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## A Strategic Planning Master: UWG Awaits Bright Future Under Brendan Kelly



*Photo Courtesy USG*

**By Justin Hodges**

*Editor in Chief*

Dr. Michael Crafton has returned to his natural habitat teaching English and Dr. Stuart Rayfield leads the troops of the president's office. She will bask in that uniform until April 1 when the University of West Georgia begins its next chapter with Brendan Kelly stepping in as President, a full calendar year after breaking up with Kyle Marrero. After the Sharknado-level disaster of the budget crisis and shredding about ten pounds of attendance off, UWG needs a coach that knows how to coordinate a rebuild. Kelly's journey as Chancellor at USC-Upstate reflects marvelous work in that regard. In what the University System of Georgia (USG) dubs a "strategic planning process", Kelly laid a foundation in Spartanburg that provided the school three new colleges and seven bachelor's and master's degree programs that their students clamored for. The trophies of his efforts? A trampoline of state funding, attendance records shattered, and admiration from U.S. News as the top public regional university of the South. "The work this university has done over the last several years has been truly extraordinary," said Kelly. "There's an energy you can feel in the community and an eager

ness to create opportunities for students." Kelly has roamed the academic industry since 2000, teaching courses in Communications and Theatre Arts at Eastern Michigan University. He's a big basketball fan and has plenty of experience in the Gulf South Conference, climbing the faculty ladder at the University of West Florida from 2013-2017.

There he bob-and-weaved from director of forensics, to chair of their Communication Arts department, to Vice President of University Advancement before arriving at USC-Upstate in 2017. Kelly is a Hall of Famer in the National Forensics Association, a Patriotic Employer by the U.S. Department of Defense and has won several excellence in teaching awards. The man simply never stops progressing himself and everything he influences. The UWG community got a good whiff of that when Kelly came to campus for his official welcoming, charming audiences at Ingram Library and the Campus Center. "I worked in restaurants while I was in college and high school, the only thing that makes a successful restaurant is how much does the consumer enjoy the food and the experience," said Kelly. "That's a lot of things tied together. How clean is the floor? How good is the ser

vice? How does the food taste? Do I feel like people were grateful that I came? I think those same principles work anywhere."

He's absolutely correct. Providing ultimate satisfaction to consumers is the fuel for success amongst all worldly spectrums. The understanding of this embodies great leadership and dedication to helping people and meeting their needs, because that's what successful people do and have always done. Kelly is here for the sake of the students, and they can expect to be treated as a top priority in his initiative.

"For us, we have to be assessing the national landscape in higher education and addressing all institutional needs, at the end of the day it's the user experience," said Kelly. "The only thing that should be hard about college is the work you do in class. Everything else should be easy. If it's not, then we're doing it wrong. We have to make it so that we remove impediments."

Last semester was undoubtedly a scooter swing to the ankle for the University. Thankfully, Kelly's prestige matches what UWG needs in its next great leader, great wisdom and great understanding of success. Under his tutelage, the University should continue to grow and succeed.



## Artists of UWG Put Their Best Work on Display

By **Haleigh Stone**

*Contributing Writer*

The University of West Georgia’s annual Juried Student Exhibition was held on Jan. 23. Twenty students were chosen and judged by former President of the Mid-South Sculpture Alliance, Isaac Duncan III. Eleven students placed in the exhibition. The awards for Best in Show included 2D art, 3D art and Merit prizes were awarded as well. Best in Show for 2D art was won by Jordan Lewis for his drawing titled “Branded.” First place 2D art was won by Nathan Childers for his “Now Serving” painting.

Hannah Swofford won second place 2D for her “This That” charcoal drawing and third place went to Sophia Cunha for her “Doll House” photography. Fourth place 2D art was won by Megan McCoy for “Headache Cure” in mixed media and fifth place to Christian Johnson for his “Freshen Up” painting.

Best in Show for 3D art was won by Cecille Redding for her “You Push I Pull” ceramics piece. First place 3D art was won by McKenna Schmidt for her “Comfort” found object sculpture. Merit prizes were also awarded to



*Photo Curtesy Sophia Cunha*

Chase Guajardo’s “Home on the Range” screen print, Emme Marler’s “What is the Value of Our Society” ink drawing, and Dallas Griffin’s “Dallas Self Portrait” watercolor. Although the awards and reception have been announced, the Juried Student Exhibition is currently ongoing in the Bobick Gallery in the Humanities Building until Feb. 20. Students and faculty are encouraged to visit the Bobick Gallery and support UWG students’ original works.

