

# DIVERSITY

at UGA.

NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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## A message from Michelle Garfield Cook Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and Strategic University Initiatives

The Office of Institutional Diversity is charged with providing direction and leadership to the University of Georgia's efforts to ensure that our university is a welcoming and inclusive place for all. That is a tall order that is full of opportunities to involve the entire community. A critical part of our success in this work is our ability to push the messaging and support regarding diversity and inclusion out across our campuses and into our many divisions, units, departments and areas. Why? Because while I hold the title of Chief Diversity Officer, the reality is that most folks who live, work and visit the University of Georgia will never meet me. They will interact with the thousands of students, faculty and staff members who make up our community. Therefore, it is important that everyone is equipped with the competencies needed to promote inclusion at the University.

It is rather easy to say that we value diversity and inclusion and to embrace a specific set of competencies in support of that value. But the real challenge is determining how we operationalize this value on our campus. There are

**COOK CONTINUED ON PAGE 7**



Through the Road Dawgs program, UGA students use their spring break to travel across Georgia to talk with high school students about college preparation.

## UGA receives sixth consecutive award for commitment to diversity

For the sixth consecutive year, the University of Georgia's far-reaching commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion has been recognized with a national award.

The *INSIGHT Into Diversity* Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award is the only national recognition honoring colleges and universities that exhibit outstanding efforts and success in the area of diversity and inclusion. Rather than recognizing a single program or unit, the award highlights a range of student, faculty and staff initiatives at the university.

"The University of Georgia is proud to be a national leader in promoting diversity and inclusion throughout our institution," said President Jere W. Morehead. "I appreciate this recognition from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* once again for our successes in this important area and our efforts to go even further."

The central role that diversity plays at UGA is outlined in the institution's mission statement, and efforts to promote diversity and inclusion include programs to recruit and support historically underrepresented and first-generation students; recruit and retain diverse faculty; and promote a living, learning and working environment where differences are respected and celebrated.

"The University of Georgia proudly embraces the diversity that is found in our faculty, staff and students," said Michelle Cook, Vice Provost for Diversity and Inclusion and Strategic University Initiatives. "We also are committed to building a community, culture and climate where everyone is supported and where everyone can be successful."

To read the full story, visit [t.uga.edu/5gM](http://t.uga.edu/5gM)

# WiSci supporting the next generation

Five years ago, Cecilia Sánchez and Anya Brown, ecology doctoral candidates at the time, founded the Women in Science organization at the University of Georgia in service of creating a community where they could connect with peers and mentors. Open to anyone (including men) interested in pursuing equality and diversity in science, WiSci has grown to incorporate undergraduate students, an outreach program and all STEM disciplines.

The organization hosts several events each academic year, offering opportunities in mentoring, networking and career development, with either a career panel or workshop organized every semester. Career panels illustrate the variety of careers undergraduates can pursue with their degrees. Career development workshops help students work on their resumes and cover letters, interviewing skills and negotiation techniques in preparation for entering the job market. Occasionally, the group sponsors social gatherings where participants meet up and have fun as they connect with others.

“We also have a tiered mentoring program where we pair undergraduates with graduates and graduates with postdocs using a survey,” said Barbara Del Castello, a third-year Ph.D. student in genetics from San Francisco and president of WiSci. “This helps put like members together and increases the effectiveness of the mentoring program.”

WiSci also pushes beyond the boundaries of campus and into the community. In an ongoing tutoring program at Clarke Central High School, each high school student is matched with a WiSci member to receive one-on-one help in chemistry. The group recently hosted a table at Sandy Creek Nature Center during its inaugural Science Open House, where the children engaged in hands-on learning activities like extracting DNA from strawberries. WiSci is currently working with Girl Scouts of the USA in Athens to help Scouts earn their STEM badges. During the 4-H Fall Festival, WiSci offers students the opportunity to perform scientific experiments with WiSci volunteers.

“We started to do outreach because we realized we needed to inspire the next generation to keep WiSci going and growing,” Del Castello said.



Women in Science founders Anya Brown and Cecilia Sanchez inside the Science Learning Center.

