time Cottrell MBA program began in 2008 and is based on a cohort structure, which means that a group of students is accepted into the program each fall and progresses through the program as a group. During their second year, Cottrell MBA students complete a capstone consulting project in which student teams consult with regional organizations on a strategic business need. Each team is provided a professional mentor as a coach to help them apply their learning to real-world situations.

“Students bring at least two full years of professional experience into the classroom, and on average, our students have seven years of experience,” said Kelli Crickey, director of the Cottrell MBA. “The diversity in professional backgrounds and daily experiences add value to the learning experience, and classmates also hear firsthand the common challenges and opportunities in leading organizations across different industries and environments.”

The Cottrell MBA is the second graduate degree offered on UNG’s Gainesville Campus, following the Master of Education degree in early childhood education. Since January 2013, the number of bachelor’s degree programs available on the Gainesville Campus has more than doubled.

Before applying for the Cottrell MBA, prospective students must attend an information session and have a minimum of two years of work experience. Applicants must provide their résumé, two professional recommendations, official transcripts, and either GMAT or GRE scores. Applications are due by June 15 to be accepted for this fall. Individuals may register for an information session at www.ung.edu/mba or call 470-239-3030.
Hundres of alumni returned to their alma mater to share memories with friends and honor fellow alumni during reunions and other special events at the 2015 Alumni Weekend at the Dahlonega Campus of the University of North Georgia.

“Our goal for Alumni Weekend is to attract alumni back to UNG and to make them and their families feel welcome and connected while enjoying a broad assortment of events,” said Phil Collins, associate vice president of alumni relations and annual giving. “These events serve as a catalyst for rediscovering the university and the friendships alumni made here. One consistent thread I have heard is that, upon return, alumni are very pleased with the quality of their alma mater, and leave with a renewed sense of pride.”

Among the reunions held during the weekend were several events to mark the 50-year reunion for members of the class of 1965, who were inducted into UNG’s Golden Alumni Society and presented the society’s golden medallion by UNG President Bonita Jacobs. The society is exclusively for UNG classes marking 50-plus years since graduation.

“Events like this are such a great way to catch up,” said Paul Armstrong (’65), one of many who kicked off the class’s golden weekend at a drop-in social on Friday afternoon. “It’s been five years since our last time on the Dahlonega Campus, and it’s grown so much since then.”

The classes of 1975, 1985, 1990, and 1995 also held reunions. As part of the weekend activities, the North Georgia Dahlonega Alumni Shared Interest Group (SIG) held an Awards Luncheon to recognize outstanding students and alumni for dedication and service to the university and the community. The awards included:

Dr. Brian Mann, professor of modern languages and head of the Division of World Languages and Cultures, received the Distinguished Professor Award, in recognition of “total service” to the university. Mann has taught at UNG since 1999. Under his leadership, the university has expanded its language offerings to 10, including adding majors in Arabic and Chinese.

The Paul M. Hutcherson Outstanding Student Award recognizes a male and female student who have demonstrated the highest ideals of citizenship, and this year’s recipients are Elle Cornett, a senior psychology major from Alpharetta, Georgia, and Cadet Col. Lane Hodnett, a senior business management major from Buford, Georgia. Cornett has held numerous student leadership positions at UNG, worked four summers as an orientation leader, and was chosen Miss UNG in fall 2014. Hodnett, 2014-2015 commander of UNG’s Boar’s Head Brigade and an Eagle Scout, has been recognized as a Distinguished Military
Graduate by U.S. Army Cadet Command. In May, he will commission into the U.S. Army as a second lieutenant in aviation.

Dr. Mark Causey (’06) of Cumming, Georgia, received the Young Alumnus Award in recognition of his outstanding professional career and community service. Causey graduated magna cum laude with a Bachelor of Science degree in biology. He is president of the Georgia Orthodontists Foundation, and his practice was voted Best of Forsyth in 2015.

Tony Faiia (’68) of Dahlonega, Georgia, received the Distinguished Alumnus Award for his extraordinary record of service and support to UNG. Faiia earned a Bachelor of Business Administration degree and commissioned into the U.S. Army’s armor branch. A Vietnam veteran, Faiia has received numerous awards and recognition for his service. He worked 43 years in aviation claims and is a licensed pilot.

The recipients of the Alumni Hall of Fame Award are Dr. Sandra Pryor Clarkson (’65) and retired Maj. Gen. James Guest (’60). Clarkson of New York, New York, is a professor of mathematics and statistics for Hunter College, where she has held several leadership positions. Nationally, she has served as co-chair of the Joint Committee on Women in the Mathematical Sciences. Guest, who is from Toccoa, Georgia, served 33 years in the U.S. Army and held a variety of assignments, including with Special Forces, and earned a number of military awards and recognition. He holds a master’s degree in personnel management.