Events like this are one of the many ways

the art department supports and helps the art majors receive real-world experience with their art. For many students, these exhibitions are a way to gain exposure with their artwork. “It was honestly a shock that I won any place, but I was so moved by the way our juror spoke about my work,” Cunha says.

“Unlike most photographers nowadays, I am not always digital. I’ve learned to value and appreciate the physicality of a photograph, and I think the juror really understood that. My piece ‘Dollhouse’

was inspired by artists like William Eggleston and William Wegman.” Many artists at UWG like Sophia Cunha are working relentlessly to spread their art and build their own personal brands while juggling full-time academics. Exhibitions like this help students who are not art majors see what the UWG art majors are learning and creating. For the artists it gives them an overwhelming sense of gratification to have their art recognized by an esteemed juror but also accepted by their peers.

## Deeper Than Music: Mac Miller

By **Mason Ayers**

*Contributing Writer*

A palpable emotion overcame dark rooms as dilated eyes began to well. A single blink would cause tears to pour down. As Thursday night blurred into Friday morning, Mac Miller fans prepared to experience the rapper’s first posthumous album, “Circles.” While many fans refreshed his artist page at 12 a.m. across various music platforms, others could hardly come to grips with the thought that this would be the first album release that Mac wouldn’t be here to see. For many, Mac was more than an artist. The relationship he shared with his core fans transcended music. It wasn’t the fact that he had six Billboard top five albums, or that he had more than 20 top 100 hits. It was his unguarded approach to life that captivated his fans. He openly expressed his vulnerabilities, and he lifted the veil that barricaded fan from artist. Mac, unabashedly, talked about his battles with addiction, mental health and depression.

When it comes to this type of sincerity from hip-hop artists, Kid Cudi can be considered as the person who kicked down the



*Photo Curtesy Warner Records*

door. Before Cudi emerged into prominence in the late 2000’s, the idea of being expressive with one’s emotions/demons was rare within hip-hop. Artists like Travis Scott, Kanye West, Kendrick Lamar, Uzi, Jaden Smith, and Asap Rocky call Cudi their inspiration. While a much longer laundry list of artists who look up to Cudi could be mentioned, this is to say, that such honesty is relatively new within the culture. The same thing that Cudi represents to his fans, Mac represents for a younger generation. Mac didn’t hold back his true self. He didn’t hide. In an industry full of frauds and artificial plants, Mac was real. He noted the shift in his artist development from his

younger self, attempting to make “bangers,” and his growth into what he became. He said that he no longer wanted to feel numb, and that he began “to make the music [he] actually wanted to make.” This meant that he was no longer going to let what others felt would be successful dictate the art that he created. He grew up and grew into himself, the man that inspired millions. Unapologetic and unflinching, Mac made it clear that he desired to lead a life of purpose. With more than 21 million monthly listeners on Spotify alone, the anticipation for “Circles” was obvious. With flowing tears smeared across the cheeks of those who could not contain them any longer, his

fans’ nervous anticipation had peaked. Audible deep breaths were taken. The time had come to press play. Throughout his career, Miller was no stranger to sharing his vulnerabilities and struggles. “Circles” was no different. He sang about his feelings of being without direction. He felt trapped within an unbreakable cycle. The first track likely served as an ode to the culminating track of his previous album, “Swimming.” “It go on and on,” said Mac in his final verse of the album.

