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Special education major receives statewide award

June 14, 2017



Meredith Boatright

Senior special education major Meredith Boatright says that she has always been drawn to children with special needs. So much so, that even as a child, Boatright says she preferred to spend her time with students with disabilities.

“I am still that way,” she says.

On Friday, June 9, Boatright received her first statewide honor in what College of Education faculty member [Kymberly Harris, Ph.D.](#), says is sure to be the first of many in her future career as a special education teacher.

Named the Georgia Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Student Member of the Year, Boatright was presented with a plaque at the annual IDEAS conference held on St. Simons Island, Georgia. This award recognizes an undergraduate student who has made outstanding contributions to CEC and Exceptional Children.

“Honestly, I was in shock but felt so honored at the same time,” Boatright said of the award. “The first two people I had to call were my parents because they are my biggest supporters and have been with me on this journey from the beginning. I wouldn’t have had the opportunity to be considered for this amazing award if it wasn’t for Dr. Harris nominating me,” she added.

Boatright serves as the president of Georgia Southern University’s chapter of the Student Council for Exceptional Children (SCEC).

“Her classwork is exemplary,” said Harris. “She has managed to maintain her GPA while pursuing a variety of extracurricular activities that involve children with disabilities, as well as her position as president of our SCEC chapter.”

Harris added that Boatright has been a “vital asset” to the SCEC chapter since her induction in 2016.

“She continues to brainstorm innovative ways to involve the chapter in the lives of children with disabilities in our area including the Buddy Walk, Special Olympics, Fishing Rodeo and SoulShine 5K,” Harris said.

Boatright has also served as a volunteer staff member at Lindsay’s Place in Savannah, been a prom date for a student with disabilities at the Night to Shine Prom, and works at the Bulloch County Recreation Department as a specialist for children with special needs during summer camps.

“Just to see a smile on a child’s face—everything we do is worth it for that very reason,” said Boatright.

Scheduled to graduate in spring 2018, she is already thinking about the future.

“After I graduate with my undergraduate degree in special education with a concentration in reading, I plan on getting my master’s in special education with my focus more on adaptive curriculum,” Boatright said.

[Council for Exceptional Children](#) (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving the educational success of individuals with disabilities and/or gifts and talents. CEC advocates for appropriate governmental policies, sets professional standards, provides professional development, advocates for individuals with exceptionalities, and helps professionals obtain conditions and resources necessary for effective professional practice.

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