

# College of Education News

October 10, 2017

Georgia Southern University

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# Georgia Southern hosts record numbers at FGE Day

October 10, 2017



FGE Day participants learned about Georgia Southern teacher preparation programs including B.S.Ed. Health and Physical Education (pictured).

On Thursday, September 28, 238 high school students interested in pursuing a teaching career visited Georgia Southern University for Future Georgia Educators (FGE) Day hosted at the Nessmith Lane Conference Center.

During the event, students were provided various opportunities to learn about the teaching profession. Georgia Southern College of Education faculty and students presented workshop sessions on topics such as degree programs offered in the College, STEM education and technology in education. Attendees also had the opportunity to gain insight from some of Georgia's previous Teachers of the Year.

FGE Day is an initiative that is coordinated by the [Professional Association of Georgia Educators \(PAGE\)](#) in conjunction with colleges of education in Georgia institutions to provide professional learning, networking and college visitation for students who are considering teaching as a profession.

During the event, PAGE hosted the FGE Knowledge Bowl, where students are challenged with curriculum from their education pathway courses. Statesboro High School took first place followed by Burke County High in second and Coffee County High School in third.

Additional competitions included the FGE Day t-shirt design contest and "Why Teach" campaign challenge. Metter High School took home the winning submissions for both contests.



The FGE Day keynote address was given by 2016 Georgia Teacher of the Year Ernie Lee.

Students attended the day-long event from 14 different schools including: Burke County High School, Claxton High School, Coffee County High School, Effingham County High School, Fulton Schools College & Career Academy, Jeff Davis High School, Jones County High School, Liberty County High School, Metter High School, Screven County High School, Statesboro High School, Tattnall County High School and Wayne County High School.

Lela Crosby, senior at Jeff Davis High School, explained she was excited to learn more about Georgia Southern and a career in teaching because she already knows she wants to become an Eagle Educator.

“I want to go to Georgia Southern, and being here today allows me to get a feel for the school and teaching in general,” she said. “It also allows me to join with others that are looking at the same career as I am and connect with those individuals.”

Crosby said she is interested in education at all levels—elementary through high school—and specifically would like to teach social studies or English. Her inspiration to become a teacher has been found in her own educators at Jeff Davis who have encouraged her to “try to the best of my ability to do everything in life.”

Screven County High Senior Kim Hunter also expressed that teaching is the career path for him thanks to the examples set by educators in his life. He plans to teach health and physical education, encouraging students of all ages to pursue healthy lifestyles.

“I grew up playing sports,” explained Hunter, “and students can learn a lot from a good coach and a good leader. You can show students how to be a better person and teach them about leadership.”

Tatum Sample, a junior at Metter High School, says her “Examining the Teaching Profession” class, as a part of her Teaching as a Profession Pathway, has made her “really excited” to become an educator.

“I plan to teach because I like working with kids,” said Sample. “I understand that some students need more time than others, and I would like to help all students by incorporating more projects in class because that is what has helped me.”

Sample is interested in working with middle grades students teaching mathematics—her favorite subject.



Students met former Georgia Teachers of the Year and learned about their experiences.

PAGE College Services Representative Mary Ruth Ray explained that their organization began hosting FGE Days in response to the growing teacher shortage in Georgia.

“As the largest professional education association in the state, PAGE feels a responsibility to play our part in addressing this shortage,” said Ray. “One way of doing this is to host FGE Days where we partner with colleges of education to bring together high school students who have expressed an interest in teaching and expose them to inspiring award-winning educators as well as the colleges who can help them achieve this dream of becoming a classroom teacher.”

This is the third year that PAGE and Georgia Southern’s College of Education have partnered to host teachers for FGE Day, and Ray says that each year the attendance has increased.

“As the original ‘Georgia Teachers College,’ Georgia Southern is a natural choice to host such an event. The Georgia Southern College of Education has a long standing history of outstanding teacher preparation, and Dean Thomas Koballa and his faculty excel at hosting these high schoolers and fueling their enthusiasm for the education profession.”

For more information about FGE Day, visit <https://page.site-ym.com/?FGEDay>.

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# COE dean, faculty participate in Georgia Pre-K Week

October 10, 2017



Pictured l-r: COE Dean Thomas Koballa, and Faculty Teri Melton, Ph.D. and Chianti Grant-Culver, M.Ed. participate in Georgia Pre-K Week.

October 2-6 was the seventh annual Georgia Pre-K Week and the program's milestone 25 years of quality early learning.

Schools across the state celebrated by having community leaders read to students and participate in the day's activities. Three of the College of Education's faculty members were invited to local schools including Dean Thomas Koballa, Ph.D.; Teri Melton, Ph.D.; and Chianti Grant-Culver, M.Ed.

Koballa and Melton, an associate professor of educational leadership in the Department of Leadership, Technology and Human Development, read to the Pre-K class at Statesboro High School (SHS). The High School houses a Pre-K program in conjunction with their Teaching as Profession Pathway and Early Childhood Education Pathway programs.

Koballa and Melton were invited by SHS Assistant Principal Alissa Sasser, who is also a current doctoral student in the College of Education.

"It was an absolutely delightful experience," said Melton. "I have not been around students of that age since I was the headmistress of an American International School in the Dominican Republic; I had forgotten how much fun they can be."

After reading "The Little Engine That Could," Melton said that the class participated in sharing time.

"They truly love to share stories about their lives, and the majority reported that they read with their parent(s) on a daily basis, which is so important."

Culver, an instructor of early childhood education in the Department of Teaching and Learning, was invited to read to a Pre-K class at Julia P. Bryant Elementary School.

"Engaging students in literature-rich experiences is essential in developing life-long readers," said Culver. "I was honored to have the opportunity to help cultivate the seeds of learning through books and reading while celebrating this year's Pre-K Week with a former colleague, Michelle Owen."