“Just like a circle, I go back where I’m from.” It is this earnest lyricism that endeared Mac to millions of fans. Mac allowed his fans a look into his life in a way that many artists fear. He understood that his truth was not exclusive to himself, but rather a shared affliction of many. He turned his pain into inspiration. “Why don’t you wake up from your bad dreams,” rapped Miller. “When’s the last time you took a little time for yourself? There’s no reason to be so down. Rather fly around like there’s no ground.” “Everybody’s gotta live, and everybody’s gonna die. Everybody just wanna have a good-good time. I think you know the reason why.” – Mac



# Unpacking a Poem at The Other Night School

By Shelby Carroll  
*Contributing Writer*

The University of West Georgia's School of the Arts program kicked off the spring semester by hosting its first of The Other Night School events, "The Anatomy of a Poem." The Other Night School is a dynamic learning environment provided by UWG's College of Arts and Humanities, which tackles intriguing topics of interest and deconstructs them in an interactive community setting. The seminar was held at the Newnan Carnegie Library on Jan. 21, 2020. It began with a small reception of food and beverages at 6 p.m. and continued on into the heart of the event with the talk itself beginning at 6:30 p.m. UWG's School of the Arts (SOTA) Director and Professor of English, Chad Davidson, led this specific event and began by proposing the thought-provoking topic of how to

truly make meaning of poetry, along with the question of where it may derive its power. Davidson highlighted the importance of poetry, noting that it has been preserved back to the days of Homer, the legendary author of the Iliad and the Odyssey within Greek literature, in the eighth and ninth century B.C. "It's quite easy, really, to turn people onto it. There's a reason it's been around for thousands of years," said Davidson. During his speech, Davidson referenced the great English poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who refers to poetry as "the best words in the best order." The poem that Davidson chose to unpack at the event was "The Road Not Taken," written by the American poet Robert Frost.

He noted the use of antiquated words that still feel modern, making it a timelessly relatable piece. After emphasizing

the importance of the rhyme structure, and how best words, best order was utilized, he reflected on the poem as being a "cultural touchstone." During this event, Davidson referred to poetry as "a careful deployment of language" as well as being "constructed by meaningful ambiguity." "Poetry specifically is condensed material, so it lends itself to discussions and educational programming," said Davidson. "Unlike a novel or a film [which the audience would have to know beforehand], many poems can be read and discussed easily in a short presentation. Moreover, poetry often calls for a kind of linguistic precision and verbal economy that renders it uniquely suited for the task. "It's heartening to me to see so many out to learn about poetry when they could easily watch a basketball game or go to the cinema," said Davidson.

"If I can change some minds about poetry, well that's a win-win." The Other Night School is a dynamic learning environment provided by UWG's College of Arts and Humanities, which tackles intriguing topics of interest and deconstructs them in an interactive community setting. For the Spring 2020 semester, UWG professors such as Davidson and others will continue to alternate between Newnan, Carrollton, and Serenbe to present topics in literature, language, history, art and music. Students, as well as all members of the community, have the opportunity to attend and enjoy The Other Night School for the remainder of the semester, with events scheduled to occur up until April 21 of this year. Although tickets are not required for entrance at the door, attendees can RSVP for the chance to win door prizes.

*Photo Courtesy Newnan Carnegie Library*



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SPRING 2020

JANUARY

TUE 21

THE ANATOMY OF A POEM  
CHAD DAVIDSON, PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH  
CARNEGIE LIBRARY, NEWNAN

TUE 28

FACT AND FANTASY IN WESTERN ART  
NATHAN REES, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF ART  
HAWTHORNE ROOM, SERENBE

FEBRUARY

TUE 11

GETTING WARMER: LITERATURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS  
SHANNON FINCK, SENIOR LECTURER OF ENGLISH  
THE HUB, CARROLLTON

TUE 18

REMEMBERING THE CONFEDERACY  
KEITH BOHANNON, PROFESSOR OF HISTORY  
UWG CENTER, NEWNAN

MARCH

TUE 10

SPECIAL EVENT: BLACKWELL PRIZE-WINNER GRAHAM BARNHART  
CARNEGIE LIBRARY, NEWNAN

TUE 24

THE SMALLEST OF SLAVES: ENSLAVED YOUTH IN JAMAICA  
COLLEEN A. VASCONCELLOS, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF HISTORY  
HAWTHORNE ROOM, SERENBE

APRIL

TUE 7

OPERA IS DEAD, LONG LIVE OPERA!  
DAWN NEELY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF VOICE & DIRECTOR OF OPERA WORKSHOP  
THE HUB, CARROLLTON

TUE 21

HOW TO BE A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD  
DR. ROB KILPATRICK, CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES AND CULTURES  
UWG CENTER, NEWNAN

Complimentary wine and intelligence

All receptions begin at 6:00 p.m. with talks at 6:30 p.m.