Dr. Melissa Durand of Cumming, Georgia, received the Ralph Colley Spirit of North Georgia Award, which is given to an individual who has experienced adverse circumstances to live an exemplary life. Durand attended the university from 1993-95 and received early acceptance to then-Medical College of Georgia’s School of Dentistry in 1995. After sustaining serious injuries in a car wreck in 2008 that required a five-week stay at Shepherd Catastrophic Care Center, Durand spent six months in physical therapy before returning to practicing dentistry and raising her family.

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Bragg (’98), who spoke during the 32nd Annual Memorial Retreat Ceremony, reminded current students to cherish their years at UNG.

“This site gives me a sense of pride that cannot be explained and only alumni can understand,” Bragg said. “I challenge each of you to truly embrace your experience here. Make this experience yours and trust me when I tell you, you will call on these four years in the back of your mind often and refer to them as the best year of your lives.”
Dr. John House, ’63, has had a passion for writing since he was a child. After returning from deployment in Vietnam, he began a 36-year career practicing family medicine in Winder, Georgia. After retirement in 2007, he began networking with other writers and has written three books to date, the first titled “So Shall You Reap,” a fictional story exploring the relationship between college athletes and drugs. The second was “Choices,” a locally-set, fictional account of an emergency room physician who becomes involved in a botched robbery-hostage situation. House’s latest book, “Trail of Deceit,” was inspired by his love of nature and uses his knowledge of the Appalachian Trail.

Jim Wooten, ’74, recently joined the Mexico Ledger as a staff reporter in Mexico, Missouri, to begin a new career in journalism. Prior to joining the staff, Mr. Wooten retired from Independent Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

Robert S. Davis, ’76, has received the national Lloyd Dewitt Bockstruck Award for work in genealogy and the Lifetime Achievement Award for Scholarship in the American Revolution by the Southern Campaigns of the American Revolution. He appeared this spring in a four-hour documentary on the Civil War on The History Channel. Davis currently teaches history at Wallace State College in Hanceville, Alabama.

Enotah Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Raymond George, ’77, has been sworn into his position for a full four-year term. Following his appointment to the position in 2012 and serving the remainder of an unexpired term, George was elected to a full term in November.


The heroic actions of alumnus Michael J. Williams, ’67, who received the Distinguished Service Cross for heroism during the Vietnam War are recognized in a new statue on UNG’s Dahlonega Campus. A top student and cadet, Williams was one of the first three cadets to receive a full scholarship from the U.S. Army. He deployed to Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division and in 1968, he was leading a platoon near Cu Chi, Vietnam, when his unit came under fire. Williams, who had been promoted to first lieutenant, used a grenade to destroy two enemy machine gun nests. His action, which is depicted in the statue, earned him four medals, including the Distinguished Service Cross. The Capt. Michael J. Williams Trophy is permanently displayed in the atrium of the Brooks Pennington Jr. Military Leadership Center.
Derrick Case graduated from the University of North Georgia in 2008 with a bachelor’s degree in marketing and a notebook full of ideas, but one of those was not opening a clothing store.

“Obviously, I didn’t dream of selling dresses when I was in college,” Case said.

He and wife Danielle, who attended UNG for 2 1/2 years, own Dress Up Boutique, which has 10 stores across the region. The couple’s first store opened in Dahlonega in August 2009, about five weeks after the pair grew weary of driving 45 minutes to an hour from their home to shop. Less than a year later, the second store opened in Gainesville, Georgia, and the business grew quickly after that, including corporate headquarters and distribution center in Gainesville. Both now work full-time in their clothing business; Danielle Case is the visionary, Derrick Case said, and he manages the business side.

“So much of starting your own business from the ground up without funding or support is kind of learning as you go, but from a marketing perspective, I learned plenty in school that has helped,” Derrick Case said. “Dr. Powell, who I had for a lot of classes, was big on having a lot of open discussions and very good at getting your brain working instead of just reading out of the textbook.”

Both are Dahlonega natives and knowing their market was key to getting the business started, Derrick Case said.

“With our familiarity with north Georgia and Dahlonega, knowing our market helped us start that first store,” he said. “The plan all stemmed from confidence more than anything else. A business has to be started based off of a need and we were confident there was a need.”

While at UNG, Case worked full time at a local gym, working his way up to being part owner and learning how to run a business in the process. After graduation, he worked at a corporate sales job for a year and a half, even after the couple opened their first store. His advice for business majors? Take your education seriously.