Read more at [t.uga.edu/4ZP](http://t.uga.edu/4ZP)

# Standifer named assistant to the president

Alton M. Standifer recently joined the staff of the Office of the President as assistant to the president. Standifer previously served as director of new student orientation and associate director of undergraduate admissions.

“Alton will be a tremendous addition to our staff,” said President Jere W. Morehead in announcing Standifer’s appointment. “He has been a part of the campus community for the past five years and has worked diligently to enhance our orientation process and ease the transition to UGA for students and their families. He has built strong relationships across the campus, and I look forward to the positive impact he will make in this important role.”

As assistant to the president, Standifer’s primary responsibilities are focused on student affairs, diversity relations and community engagement. He serves as the liaison to the Staff Council, Retirees Association, Board of Visitors and Student Government Association, while also representing the President’s Office in the planning of several annual events, including the Holmes-Hunter Lecture Series, Mary Frances Early Lecture, Staff Appreciation Day and the presentation of the President’s Medal during Founders Day.

“It is an honor to support President Morehead in his efforts to advance the University of Georgia, and I consider it a great privilege to have the opportunity to serve in this role,” said Standifer. “I look forward to working alongside students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends, and to helping to strengthen collaborative relationships between the university and key constituents in Athens-Clarke County, the state and across the nation.”



Alton M. Standifer, assistant to the president.

Read more at [t.uga.edu/5dB](http://t.uga.edu/5dB)

# A theater for the Deaf and hearing

Have you ever watched a movie with subtitles and gotten frustrated by reading lines of dialogue at the bottom of the screen while you’re missing the action above the text? This is somewhat akin to how a deaf person has to watch a live show with a sign language interpreter. Constantly looking off to the side while the drama takes place on stage can ruin the immersive quality of theater.

Two University of Georgia alumni, Haley Beach and Amara Ede, sought to remedy that problem when they founded a theater in Athens called Hands In!, an educational nonprofit that produces original works in American Sign Language (ASL).

“There was no community for Deaf arts in Athens,” said Beach. “And they really just needed a platform. And I think the hearing community needs this type of theater experience, too. The whole point of what we do is to bring ASL awareness to the hearing community and provide a platform for the Deaf community.”

In a Hands In! production, both Deaf and hearing actors perform, but everyone signs their lines. Voicers offstage speak the lines as they are being signed, so the hearing audience can understand what’s happening as well.

Hands In! has an ASL consultation board comprised of Deaf members only, and they strive to incorporate Deaf actors in their shows.



Jordan Richey and Christopher Carpenter, both hearing members of Hands In!, perform in “Nottingham.”

Read more at [t.uga.edu/5dC](http://t.uga.edu/5dC)

## AMAZING STUDENTS: Maite Bucher

*Maite Bucher, a Ph.D. candidate studying environmental health sciences, helped initiate the Scientific Research and Education Network (SciREN) to facilitate collaboration between universities and local schools. She aspires to encourage young minds, particularly women and minorities, to pursue careers and higher education in STEM.*

**What is your passion and how are you committed to pursuing it?**

I would like to conduct research that assesses the health of our coral reef ecosystems. I am committed to pursuing this passion by becoming a scientist and professor with the goal of (1) stimulating collaboration between universities and governments, (2) supporting women and minority scientists in scientific fields, and (3) invoking public interest and action.

Read more at [news.uga.edu/maite-bucher/](http://news.uga.edu/maite-bucher/)

## AMAZING STUDENTS: Ben Starks

*Ben Starks, a fourth-year Foundation Fellow studying management information systems and business analytics, has a passion for analytics and basketball. For the past year, he has worked on the UGA basketball statistics and analytics team, combining his two greatest loves. After interning with the LA Clippers, Ben wants to pursue a career in professional sports analytics.*

**I chose to attend UGA because...**

...The opportunities are truly endless. I know that sounds corny, but it’s the truth. Hearing both the Ramsey Scholars and Foundation Fellows speak about their experiences traveling the world and earning incredible internships solidified my desire to attend UGA. Growing up watching Georgia football every Saturday did not hurt either.

Read more at [news.uga.edu/ben-starks/](http://news.uga.edu/ben-starks/)



# CAMPUS SCENES



Above: The Arab Cultural Association hosts a banquet to celebrate Eid al-Adha.