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## SPORTS

### UWG Men's Basketball Falls Short to Rival Valdosta State

By Joey Walraven  
*Contributing Writer*

On Thursday, Jan. 16, the UWG Wolves men's basketball team fell short to their rival Valdosta State in a high scoring affair. Despite UWG leading over half of the game, the Blazers were too much for the Wolves in the end with a final score of 98-93. With the loss, the Wolves fell to 4-12 on the season. To begin the game, the Wolves came out running. They opened up with a 10-2 run, which was a product of pushing the fast break and getting a Valdosta State starter, Darrell Jones with three early fouls which sent him to the bench.

Another important factor for the early lead was due from the high-level play from junior

guard Oronte Anderson, starting out shooting 2/3 from the field. Despite the early lead, Valdosta State responded to the West Georgia run and began to roar back and play tenacious defense.

Their defensive pressure forced the Wolves to commit six turnovers in the first half. Adding to the troubles, the Wolves went a less than ideal 1/5 from the free throw line. In comparison, the Blazers went 10/16, hinting that their aggression on offense, leading to easy points. The Blazers went into halftime with 42-40 lead. Despite not having the lead at the half, the Wolves had several aspects of the game that kept them competitive. The most notable discrepancy between the two teams was the gap of three-point shooting. The Wolves shot 5/13 behind the three-point line while holding the Blazers to only shooting 2/9. Given the even rebound split of 27 from both teams, it was evident

that the teams would both have to play discipline games to secure a victory.

The second half was played very tightly and had over a dozen lead changes. The Wolves' second half success was fueled by several players stepping up, most notably, Anderson, Kovi Tate, and Seth Brown-Carter. Anderson continued to control the tempo of the game while Tate dominated the paint with a double-double of 18 points and eleven rebounds. Brown-Carter shot the ball very well in the second half, which helped them take the lead several times. Despite only two first half points, Brown-Carter finished with 21 points. Head coach Dave Moore was emphatic with their performances, "Kovi and Seth played a huge role in the second half. Without their performance, we're not in this game," said Moore. While several Wolves stepped up, the interior play from Valdosta

State proved to be too much, only converting four three-pointers, The Blazers scored 56 second half points, including 17 free throws. Oronte Anderson led the game with 24 points, accompanied by nine assists and six rebounds. Coach Moore was very proud of Anderson's performance, labeling it as his best offensive game so far. When asked about Anderson's importance to the team, Coach Dave Moore stated that "He [Anderson] is our engine... He's what makes us go." While Coach Moore was happy with the way his team played, he made it clear that the Wolves have to do a better job with closing the game. "If we come out and score 53 points in a half, we have to win that," said Moore. Coach is optimistic that his team's competitive fire will allow them to have a chance to win any game on any given night.





Photo Curtesy Atlanta United FC

# Atlanta United Enters New Era

By Kyle Soto  
*Contributing Writer*

The soccer world is a machine that is constantly churning sending players and coaches all over the world in search of more money, trophies and success. As it approaches its fourth season of existence, Atlanta United watches some of its most important players do the same.

The sales of Darlington Nagbe, Julian Gressel, Leandro Gonzales-Pirez and the reported sale of Hector “Tito” Villalba sent shockwaves throughout the Atlanta United fanbase, even if some of these outgoing transfers were somewhat expected. Many fans are wondering why the Atlanta United front office would move these players on, but the answer isn’t that simple.

Nagbe was expected to leave Atlanta for most of 2019. During the 2019 preseason, Nagbe initially missed training camp but later linked up with the team. There were reports that he wanted to move back to his native state of Ohio to be with his family, but Atlanta United kept him for another season before he eventually made the move to Columbus Crew.

Major League Soccer (MLS) rules and the league’s salary cap can make it difficult for teams to retain their assets, forcing clubs to make difficult decisions. Even though Gressel massively outperformed his contract, Atlanta United awarded center back Miles Robinson with a new contract that runs through the 2023 season, leaving less room for the team to negotiate with Gressel. The saying “no player is bigger than the club” especially applies in a salary-capped

league like MLS, and Atlanta simply couldn’t hold prevent Gressel from leaving for conference rival D.C. United.