“Take full advantage of your time in college. I think many college students unfortunately take that time to sow their wild oats instead of studying and working hard,” Derrick Case said. “I worked full-time and went to school full-time and still graduated in four years. When I got out of school, people were able to see my work ethic, which helped me get the corporate job. They could see that I didn’t just coast through school.”

Derrick and Danielle have a young son, Hudson, born in 2013 when their business started taking off. The couple plans to open new stores in Cumming and Athens soon, and they are working on their first two out-of-state locations, which they hope to announce before the end of the year.
The leadership skills Capt. Thomas Scott Levely learned as a cadet at the University of North Georgia provided a solid foundation for the role he serves today as a military intelligence officer helping protect the nation from cyber attacks.

“The university prepared me by grounding me first in the fundamentals of being a leader. The university closely mimics the Army in so many ways that any opportunity to participate in corps functions and operations translates very well into the regular Army,” he said. “Those foundations enabled me to become a military intelligence professional.”

Levely is a deputy battle captain in the Joint Force Headquarters Cyber Command Center at Fort Gordon, Georgia, which is led by Maj. Gen. Stephen G. Fogarty, a 1983 UNG graduate.

A native of Burke, Virginia, Levely graduated from UNG in 2010 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in history. He previously had earned a bachelor’s degree in English from West Virginia University in 2002.

While learning the complex hierarchies of his job environment is one of the biggest challenges in his job, Levely said one of things he enjoys most is the people.

“I work with a very dedicated group of people working on a mission that relates to the many geo-political issues our country currently faces,” he said. “I get to be part of a mission that is very new, relevant, persistent, and challenging.”

Levely’s advises current students and cadets to take advantage of the multitude of leadership opportunities offered at UNG.

“Those experiences will pay off in so many ways that you will forever be glad you had that opportunity. Enable yourself to achieve success by studying hard and achieving good grades,” he said. “Begin to try and understand the Army’s capabilities from the team level on up and how they are used in the contemporary operating environment.”

Capt. Thomas Scott Levely (’10) serves in the Joint Forces Headquarters Cyber Command Center at Fort Gordon.
he didn’t start out particularly enthusiastic about the military, recalling how his first year at North Georgia was “pretty tough.” But then, in his second year with the Corps of Cadets, Marc earned several responsibilities and decided a career as an Army officer was right for him. Looking back, Marc believes he was influenced by his dad’s service. He recently retired from the Army and is now deputy chief of external affairs for the Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, D.C.

Riverview Middle School Principal Bill Zadernak, ’95, has been selected for an Exemplary Leadership Award from the Georgia Association of Middle School Principals. Zadernak has worked in the Dawson County School System since 1998. He has served as principal at Riverview Middle School for the past six years.

Maj. Gale Higginbotham, ’96, an 18-year veteran of the Gwinnett County Police Department, recently graduated from a prestigious law enforcement academy offered by the FBI. The 11-week course, held in Quantico, Virginia, included law enforcement personnel from 49 states, 26 countries, three military organizations and four federal civilian organizations.

Maj. Gale Higginbotham, ’96, an 18-year veteran of the Gwinnett County Police Department, recently graduated from a prestigious law enforcement academy offered by the FBI. The 11-week course, held in Quantico, Virginia, included law enforcement personnel from 49 states, 26 countries, three military organizations and four federal civilian organizations.

Elisha Holtzclaw, ’02, has earned the prestigious 2014 Continuing Education Award from Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta. Holtzclaw has spent her entire 13-year career with Children’s at Scottish Rite Pediatric Hospital, beginning as a nurse in the Aflac Cancer and Blood Disorders Center in-patient unit and later transferring to work primarily with patients who have solid tumors.

Merritt Ainslie, ’04, was named Morgan County High School head baseball coach for 2015-16. Ainslie played baseball at MCHS and at the University of North Georgia.
Jason Broc, ’07 (MEd) will become principal of City Park School in Dalton, Georgia, effective July 1. Broc most recently served as assistant principal at middle schools in Whitfield and Gordon counties. Before that he taught English and reading at the secondary level. He is currently pursuing a doctorate with research focus on distributive leadership and school culture.

Kenneth Mantle, ’08, was promoted to manager of the Georgia Department of Corrections’ Offender Administration Unit in December. Mantle is responsible for the supervision of sentence processing, court production, information services, offender classification and releases, interstate detainees, and probation center referrals. Mantle is pursuing a master’s degree in criminal justice at UNG.