Right: A member of the Hispanic Student Association unveils the theme of the annual Noche Latina during a general body meeting.



Above: A member of the UGA Destination Dawgs poses with a Georgia flag in Athens, Greece.

Right: The Persian Student Union and International Student Life host an International Coffee Hour in Memorial Hall.



Above: The UGA Black Male Leadership Society welcomes their 2019 Freshman Council.

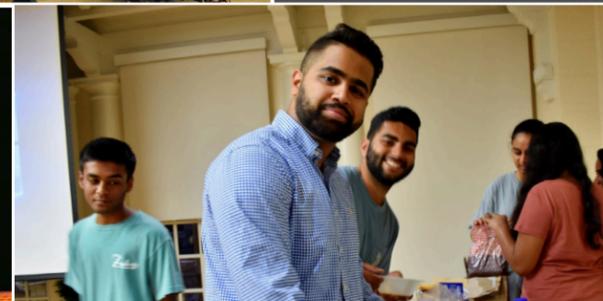
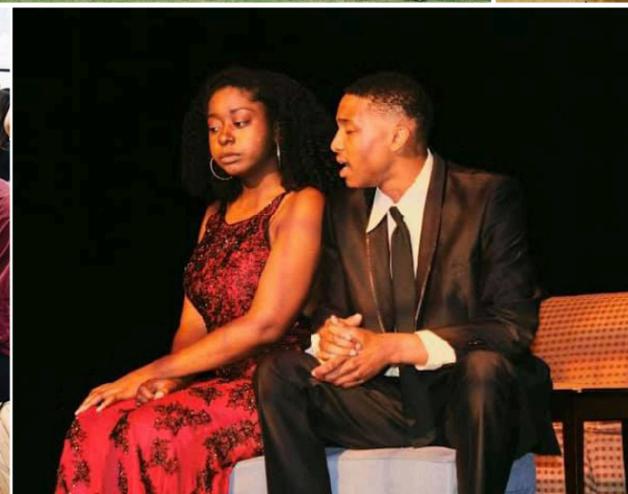


Right: Members of the Turkish Student Association provide information at the Campus and Community Resources Fair.

Below: Students come together in a multicultural field day hosted by the Filipino Student Association, Arab Cultural Association, Korean Undergraduate Student Association and Vietnamese Student Association.



Above: A member of the African Student Union performs a dance at the annual Africa Night.



Above: The UGA Indian Cultural Exchange hosts their first Chai and Chaat of the semester.

Left: Members of the Black Theatrical Ensemble perform in a production of "Blues for an Alabama Sky" at the Morton Theatre.

Right: A student advisor for PRISM and the LGBT Resource Center shows pride.



Below: The Vietnamese Student Association hosts its first general body meeting of the semester.



Above: Members of Latino/as Invested in the Students of Tomorrow (LISTo) host an informational barbecue.

Right: The Pakistani Student Association kicks off the semester with a general body meeting.



## DIVERSITY RESOURCES

### Students

Office of Institutional Diversity  
[diversity.uga.edu](http://diversity.uga.edu)

Multicultural Services and Programs  
[msp.uga.edu](http://msp.uga.edu)

International Student Life  
[isl.uga.edu](http://isl.uga.edu)

Disability Resource Center  
[drc.uga.edu](http://drc.uga.edu)

LGBT Resource Center  
[lgbtcenter.uga.edu](http://lgbtcenter.uga.edu)

Connections: Student Academic Support Program  
[diversity.uga.edu/index.php/programs/article/connections](http://diversity.uga.edu/index.php/programs/article/connections)

Student Veterans Resource Center  
[svrc.uga.edu](http://svrc.uga.edu)

### Faculty

Equal Opportunity Office  
[eoo.uga.edu](http://eoo.uga.edu)

Black Faculty and Staff Organization  
[facebook.com/BFSOUGA](https://facebook.com/BFSOUGA)

Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion  
[diversity.uga.edu/index.php/programs/article/CDI](http://diversity.uga.edu/index.php/programs/article/CDI)

Human Resources  
[hr.uga.edu](http://hr.uga.edu)

UGA GLOBES  
[ugaglobes.wordpress.com](http://ugaglobes.wordpress.com)

# Scholarships to aid rural Georgia

The George W. Strickland, Jr. Foundation recently gifted \$400,000 to the University of Georgia to establish four Georgia Commitment Scholarships.