Gonzalez-Pirez’s departure is a different story. On numerous occasions throughout the 2019 season, manager Frank de Boer and some of the team’s South American contingent butted heads. Gonzales-Pirez made some questionable statements regarding de Boer and his tactics to the press in 2019, and conflicting statements from Gonzales-Pirez and the Atlanta United front office have resulted in some confusion over which party wanted to part ways.

Villalba, Atlanta’s first ever Designated Player signing and once a regular starter for Atlanta that provided a different dynamic going forward, saw his role change under de Boer. He found himself watching matches from the bench and missed a large chunk of the 2019 campaign due to injury. His transfer to Paraguayan side Libertad reportedly boiled down to his request for guaranteed playing time, which Atlanta United couldn’t guarantee. Villalba hopes to be called up for the Copa Sudamericana this upcoming summer, the main reason he wanted more playing time.

Nagbe was a regular starter during his time in Atlanta and a crucial component to Atlanta’s style of play. His departure will certainly cause issues for Atlanta in 2020, but his transfer didn’t have the same emotional impact that Gressel’s, Gonzales-Pirez’s, and Villalba’s did.

“Fans have their loyalties, and who can blame them?” Dirty South Soccer’s Joe Patrick said. “They grow to

love these players and it’s the front office’s job to make sure they don’t let those loyalties [impact] decision making in terms of improving the team.”

Regardless of why they left, Gonzales-Pirez’s move to Mexican side Club Tijuana and Gressel’s transfer to D.C. United have had a major emotional impact on the Atlanta United fanbase, and understandably so. Gressel established a strong relationship with the city and its fans by participating in charity work and even launching his own blog, Gresselman.com, to have an outlet where fans can delve more deeply into his life.

Gonzales-Pirez epitomized how Atlanta United wanted its team to play by successfully passing out of the back and making risky decisions while still securing the back line. Gonzalez-Pirez was one of the best defenders in the league during the majority of the time in Atlanta.

Gressel and Gonzales-Pirez lead Atlanta United in appearances for the club with 98 and 95 appearances, respectively. Gressel also leads Atlanta’s all-time assist record with 36 assists during his time as a Five Stripe.

The core of the team that the Atlanta United front office and Tata Martino constructed together has been dissipating for some time. The departures of Gressel, Gonzales-Pirez, and Villalba, all starters for the club’s first game against the New York Red Bulls in 2017, highlight how much the team has changed. Only three players, Alec Kann, Jeff Larentowics, and Josef Martinez, from the first matchday squad have remained in Atlanta since

then, with Anton Walkes returning to the club on a permanent deal from Portsmouth FC ahead of the upcoming season.

Andrew Carleton, the club’s first-ever home-grown player, will spend the 2020 season on loan playing for United Soccer League (USL) side Indy Eleven. Arguably, it’s another move that indicates where the club is headed. Carleton was (and still is) heralded as a huge, local talent for Atlanta United. However, his off the field antics and his inability to secure a consistent spot in the first team squad forced the club to find a solution.

“I think this is a real inflection point on his career,” Patrick said. “Essentially, this is going to be one of his last opportunities. If he does well and he’s able to put his game together on the field, it could be a huge positive for him, and if he doesn’t it could go the other way. It doesn’t necessarily mean his career is over because he’s going to Indy [Eleven], it just means that this is the precipice of the edge.”

Atlanta United is entering a new era as a club. The 2020 version of Atlanta United may feel a bit strange, but such is the nature of soccer. De Boer and his team were able to win trophies and make an impressive run in the playoffs during 2019, but now that de Boer has brought in the types of players that he feels suit his system more effectively, Atlanta United fans are seeing the club enter a new era. The players that have left Atlanta, especially those that have been with the team from the beginning and won the MLS Cup in 2018, will forever be remembered.



# UWG Baseball: New Coach New Goals

By **Amber Bell**  
*Contributing Writer*

With opening day quickly approaching, UWG baseball prepares to begin the 2020 season. Jeff Smith is taking over the program after nine years as an assistant coach under Skip Fite. With nearly a decade in the program, Smith looks to take the team to the next level. With seniors making up 15 players of the 32 man roster, the team is adjusting to the new leadership. “I think we’ve made some strides. The thing is, I knew all of the players so it was an easy adjustment for me,” Smith said. “Now implementing the things that I want to do has been an adjustment for them as well. It’s done well.”