Brittany Bauschka, ’11, has been selected by the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta as the digital marketing associate. She is an avid traveler and studied abroad in the United Kingdom at the University of Bristol in London, where she earned a Master of Science degree, and in St. Petersburg, Russia, during the summer of 2010.

Katie Barton, ’11, has been named director of research for Colliers International in Nashville, Tennessee. As director of research, Barton will be responsible for conducting in-depth market analysis, research and reporting for Colliers Nashville.

Caroline Abraham, ’13, joined Harry Norman Realtors as a sales associate in the Forsyth County/Lake Lanier office.

Ryan Cooke, ’14, and Evan Head, ’14, purchased one-way tickets to Thailand and have been backpacking the “Banana Pancake Trail,” which goes through Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam and Laos, since January 2015. You can follow their inspiring journey on their blog, http://www.doyoutravelbro.com/, and Facebook Page.

Will Lazenby, ’14, and Ashlyn Hollingsworth are engaged to be married. Hollingsworth is currently attending the University of North Georgia, where she plans to earn a degree in secondary English education. Lazenby is currently employed with Carr, Riggs and Ingram as an auditor.

Students Share Success on social media with #UNG15Grad

View the new alumni stories at: ung.edu/commencement/ung15grad
Thanks to values strengthened in him at the University of North Georgia, Dan Emmett ('78), was able to fulfill his childhood dream of becoming one of the select few Secret Service agents who protects the president.

“I think it was the same for me as it was for hundreds, if not thousands, of people who have passed through the school since its inception — North Georgia epitomizes a place where you learn the values of leadership, discipline, honor, and commitment,” he said.

As he details in a book about his 21-year career, “Within Arm’s Length: A Secret Service Agent’s Definitive Inside Account of Protecting the President,” Emmett became fascinated with the people protecting the president at age 8 when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

“As a child I wanted to be a Secret Service agent and I wanted to be a military officer. North Georgia just seemed the most logical starting point. It was an environment that encouraged people to be their best and really re-emphasized what I had been taught by my parents: honor, discipline, service to one’s country, and trying to do your best at everything you attempt,” Emmett said.

A native of Gainesville, Georgia, Emmett earned a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from UNG and commissioned into the Marine Corps. He served from 1977 to 1981 and rose to the rank of captain.

After being accepted into the Secret Service training program in 1983, Emmett rose through the ranks of service to the Presidential Protection Detail (PPD). He spent six years on PPD, and protected presidents George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush.

In his book, Emmett describes some of his more high-profile assignments. He also shares firsthand details about the daily duties and challenges of conducting presidential advances, dealing with the media, driving the president in a bullet-proof limousine, jogging alongside him through the streets of Washington, and flying with him on Air Force One.

Following the September 11 attacks, the Central Intelligence Agency offered Emmett a job in the counterterrorism center, where he remained for six years. He retired from the Secret Service in 2004, and then worked as an instructor at the U.S. Secret Service Academy.

Emmett, who also has a master’s degree in education is an adjunct professor of criminal justice at Auburn University.
IN MEMORIAM

Mr. Bobby D. Bagby ’82 – February 12, 2015
Ms. Precious T. Bass ’14 – November 28, 2014
Mr. John E. Bogle ’43 – November 18, 2014
Mr. David H. Boulware ’78 – December 3, 2014
Mr. Robert W. Bowman ’62 – November 14, 2014
Mr. James E. Braden ’45 – February 18, 2015
Mrs. Bee W. Broadrick ’38 – November 24, 2014
Mr. Jesse W. Brown ’67 – November 7, 2014
Ms. Dorian E. David ’95 – January 25, 2015
Mr. Roy E. Day ’40 – October 30, 2014
Mr. David L. Decker ’76 – April 6, 2015
Ms. Tami J. Gabriel ’98 – December 13, 2014
Mrs. Thelma F. Gay ’40 – November 14, 2014
Mrs. Mildred B. Hacke ’76 – December 22, 2014
Mr. Robert L. Hadden ’73 – January 30, 2015
Mr. James E. Hayes ’65 – February 2, 2015
COL Sam L. Hinson ’40 – April 11, 2015
Mrs. Martha M. Holbrook ’40 – January 12, 2015
Mr. Gordon W. Jones ’71 – February 3, 2015
CW5 Jeffrey K. King ’71 – March 4, 2015
Mrs. Jessilynn M. Knight-Rock ’77 – March 1, 2015
Miss Rita S. Long ’64 – March 8, 2015
LTC (Ret.) Thomas S. Luckey ’66 – February 25, 2015
Mr. Ricky L. Martin ’04 – March 21, 2015
Mrs. Susan M. Mills ’71 – October 5, 2015
COL Thomas E. Minix ’53 – March 19, 2015
Mr. John E. Padget ’79 – November 20, 2015
Mr. Jesse M. Reeves ’72 – December 13, 2014
Mrs. Bettie Y. Rogers ’03 – January 20, 2015
Mr. Oliver H. Rogers ’49 – November 30, 2014
Mrs. Nancy J. Sadler ’79 – March 6, 2015
Ms. Marilyn W. Sharpley ’73 – November 17, 2014
Mr. Donald H. Shomake ’59 – October 6, 2014
Mrs. Frankie K. Stringer ’72 – November 3, 2014
Mr. Quinton W. Weldon ’93 – March 19, 2015
Mr. Carlson T. West ’61 – March 15, 2015
Mrs. Carolyn L. Williams ’53 – February 13, 2015
Mrs. Debra K. Witt ’77 – October 5, 2014

