

College of Education News

March 12, 2018

College of Education, Georgia Southern University

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i2STEMe travels to Australia to share knowledge about international professional development

March 12, 2018



College of Education's Lisa Stueve, Ed.D. (left) and Kania Greer, Ed.D. are pictured at the University of Sydney in Australia.

Georgia Southern College of Education's (COE) [Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education \(i2STEM^e\)](#) Coordinator Kania Greer, Ed.D., and Outreach Coordinator Lisa Stueve, Ed.D., recently presented "International Professional Development: Lessons Learned" at the inaugural International Conference on Education and Learning (ICEL), held in Sydney, Australia.

Greer and Stueve based their presentation on the Institute's experience working with the STEM Academy of USA in 2017 to create a three-day professional development offered to 40 teachers from six local schools in West Bengal, India and their continued collaboration with the organization to work with Indian STEM educators.

"Learning is so much more international than it used to be," said Greer. "And the STEM language is international. Math is math, and science is science—no matter where you are."

Greer and Stueve's presentation included conveying concepts that cross cultural boundaries including authentic teaching and learning, which Greer says can be defined as "bringing real-world problems and opportunities into daily instruction to help create buy-in from students with problems or scenarios that are relevant to them and their experiences."

The conference included educational professionals representing countries including Sweden, South Korea, China, India, South Africa, Australia, Thailand and

the United States. Greer and Stueve made connections with many of the attendees and are in conversations with Swedish colleagues about future collaborations.

"The struggles we have in our schools are fundamentally similar to struggles in other countries," explained Greer. "They want to know how we are addressing our issues, and we want to know how they are handling their issues. Because we live in an international world, our teachers will need to understand diverse classroom settings, and experience with various cultures is vital."

During last year's training in India, i2STEM^e visited the local zoo for a project-based learning opportunity. Students evaluated existing animal habitats at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park in Chennai, Stueve explained, and were asked to work within the parameters of the land available to design improved habitats for some of the residents.

"Authentic teaching includes place-based education, problem-based learning and project-based learning," said Greer. "Students need to be able to relate to the STEM problems [teachers] are presenting them with so that they can feel invested. This is also an opportunity for [educators] to have students be active in their communities with real-world scenarios that they can collect data and propose real-life solutions for."

The mission of i²STEM^e is to provide professional development, engage in community outreach and seek external funding to promote STEM teaching and learning in both formal and informal educational settings. The Institute hosts many annual events including summer camps, Science Olympiad and the annual Interdisciplinary STEM Teaching and Learning Conference. The Institute was founded in 2012 and collaborates with all colleges at the University to enhance STEM experience and education.

Georgia Southern alumna receives national counseling award

March 12, 2018



US Army Brigadier General Kevin Vereen (left) and ACTE President Gina Riggs (right) present ACTE Career Guidance Award to Sharon Barrow.

With more than 23 years of experience in public education, Georgia Southern alumna Sharon Barrow ('93, '95) has dedicated her career to the education and well-being of students. Her commitment recently earned her the 2018 National Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE) Career Guidance Award.

The award recognizes school counselors and career development professionals who have demonstrated efforts to connect students with opportunities for success, shown innovation in career exploration and development and have advocated for career and technical education as a viable option for all students.

A graduate of Georgia Southern's bachelor of elementary education program, Barrow's first position in the classroom was a long-term substitute teacher position immediately following her student-teaching experience.

"One of the largest challenges I found in student teaching, as well as the long-term substitute position, was working with students who were carrying such heavy personal burdens," said Barrow. "I firmly believe my post-secondary preparation at Georgia Southern prepared me for providing effective classroom instruction; however, I wanted training in counseling in order to strengthen my own personal weakness so that I could be a better teacher."

Barrow returned to the University to complete a master's in counselor education in 1995.

"There simply was not another Georgia institution that offered a better program of study for school counseling," she said. "Georgia Southern was, and still is, known for the College of Education. It made sense to remain an Eagle."

Barrow has served as within the education system of Georgia, first as a teacher in Effingham County and a middle and high school counselor in Ware County. Today she is a high school counselor in Fayette County.

"I am, at times, a sounding board, cheerleader, college and career resource and source of chocolate on really tough days," she said. "My heart sometimes breaks for them when they struggle with various parts of growing and maturing, and I love it when students stop by just to share good news. My career as a school counselor makes me feel useful to others who have a need.