The scholarships will be awarded in fall 2019, prioritizing students from 16 rural Georgia counties: Evans, Tattnall, Bryan, Bulloch, Candler, Liberty, Toombs, Emanuel, Jenkins, Screven, Burke, Appling, Wayne, Glynn, Long and Effingham.

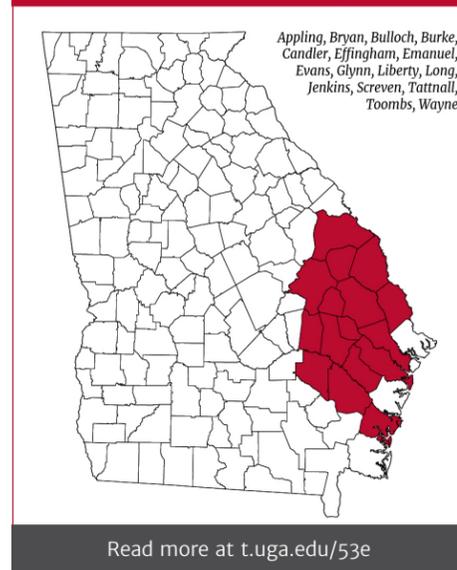
The Strickland Scholarships will impact students in rural Georgia, an area that had deep meaning to the foundation's namesake, Evans County native George W. "Jack" Strickland, Jr., a United States Army veteran and business owner in Claxton.

The GCS program aligns with the foundation's passion to strengthen communities, provide opportunities for education and inspire the next generation. Students receiving the Strickland Scholarships will not only receive a scholarship and tailored programming provided by the university's Division of Academic Enhancement, but also the opportunity to participate in the newly established ALL Georgia Program.

The ALL Georgia Program supports all rural students at UGA with a network of resources and common experiences, in addition to providing unique programs and opportunities to the scholars. The ALL Georgia Program promotes the mission of UGA as the flagship institution of higher education in Georgia by improving access for rural populations and creating a broad-based collaboration across multiple offices at the university.

"We are appreciative of the George W. Strickland, Jr. Foundation's commitment to our rural Georgian students and know that the lives of these students and their families will be positively impacted for generations to come," said Kelly Kerner, UGA vice president for development and alumni relations.

Counties supported by George W. Strickland Jr. Foundation Georgia Commitment Scholarships



Read more at [t.uga.edu/53e](http://t.uga.edu/53e)

## FOCUS ON FACULTY



**Emily Sahakian**

*Emily Sahakian, associate professor of theatre and French, encourages students to use theatre to form partnerships within the community through experiential learning, mentorship programs and volunteering.*

### What do you hope students gain from their classroom experience with you?

One of my students in the "Community-based Theatre" course told me that my teaching taught him to listen. I also hope that my courses teach students to write and speak with precision, to make reasoned choices, to appreciate their unique creativity, intellect and problem-solving skills and to see the impact they can make in their daily lives.

Read more at [news.uga.edu/emily-sahakian/](http://news.uga.edu/emily-sahakian/)



**Javier Boyas**

*Javier Boyas, associate professor in the School of Social Work, hopes his students learn the importance of interdisciplinary methods for solving complex social issues and thinking critically about effective solutions.*

### How do you describe the scope and impact of your research or scholarship to people outside of your field?

My program of research aims to build knowledge that contributes to effective intervention and prevention approaches to reduce and ultimately eliminate health disparities among communities of color, particularly among the Latinx community. I try to carry out investigations whose results have an applied aspect to them.

Read more at [news.uga.edu/javier-boyas/](http://news.uga.edu/javier-boyas/)

# Fostering relationships through business

As president of the Multicultural Business Student Association, Tiffany Dang knows a thing or two about professional development.

The Multicultural Business Student Association (MBSA) is a student organization in the UGA Terry College of Business that offers students from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to grow professionally, as well as promote diversity within Terry College and beyond.

Dang, a fourth-year marketing and international business major and president of MBSA, works hard to ensure the organization is serving its members and the community.