Smith says the mindset for the program is to play more games and compete at a higher level. “We want to get to a regional. That’s our goal every year,” Smith said. “We feel like if we can finish as one of the top three

programs in the conference, which we should be every year, then we will be in a regional every year.” Smith wants to see the team consistently competing at a regional level, with a chance to go beyond. He says that recruiting will play a major part in the years to come. In the fall, he hired Bryan Niedbalski to the assistant coaching position. “What I was looking for was a person that was a very good recruiter, because I think recruiting is the biggest thing that we have to do at the college level. I needed someone that could relate with our players and with our recruits,” Smith said. “What we are trying to do, and even prior to me taking over and before I got here, the baseball program had fallen off a little bit. We had, under Coach Fite and myself, gotten the program back to a respectable level, a level that has competed at times at a national level.”

When talking about the current team, Smith says experience will be one of their main strengths this season. “We have 15 seniors, nine that are on the pitching staff,” Smith says. “We need for those guys to play to the level they are capable of and if we do that and we stay healthy we should do fine. What I’m wanting to do with our recruiting process and the things I’ve told Bryan we need to do is bring in a talent level that can be consistent at a high level.”

Last season the baseball team ended the year with a 28-24 record after a run to the GSC semifinals. “I think we had a good year. We ran out of gas with a few injuries on the pitching mound at the conference tournament,” said Smith. “We got off to a slow start. I would like to get off to a quick start. Play well and get hot. This team here, the confidence level of getting off

to a quick start, is going to be huge for them.” Smith says he is excited to get the season started and lead the group of guys that are already here. “They do a lot of things that people don’t see off the field. They work hard,” Smith said. “The big thing is, I would just like to see them be successful. This year we’ll be able to go play in a regional and compete for the opportunity to go further. With as many seniors as we have, that would just be a great way to end their college careers here.”



Photo Courtesy Colton Lubink

# West Georgia Women’s Basketball Gets Big Rivalry Win

By **Christian Baker**  
*Contributing Writer*

The University of West Georgia Wolves Women’s team defeated Valdosta State on Thursday evening when they took down the Blazers 78-69 in Gulf South Conference play. This marked the 75th matchup between the Wolves and Blazers. Valdosta State leads the all-time series 40-35, however West Georgia has now won three straight over them. Despite shooting 31.9% from the field the Lady Wolves won the game in the second quarter outscoring Valdosta 29-15. The Wolves got off to the right start with a three pointer

which led the team to go on a 16-6 run to get the Wolves in double digits halfway through the second quarter and leading the game at halftime. The biggest difference in the games at the free throw line where UWG converted 26-of-35 attempts they and Valdosta making just 13-out-of-25 attempts. The Blazers also turned the ball over 28 times for 28 points allowed off of them. “In the beginning of the third quarter we started off at a great start with just one point made the VSU was leading the game. In the fourth quarter the Lady Wolves were able to defeat the Valdosta Blazers,” said Mitch Gray, UWG Hall

of Famer Broadcaster. Taylor Brown came off the bench and made a big impact for the team with 19 points and a good amount of free throws. Jayda Dooley, power forward, was the team leader with seven rebounds. The Lady Wolves are going into the next game (11-4) on the season with their head coach Scott Grominger earning his 226 total career wins, which ranks him third all-time at UWG among all former Women’s Basketball coaches. Guard Taylor Brown has emerged as one of the top bench players with Brown tied to lead the team in scoring with 13 points per game average, along

with power forward Ealey Drawhorn proving to be two of the better players in the Gulf South Conference. Ashley Lee has also recorded six double-doubles this season. Kayla Bonilla Valdosta state leads team in assist with 52. Brown leads the team in field goal percentage, shooting at 54%. The Lady Wolves will take on Lady Argos from West Florida for their next game which will be the first home game. The Argos are 5-11 on the season and will be coming off a win from Mississippi College going into the matchup against the Lady Wolves match up on Saturday.