During her tenure in the education field, Barrow has demonstrated success in many areas, creating innovative programs and events for students and earning more than \$40,000 in grant allocations to fund the programs. She is also a former recipient of the Georgia Career Guidance Counselor of the Year by the Georgia ACTE.

Barrow says winning the ACTE's national award was a very humbling yet also exciting experience.

"There are times when I feel the same excitement or giddiness that I felt after realizing my name was called," she said. "And then I immediately feel the need to center myself so that I do not fail to represent other professionals [in this field]."

She added that this recognition will also provide her the opportunity to bring attention to the counseling profession and the "vitally important" role it plays in public education.

"My hope is that I can meet the opportunity with honesty, passion and positivity," Barrow said.

The National ACTE Career Guidance Award is sponsored by the U.S. Army and is awarded annually during the ACTE Awards Banquet. ACTE is the nation's largest nonprofit association committed to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers.

To learn more about the counselor education programs at Georgia Southern, visit [Coe.georgiasouthern.edu/coun/](http://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/coun/).

Georgia Southern is helping high school students GEAR UP

March 12, 2018



Science and mathematics teachers participating in the GEAR UP Georgia grant completed a professional development with Georgia Southern faculty in summer 2017. An additional training is scheduled for this coming summer.

Georgia Southern University's College of Education (COE) faculty are making a difference for at-risk high school students by participating in the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP) Georgia. The statewide project provides supportive services to help students complete their high school diplomas and prepare them for post-secondary education.

First funded in 2016, the grant is being issued by the U.S. Department of Education to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of Georgia Institute of Technology. The award, administered over seven years, will total \$21 million dollars and serves more than 12,000 high-need students in more than 40 schools throughout Georgia.

Georgia Southern Professor of Middle Grades and Secondary Education Robert Mayes, Ph.D., and members of the COE's Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education (i²STEM^e) worked with the University System of Georgia starting in 2015 to submit the proposal.

The COE is now taking an active role in the project by offering professional development for 8th and 9th grade teachers. The training provides teachers with engaging curriculum and activities for teaching interdisciplinary STEM within science and mathematics classes as well as strategies to enrich curriculum so it is culturally relevant to their students.

Mayes, who serves as the lead for the Georgia Southern professional development team, noted that they aim to serve underrepresented populations of students in Georgia and, ultimately, encourage those students to pursue STEM careers.

“These students can be future scientists, computer technicians, engineers and mathematicians,” said Mayes. “It is our hope that we instill within the science and mathematics teachers we are working with the authentic teaching strategies to engage students in STEM. We want to give their students the desire to stay in STEM areas through engagement in real-world learning opportunities.”

Teachers participating in the specialized training are from six Georgia school districts, including Savannah-Chatham, Clayton, DeKalb, Grady, Muscogee and Thomas counties.

The COE offered the first development workshop for educators in summer 2017. Forty-eight 8th grade science and mathematics teachers from the partnering schools attended the three-day workshop including sessions on culturally sensitive pedagogy, authentic teaching strategies, model-based reasoning, mathematics and science projects, quantitative reasoning and learning model planning.

The Georgia Southern GEAR Up team includes University faculty Mayes, Lacey Huffling, Ph.D., Kania Greer, Ed.D., Alma Stevenson, Ph.D., Lisa Stueve, Ed.D., and psychology doctoral candidate student Bryon Gallant.

Since the summer workshop, the Georgia Southern team has offered online workshops to the teachers and conducted observations of those who attended the summer workshop. During the spring, the team is scheduled to conduct additional observations and will offer a second summer workshop in Macon.

“We are encouraged and dedicated to this project because it serves some of the most high-need, underrepresented population of students in Georgia,” said Mayes. “We want to help these students go from high school to technical colleges and universities and succeed.”



Teachers participating in the 2017 summer professional development at Georgia Southern University worked on place-based and real world projects that can relate to their students.

For more information on GEAR UP Georgia, visit <https://www.gearupgeorgia.org/>.

College of Education professor receives national lifetime mentor award

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Georgia Southern University College of Education (COE) Professor Brandon Hunt, Ph.D., has been awarded the Jane E. Myers Lifetime Mentor Award and will be recognized at the 2018 American Counseling Association Conference in April for her significant contribution to the counseling profession.