Former Staff
Ms. Ila Mae Duff – January 31, 2015
Ms. Cona B. Grizzle – November 8, 2014
Ms. Esther L. Walden – February 11, 2015
The University of North Georgia Department of Athletics inducted five alumni into the Athletics Hall of Fame in February. The honorees included Jason Elkins (’02), Courtney Hester Dwyer (’02), Irina Watkins (’06), Jimmy Williams (’89) and Beth Willis Burke (’05).

“Our fifth annual class brings great honor and pride to the university with their distinguished achievements, and we are pleased to be able to recognize these five former student-athletes who have contributed so greatly to the lasting legacy of UNG Athletics,” Athletic Director Lindsay Reeves said.

Elkins led the university’s baseball program to success in the early 2000s, and was named a National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) All-American in 2002. He holds numerous school records, including 17 single-season saves, 40 career saves, 95 game appearances, 1.32 season ERA, and 1.58 career ERA. Elkins lives in Cumming, Georgia, and works as a voice actor.

Dwyer was a three-time All-American in women’s basketball and was named a Kodak All-American twice. She holds numerous school records, including 17 single-season saves, 40 career saves, 95 game appearances, 1.32 season ERA, and 1.58 career ERA. Elkins lives in Cumming, Georgia, and works as a voice actor.

Walter Dwyer was a three-time All-American in women’s basketball and was named a Kodak All-American three times, including Freshman of the Year in 2000. Dwyer is a member of the 1,000-point club and holds the university record for career scoring average (23.4 points per game). She is a special education teacher and cross country coach at Johnson High School in Gainesville, Georgia.

Watkins is the only person in Peach Belt Conference history to earn a championship at two different universities — UNG and Kennesaw State University. She was a two-time NAIA Region XIII cross country champion and represented the university at the 2004 NAIA National Championship. She has a master’s degree in sports psychology and is working on a doctorate.

Williams led the men’s basketball team to four consecutive postseason conference tournaments from 1986 to 1989 and scored 561 points his senior season. He averaged in the double digits in points and rebounds (called a double-double in basketball) throughout his four-year career. He is the assistant principal and head boy’s basketball coach at East Laurens High School in Dublin, Georgia.

Willis Burke was named to the NAIA All-American second team in 2004 and 2005 and is a three-time All-Conference and All-Region NAIA selection. She was voted Pitcher of the Year in 2004 and 2005 and holds school records for 20 combined shutouts and a .139 single-season opponent batting average record. She is a lead business analyst at Connecture, Inc.

The UNG Athletics Hall of Fame honors individuals who have earned outstanding athletic achievements or made substantial contributions to the university. A nine-member Board of Directors is responsible for operations of the Athletics Hall of Fame and selects honorees, based upon nominations.
UNG honors Mixon with Presidential Leadership Award

Retired Army Lt. Gen. Benjamin "Randy" Mixon, an alumnus of the University of North Georgia who served nearly 36 years in the military, is this year’s recipient of the UNG Presidential Leadership Award. President Bonita Jacobs presented Mixon with the award on March 21 during the university’s 2015 Scholarship Ball.

"Gen. Mixon embodies the UNG values of excellence, integrity and service," Jacobs said. "During his 36-year military career, he commanded infantry soldiers at every level in locations around the world, and his units often were called upon to provide humanitarian services in the countries where they deployed. For his outstanding service to our country and for his steadfast support of the University of North Georgia and our students, it my extreme and great honor to present the 2015 Presidential Leadership Award to Gen. Randy Mixon."