Photo Courtesy Johnathan Mckenzie

## Personal Fitness at West Georgia

By Kennae Hunter

Contributing Writer

Students and faculty members have the opportunity to work with a personal trainer in University Recreation. The University of West Georgia offers a personal training program in the recreation center for students and faculty to work one on one with students who are certified personal trainers. “It had been turned off for a while. There wasn’t anybody managing the area,” Assistant Director of Fit-

ness Drew Powell said. “So, when I got here, I took it upon myself to find some people that were worthy of training individuals, were able to get a certification and were able to be trained appropriately to work with people one on one. From there it grew and grew as we gained more personal trainers.” Students who show interest in becoming a personal trainer will be selected for an interview. After speaking with them, the department decides if it is a good fit for the student. They

are expected to have the drive, motivation and personality characteristics that would encourage a comfortable environment for the trainee. Chosen individuals are required to be trained for a minimum of a semester internally, and after six months of employment they have to receive a nationally recognized certification such as the American Council on Exercise. “I became very interested in fitness when I was a sophomore in college and my passion for personal develop-

ment combined with the desire to help other people led me to become a personal trainer,” said trainer Megan Johnson. Students and faculty interested in receiving a trainer can go online to the UREC website and fill out an application expressing interest or go to the Campus Center to do it in person. Someone from the department will be in contact within 48 hours letting them know the application was received, and they will be matched with a personal trainer that will reach out within a week. Before purchasing a package of sessions, clients will receive a free consultation and assessment. The main goal of the consultation is to find out why someone wants a personal trainer. The assessment focuses on the goals the client identified. “The assessment is based off that conversation. Say the person is interested in joining an athletic team, then the assessments we do will be focused around goals that would then get them on that athletic team,” Powell said. The number of sessions the client decides to do is between them and the trainer, which can vary from one to 15, and prices correlate with the number of sessions chosen. “Our goal is that they work with [the trainer] long enough so that they gain enough confidence and internal motivation for them to work out on their own,” Powell said.

## Religious Mission in Carrollton

By Damani Smith

Contributing Writer

Two young women from the other side of the United States, Sister Bacon and Sister Nguyen, are visiting Carrollton to meet new people and spread the word on their religion. They can often be found in the Ingram Library here at the University of West Georgia. Nguyen met two missionaries back in her hometown in Utah and adopted her faith after taking lessons from the missionaries. Bacon was raised in church when she was younger and learned on her own whether or not this was her way of life. “Our mission is to help people strengthen their faith in Christ. We help people strengthen their faith in Jesus Christ by teaching them about repentance, baptism and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost,”

said Bacon. “Everything our mission savors on is our faith in Jesus Christ,” Nguyen adds. Bacon is from Las Vegas, while Nguyen is from Sandy, Utah. Sister Bacon has been in Carrollton since October, letting it be known she is familiar with the area. “I love it out here! It’s super awesome, and I love to travel throughout the state of Georgia,” said Bacon. “We are called to serve in the Atlanta area. It’s always neat to move around and experience the culture and the people and how much they love life and God here, especially in the South. We’ve both been missionaries for a year and a half, eighteen months, so we stay in Carrollton anywhere from about six weeks to six months. My mission began at Kennesaw State University, prior to me visiting Peachtree City. I then



Photo Courtesy Damani Smith

traveled to Conyers, followed by Auburn, AL, and now I’ve ended up here. “That’s hard to answer because every area, it’s something different,” continued Bacon. The people is what makes every area so great, because you can truly create your own family, even people that aren’t members of the church.” If anybody was looking for a church family, out in Carrollton, the girls will be more than happy to have new members join in with them. They are very polite and welcoming.

These young ladies have a few words they want everyone to hear, no matter what their beliefs or religious background is. “I think the legacy is what I want people to remember that the savior in Jesus Christ is there and that he is their Lord and savior and loves them no matter what,” Bacon said. “I would say when you meet someone for the first time is that they don’t believe what we say based on our own testimonies, but the act and think for themselves based on what our heavenly father wants.



# Defying Statistics: The Journey of a College Graduate

By **Brittany Shivers**

*Contributing Writer*

Various job markets have become increasingly saturated throughout the last decade, and competition between college graduates for suitable employment is on the rise. Because of the high stakes after graduation, networking and ambition are advantageous qualities in both the college student and graduate alike.