"MBSA is all about inclusion and having perspectives from people from different cultures, whether that be different ethnicities, religions, etc. We want to see underrepresented people be successful in Terry and hope that we are able to provide the resources to reach that outcome," Dang said.

Not only does MBSA act as a community for students to share ideas and form personal and professional relationships, it offers a variety of resources for students interested in furthering professional development such as tutoring, mentoring programs and networking opportunities.

Prapul Soodini, a fourth-year finance major and member of MBSA, knows first-hand what it means to be involved in a rewarding organization committed to personal and professional development.

"MBSA has really helped me form many connections in the professional field," Soodini said. "It also has given me more than enough help to succeed with interview tips, resume critiques and direct meetings with recruiters."

Though MBSA emphasizes professional development for students interested in business, they serve a variety of students on campus looking to further their professional growth.

"MBSA isn't just for business students," Dang said. "We've had many students from all different types of majors, such as engineering and biology, come to our meetings to seek professional development."

Through and through, MBSA works hard to provide useful resources for professional development, foster relationships and encourage collaboration, regardless of academic, professional, social or ethnic background.

"The goal of MBSA is to provide a space where people from different backgrounds can express themselves in the way they choose," Soodini said. "We strive to provide a space in which individuality can be expressed through the sharing of ideas and where connections can be made based off unique relationships."



Members of MBSA at the Involvement Fair for student organizations.

To learn more about the Multicultural Business Student Association, visit [facebook.com/UGAMBBSA](http://facebook.com/UGAMBBSA)

### COOK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

numerous models that we could adopt. Many are validated, well-researched models that move organizations and communities toward equity and inclusion. They often have a track record of success and provide valuable lessons. For our community, I would suggest that we think about our values regarding diversity in terms of awareness, interpersonal engagement and practice.

Awareness of the diversity that exists at the University of Georgia and awareness of the many forms this diversity takes, as well as the multiple ways in which our diverse identities intersect and overlap, is critical. This newsletter celebrates many aspects of our diverse community, recognizing the various individuals, organizations and programs that support it. In addition, this newsletter is a tangible reminder of what we have accomplished and a prompt to do more. In today's world, which includes so much noise in our daily lives, simply being aware of those around us and their personal and lived experiences is significant.

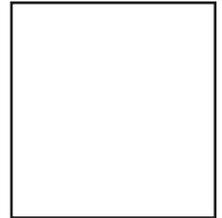
Interpersonal engagement is also important. We move around, among and in step with so many people on a daily basis, many of whom are very different from ourselves. But how often do we engage with others, particularly those who are very different? The challenge to have interpersonal engagement across difference can be intimidating and daunting, but it is also valuable and important. It actually affirms the humanity of us all. Also, as individuals on a campus of higher education, we are charged to push ourselves to learn and explore. It would be very unfortunate if we miss the invaluable education that is gained by interpersonal engagement with one another.

Practice is just what it sounds like. It involves taking our awareness and our experiences in interpersonal engagement and incorporating them into how we live our lives as citizens of the University of Georgia. It is modeling the community that we want to have here. Across the institution, individuals at every level are doing just that on a daily basis. This is why we have received multiple awards for our commitment to diversity. These accolades are not cause to pat ourselves on the back, but rather to dig in and do more. After all, we are the University of Georgia and we rise to the challenge of building a more inclusive future for our community and our world!

# DIVERSITY

at UGA®

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**Sam Fahmy**, Executive Editor  
**Abbey Miner**, Editor



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## Giving to the Office of Institutional Diversity

A contribution to the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) will help support a variety of initiatives that foster diversity at UGA.

OID provides and supports programming, such as recruitment and retention efforts, diversity scholarship funding, pre-collegiate learning opportunities, and faculty and student mentoring events.

Please contact us at (706) 583-8195 or at [diverse@uga.edu](mailto:diverse@uga.edu) to discuss ways to give and we will work to ensure your charitable giving needs are met.

To donate online, go to [diversity.uga.edu/index.php/about/giving](https://diversity.uga.edu/index.php/about/giving).

Checks should be made payable to the UGA Foundation and designated for OID on the memo line.

**Please mail checks to:**  
UGA Office of Institutional Diversity  
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