Mixon earned a degree in political science and commissioned as a U.S. Army Infantry officer upon his graduation in 1975. Mixon served in combat three times and helped establish a new unit, the 3rd Ranger battalion. He retired in 2011 as a three-star general and commanding general of the U.S. Army, Pacific and holds master’s degrees in public administration and military art and science. Today, Mixon is a vice president at General Dynamics Information Technology, a subsidiary of General Dynamics, where he supports U.S. Army training.

"I’m honored and humbled to accept this award and frankly I do so on behalf of all the mentors who invested time and guidance in my development as a leader. Like many of you in this room, it all started at this great institution and continued throughout my military career," Mixon said in accepting the award. "My leadership development was forged right here at the University of North Georgia. When it comes to leadership development, the laboratory within the Corps of Cadets at the University of North Georgia is one of if not the best places in the world to develop leaders for the military or the corporate world."

Mixon encouraged his classmates and all alumni to support the university.

"UNG not only provides a world-class educational experience for citizens in the north Georgia region, but I would say that it is the premier military college in the state and in the nation,” he said. "The future is bright for the University of North Georgia, and I would encourage all alumni to get active in supporting the university and assist in any way they can in ensuring that the standards of the university are upheld and provide support through other means to ensure the longevity of the university."

The Presidential Leadership Award is the university’s highest honor to recognize individuals who demonstrate extraordinary leadership in their personal and professional endeavors and who exemplify the university’s core values of excellence, student-focus, integrity, engagement, and service. Previous recipients of the Presidential Leadership Award are Mike Cottrell, Paul Stringer, George Coleman and Cumming Mayor H. Ford Gravitt."
The University of North Georgia increased the amount raised for student scholarships by 35 percent this year and again eclipsed the $1 million mark for student scholarships. This year’s total of $1,350,000 was announced at the university’s third annual Scholarship Ball, held March 21 in Dahlonega.

UNG President Bonita Jacobs has made increasing scholarship support for students one of her top priorities and has watched the total grow steadily in recent years.

“This is an event that is very near and dear to my heart because it is our scholarship event. Nothing is more important in what we do than making sure our students graduate,” she said. “Every year, we see students who drop out of college because of financial difficulties. Providing need-based scholarships will keep students in school and help them graduate on time.”

The first Scholarship Ball, held at UNG’s Gainesville Campus as Jacobs’ inauguration in 2013, raised more than $212,000. The 2014 Scholarship Ball, held in Cumming, Georgia, raised $340,498. During the 2013-2014 academic year, UNG raised more than $1 million for student scholarships, marking a 56 percent increase over the previous year. This year’s ball was attended by more than 400 community members, business leaders, and UNG faculty and staff.

With college enrollment increasing and many families struggling to pay for college, more students across the nation are seeking financial assistance to pursue higher education. Most UNG students receive some type of financial aid, including the HOPE Scholarship, private scholarships and grants, and student loans.

“We are here tonight to reaffirm a promise we have all made to the students of the University of North Georgia by supporting their efforts to receive the highest quality education and become productive leaders in society,” said Rich White, chairman of the Board of Trustees of the University of North Georgia Foundation Inc. “This is accomplished by receiving world-class instruction provided by the UNG faculty and a supportive learning environment sustained by a dedicated staff. Through the extraordinary work of our trustees, we keep this promise by raising funds from generous donors and alumni to lessen the financial burden of attending college.”

With more than 16,000 students and four campuses, UNG is one of Georgia’s largest public universities, and holds the distinction of being The Military College of Georgia and a state leadership institution.

“UNG is stronger than ever and we’re producing valuable graduates who serve as civic, professional and military leaders across the region and throughout the global community,” Jacobs said.
UNG names Tarnowski as VP for Advancement

The University of North Georgia has selected Jeff Tarnowski to become vice president for university advancement, effective June 1. Tarnowski has served as vice president for institutional advancement at Georgia Perimeter College since January 2005.

“Jeff is an experienced and respected advancement professional who will capably lead our advancement team in increasing support for UNG’s mission and scholarship needs,” said President Bonita C. Jacobs. “He has a tremendous record of success and leadership in generating private support at Georgia Perimeter, and I look forward to working with him at UNG.”

At Georgia Perimeter College, Tarnowski managed the GPC Foundation, Alumni Association, and the offices of alumni relations, community relations, development, grants and sponsored programs, and marketing and communications. With his leadership, Georgia Perimeter increased the assets of the GPC Foundation to more than $87 million, including the addition of GPC’s campus in Newton County, and grew GPC’s endowed scholarship program by more than 300 percent.