Key findings in a 2019 study from the Economic Policy Institute found that fewer than 20% or one-fifth of young adults ages 21-24 have a bachelor's degree. Even more so, approximately 53% of those that do graduate programs are unemployed or working in a job that doesn't require a bachelor's degree according to the University of Washington. Realistically, most young graduates are not getting hired for the job of their dreams right out of college.

Jacob Weinstein, however, defies the statistics. In May 2019, Weinstein graduated from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Music in Music Education. At UGA, he was a member of the Georgia Redcoat Marching Band and also played in the Hodgson Wind Ensemble. Weinstein was hired to be Temple High School's Director of Bands in February 2019, before he even walked the stage to claim his hard-earned diploma. But how did he do it?

The passion for music all started with his mother, Karen Weinstein, who was a clarinet player for the Forest Park Senior High School Marching Band in the early to mid-1970s.

"When I was growing up she used to play records for me of her high school's band, so I grew up listening to Second Suite, First Suite, Sousa marches, Giannini Symphony, Hammersmith Prelude and all these cornerstone band works that my mom was playing clarinet in, and I thought it was the coolest thing ever and wanted to do that," says Weinstein.

And, that he did. Weinstein started learning to play the french horn in fifth grade at George Walton Academy, a college preparatory school for pre-k through twelfth graders located in Monroe, GA. The George Walton Academy Marching Bulldog Band, which never totaled more than 80 people when Weinstein was there, is known for being small but impressive, going out and defeating 200 member marching bands at competitions all across the southeast. Weinstein started marching there in seventh grade and played in the band for six years, going out strong as the band president his senior year.

"I had incredible band directors, Christian Smith and Jason Sneath, and they really instilled a life-long love of music in me and a joy of performing," says Weinstein. "The start of my interest in teaching music was from being a part of the George Walton band, especially my senior year when I was the president of the band and was responsible for doing a lot of the warm-ups, a lot of the fundamental block teaching, and I had a lot of responsibility. I really enjoyed that responsibility and enjoyed teaching the mellophone section, so it just kind of all went hand

in hand, and then, when I got to Georgia, I was section leader of the Redcoat mellophone section for two years and just continued to enjoy teaching music."

Weinstein didn't start as a music major though. In fact, he started as a political science major due to outside pressure to have a secure and responsible job.

"I was sitting in my first political science class and it involved all this math and these statistics of calculating how people vote and it just wasn't what I thought it was gonna be, and I kept thinking 'I should be practicing right now,' says Weinstein. "So, I went to the admissions office in the school of music, and they got everything set up, so I was already in wind ensemble as a freshman. I was already in applied lessons, but when I went to the School of Public and International Affairs office they said, 'Well, we were waiting til' when you would change your major to music.'"

Now, Weinstein is a fresh face in the band director world, and has already finished his first marching season heading up a high school band program. The students have grown tremendously in terms of their playing ability, marching ability, and fundamentals, according to Weinstein.

"I'm so proud of the kids. They work so hard," says Weinstein. "I really feel like in my first year coming out of the gate as a first-year teacher and putting together a marching band show and teaching it and executing it and competing with it, I feel it was very successful, and I'm

very pleased with my first marching band season."

Now the group is preparing for their Large Group Performance Evaluation (LGPE), which is sponsored by the Georgia Music Educators Association and evaluates bands across the state giving them a score on a scale from one to five with one being superior and five being extremely poor. Weinstein's goal for the Temple band program is for each group to get all superior ratings.

To prepare, the Temple band program will go to two pre-LGPE events with one being provided by the University of West Georgia. At the event, Dr. Josh Byrd, UWG Director of Bands, and Dr. Cale Self, UWG Associate Director of Bands will work with high school bands individually to prepare them for their LGPE performances.

"The kids will have many opportunities to get a diverse perspective from guest clinicians, local band directors, our middle school band director, Patti Martin, and at the two pre-LGPE events," says Weinstein.

Aside from the hard-work and preparation that comes with being a band director, Weinstein is thankful to be given the opportunity to change students' lives in a place where music education is so highly encouraged. "I am so grateful to be a teacher in Carroll County Schools," says Weinstein. "We live in a school district that is extremely supportive of music education. I really continue to look forward to the growth that we're able to achieve working in this system with these amazing kids.

*Photo Courtesy of Temple Marching Band*





# THE WEST GEORGIAN



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