With more than 26 years of experience instructing counselors, Hunt has served as a professor in the COE since 2014.

Prior to earning her doctorate and moving into higher education, Hunt worked as a full-time counselor for three years and also facilitated long-term counseling groups. The opportunity to supervise counselors during that time drove her to become a counselor educator.

"In my master's program, my mentor Dr. William Van Hoose, told me I should be faculty someday," she said. "At the time, I couldn't even talk in front of groups of people, so I told him he was crazy. Now, I'm faculty."

Hunt says the best part of her job is working with the students.

"Students keep the job interesting and fun, which I appreciate," she said. "I enjoy helping them find their own voices as counselors and knowing they are helping clients live better lives."

Hunt was nominated by supporters including former students and current colleagues, all of whom attested to her dedication and passion to the field.

"I genuinely believe that her strength and presence as a mentor is one of her super powers," wrote a former student. "Whether she was helping me as a supervisor, program director, mentor, adviser or maybe just as 'Dr. Brandon Hunt the Magnificent,' I felt heard, seen and supported."

Hunt's colleagues echoed her support for students and added that she provides mentorship and guidance to her fellow faculty as well.

"She has mentored me in a quiet, yet impactful way," one wrote. "Sometimes it will be as simple as her walking by my office before I have class and reminding me, 'You've got this!'"

Another colleague added, "Despite being an accomplished figure in the counseling field, Dr. Hunt's humbleness and desire to help others immediately puts people at ease. She recognizes the talents of students and faculty, and invites them to participate with her on research projects, presentations and service opportunities."

Hunt says she was both humbled and surprised by the acknowledgement.

"For me, this award honors the faculty and supervisors who supported and mentored me as I started my journey as a professional counselor, as well as the clients who helped me grow as a counselor," she said. "I feel so fortunate that I have worked with so many counselors-in-training, counselor educators and professional counselors who work to make the world a better place. If you had asked me as a new counselor what my work life might look like, I wouldn't have been able to imagine the incredible opportunities and experience I have had at this point in my career."

Each year the Jane E. Myers Lifetime Mentor Award honors an individual who has significantly enhanced the counseling profession through sustained efforts, for no less than 15 years, to mentor, encourage and develop professional leaders and advocates at the local, state, national and international level. The award is given annually by Chi Sigma Iota (CSI), an international honor society of professional counseling, during the CSI Days held at the American Counseling Association Conference. It is named in honor of Jane E. Myers, who gave 30 years of service to the counseling profession and CSI.



Brandon Hunt, Ph.D.

Register for EdCamp at Georgia Southern today

March 12, 2018



Registration is open for Georgia Southern University's third annual EdCamp, which will take place on Saturday, April 21 at the University's College of Education (COE) on the Statesboro Campus, from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. EdCamp is a free, participant-driven professional development program for K-12 educators.

Often referred to as an "unconference" because of the lack of traditional conference structure, EdCamp is a fun, unique learning experience built on principles of connected and participatory learning. Attendees are asked to present current classroom practices, learn what others are doing, gain support for employing best practices in the classroom and actively participate in a host of sessions related to teaching and learning. Attendees help decide the sessions for the day based on a consensus of what they would like to learn or discuss.

According to EdCamp Co-Coordinator Michelle Reidel, Ph.D., EdCamp has established a new partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) Education.

"GPB will be hosting several sessions and will bring a great deal of experience and knowledge to the event," said Reidel. "They have numerous free or affordable resources for educators that span all content areas and all grade levels."

GPB Education offers a wide array of digital learning resources from lesson plans, online simulations, educational videos, interactive curriculum and more. GPB partners with Discovery Education and PBS LearningMedia to offer quality educational programs.

EdCamps are held across the country and worldwide. The COE hosts EdCamp at Georgia Southern for any area K-12 education professionals who would like to attend. Last year, more than 100 education professionals shared their knowledge about their teaching experiences and tools at the College's event.

Reserve a ticket to the 2018 EdCamp at Georgia Southern by clicking [here](#). For more information about EdCamp, visit the event website at edcampgeorgiasouthern.weebly.com or email Reidel at mreidel@georgiasouthern.edu. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Door prizes will also be awarded throughout the day's events.