“I am grateful and excited to join the University of North Georgia,” Tarnowski said. “I look forward to working with the advancement division, other colleagues and community members to increase external support for the university’s students and programs.”

Tarnowski began working with Georgia Perimeter College in 1999 as director of alumni affairs and was director of institutional advancement from January 2000 through December 2004. He earned his bachelor’s degree in business administration from Bradley University, in Peoria, Illinois, in 1989 and his MBA at Bradley in 1991.

Bruce Howerton served as interim vice president for advancement after Dr. Andrew Leavitt became chancellor of the University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh in December 2014.

Alumni commit to ‘75 Challenge

The Class of 1975, led by Jim Solomon, class president, and Randy Mixon, reunion coordinator, has created a class scholarship to honor the university and support students. With the theme, ‘75 Challenge, their goal is for the scholarship to establish an endowed fund that will provide annual monetary assistance for one civilian and one cadet student.

The class reunion committee completed a Memorandum of Agreement with the UNG Foundation, Inc. in time for Alumni Weekend 2015 and has begun raising funds for this purpose. During the 40th reunion weekend in April, the class contributed more than $30,000 toward the fund. The group’s ultimate goal is for the permanent endowment to have reached $250,000 in cash, pledges and planned giving when the class reconvenes to celebrate its 50 year reunion in 2025.
University of North Georgia Giving Report

The University of North Georgia has been recognized nationally for academic excellence, affordability and the quality of its graduates, and the generous support of our donors ensures that UNG’s outstanding academic and co-curricular programs are among the best in the country.

Your gifts are significant because they provide resources above and beyond public support and tuition that sustain and shape UNG as a leading university. Most importantly, your gifts to the UNG Foundation enable the university to provide students with scholarships that, in many cases, open the door to higher education and life-changing opportunities.

We recognize that our donors, as much as our faculty and staff, share in our commitment to student success. The entire UNG community is grateful for your loyal support.

Gifts acknowledged in this report were received during the 2014 fiscal year (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014). Every attempt has been made to accurately recognize these donors. If we have made an error inadvertently, please contact Pamela Stoffel in the Office of Advancement at 706-867-2873 or pamela.stoffel@ung.edu.

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For Maddie Dills, 2015 winner of the Dot Strother Scholarship, the University of North Georgia is a family affair; both parents and an older sister attended UNG and an aunt is a UNG staff member. Dills, a senior at Jefferson High School who plans to pursue a degree in nursing at UNG, didn’t consider any other school when applying to college.

“When I received word that I was accepted, I was so excited. It has always been a personal goal to attend UNG,” Dills said. “Honestly, I didn’t have a plan ‘B’ because in my heart I knew it was the only school I wanted to go to. I have heard my whole life about the wonderful memories my parents and sister cherished while attending North Georgia.”

During her high school career, Dills has been a member of the Beta Club, Fellowship of Christian Athletes and Total Person Program. Dills also played varsity basketball and ran on the track team. Her community service has included volunteering at a nursing home and gathering supplies for a local homeless shelter.

Dills also is the recipient of Georgia’s HOPE Scholarship, but plans to use the Dot Strother Scholarship to pay expenses not covered by the state-funded scholarship.

“My mom is an educator who has modeled that hard work can pay off. She has worked two jobs at times to make sure all of my siblings were able to participate in extracurricular activities and attend college. This year, my mom will have three of her four children in college at the same time,” Dills said. “Without these scholarships, it would be difficult for me to attend college.”

Funded in memory of former alumni association member and president Dot Strother, the scholarship is awarded annually to one male and one female dependent of a member of the North Georgia Dahlonega Alumni special interest group (SIG) who exhibits a good record of citizenship and leadership potential.

For more information about the Dot Strother Scholarship and other scholarships awarded by the UNG Foundation Inc., or to learn how to contribute to student scholarships, visit unggive.org.

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Dr. Karen Frost ('74), an educational leadership consultant in the metro Atlanta area, was eager to help start one of the University of North Georgia’s first shared interest groups (SIG), Women of UNG, as a way to support the institution that had a major impact on her life.

“I feel that one of the ways I can show my gratitude is to give back and hopefully touch the lives of those currently attending, as well as support the goals of the university,” Frost said. “There are so many wonderful things going on at UNG, and it is such a blessing to be able to participate by giving of my time and money to ensure that those great things continue and grow.”

SIGs are communities of alumni who share a common affinity or bond based on shared experience, identity, background, academic affiliation, profession or other UNG-related interest.

Women of UNG is open to alumnae as well as faculty, staff, current students, and friends of UNG, and the group’s stated mission is to engage, empower and enrich the women of the university. Frost, who serves as the group’s chairwoman, said she was approached by Phil Collins, UNG’s associate vice president of alumni relations and annual giving, about starting the group.

“This idea intrigued me, and the more I thought about celebrating the many women who have attended or graduated from this great university, the more excited I became,” she said. “When I found out that our school had the first female graduate in the state of Georgia, Willie B. Lewis, I knew we had to form this group.”

In addition to supporting UNG through the Women of UNG, Frost also donates to the UNG Foundation to support the institution that provided the foundation for her successful career in education.

“I had a great group of professors who worked to prepare me for my career in education. They encouraged me as I developed my teaching skills and gave me many opportunities to discuss my ideas of how the field of education could improve and impact students,” Frost said. “My time at UNG gave me confidence to launch my career.”

Frost earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education at UNG, and followed both of her parents into the educational field. Her father, the late Robert L. Ash Sr. ('41), earned an associate degree at UNG. Frost also has master’s, specialist and doctoral degrees in education.

She was an assistant principal in Cobb County Schools for three years before becoming principal of Tritt Elementary in June 2010. She retired in June 2014 after 29 years in the Cobb County School District.

For more information about the university’s SIG program, visit ungalumni.org/sigs. To find out how to give to UNG and where your support is needed, visit unggive.org.
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Zaxby's of Dahlonega
Ms. Sharon Zealey
Mr. Peter Zelyk, Jr.
Below is a small selection of events at UNG; Continuing Education courses require registration and fees. For more details and a full list, please visit und.edu/calendars/events.

**MAY**

Product Photography Workshop  
May 23, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Cumming Campus

Memorial Day  
May 25  
All UNG campuses closed

**JUNE**

Driver’s Education  
June 1-5, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
June 22-26, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

Starlight Concert & Fireworks  
June 5, music 6-9 p.m.,  
fireworks 9 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

Federal Service Language Academy  
June 7-26  
Dahlonega Campus

Fencing Camp  
Pottery Camp  
June 8-11, 9 a.m. to noon  
Gainesville Campus

Red Cross Blood Drive  
June 9, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus, Robinson Ballroom

12 Secrets of Highly Effective Leadership  
June 11, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

Jenny Melton Race  
June 13  
Gainesville Campus

Camp Appalachia for Gifted Students  
June 15-19, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus

ActorQuest  
June 15-26, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

**JULY**

Federal Service Language Academy  
July 12-31  
Dahlonega Campus

Driver’s Education  
July 20-24, 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

Music Superheroes Camp  
July 6-9, 1-4 p.m.  
July 13-16, various  
Gainesville Campus

Creative Writing Camp  
July 13-16, 9 a.m. to noon  
Gainesville Campus

Heartsaver First Aid CPR AED  
July 18, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

**AUGUST**

Summer Commencement  
Aug. 1, 2 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus

Weeks of Welcome  
Aug. 14-29  
All UNG campuses

Photographing Kids’ Sports  
Aug. 15, 9 a.m. to noon  
Gainesville Campus

Student Convocation  
Aug. 16, 7 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus, Memorial Gym

First day of classes  
Aug. 17  
All UNG campuses

Downtown Dahlonega  
Aug. 20, 4 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus

**SEPTEMBER**

Leading Your Team Through Times of Change  
Sept. 3, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Cumming Campus

Labor Day  
Sept. 7  
All UNG campuses closed

UNG Cross Country Meet  
Sept. 19, 7:45 a.m. to noon  
Gainesville Campus

Take Back the Night  
Sept. 24, 7-9:30 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus

**OCTOBER**

Admissions Open House  
Oct. 10, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.  
Oconee Campus

UNG Day at Zoo Atlanta  
Oct. 10, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Zoo Atlanta

Admissions Open House  
Oct. 24, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Gainesville Campus

Family Weekend  
Oct. 3  
Dahlonega Campus

Gold Rush  
Oct. 17-18  
Dahlonega Campus

**NOVEMBER**

Thanksgiving Break  
Nov. 26-27  
All UNG campuses closed

**DECEMBER**

Fall Commencement  
Dec. 11, 7 p.m.  
Gainesville

Dec. 12, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.  
Dahlonega Campus
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For all users:

• Maps of all four campuses
• UNG news and public events
• Look up faculty and staff
• Access UNG social media
• And more!

Learn more at ung.edu/app
Congratulations to the UNG Nighthawks!

This spring UNG’s baseball team claimed the university’s first conference championship in baseball, and the softball team garnered its fifth conference title.

Keep up with the UNG Nighthawks at ungathletics.com