Culver read "There Was an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Bat" by Lucille Colandro and shared treats with the class.

Georgia Pre-K Week is coordinated by [Voices for Georgia's Children](#), a policy and advocacy nonprofit organization. Former Gov. Zell Miller launched Georgia's lottery-funded Pre-K program in 1992 as a pilot program serving 750 four-

year-old children. Since then, Georgia's Pre-K program has laid a solid foundation for academic excellence and future success in the lives of approximately 1.6 million children.

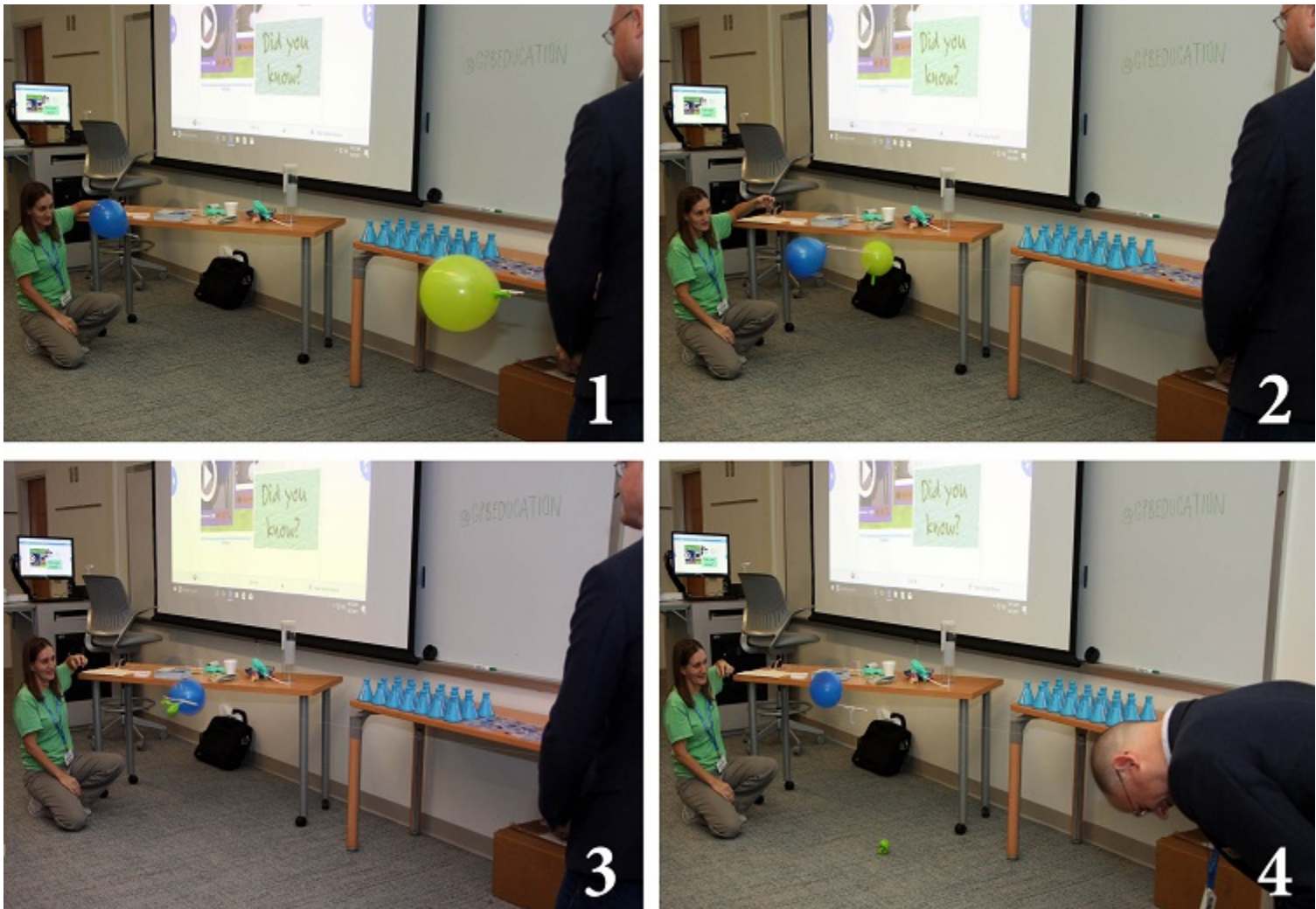
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# Educators gather for first EduMakers Unconference

October 10, 2017



GPB Education Specialist Michael Kuenlen is pictured (right) demonstrating a fun science lesson with Edumakers Participant Michelle Rivera.

Education professionals gathered on Saturday, October 7 for the EduMakers Unconference offered by Georgia Southern University's College of Education (COE). Attendees discussed the creation and teaching in makerspaces and STEM/STEAM labs.

"Makerspaces and STEM labs are increasingly becoming available to teachers and students, even in the rural regions of Georgia," said Mete Akcaoglu, Ph.D., instructional technology faculty member. "Starting from scratch is difficult both logistically and pedagogically. With this event, we aimed to form a network of like-minded teachers to support each other at every step of setting up and running a makerspace."

Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) Education Outreach Specialist Michael Kuenlen was a special guest for the event, providing information about the free digital resources offered by GPB as well as partner organizations including Discovery Education.

Attendees also explored the College's Innovation Studio and discussed current strategies used in some of their own makerspaces. Detailed discussion centered on 3D printing technology as well as robotics including topics such as funding sources and pedagogical and technical considerations.



“Thank you #GeorgiaSouthernCOE for the high quality professional development provided at #EduMakers Unconference! So many new ideas and resources,” tweeted participant Jeff Giddens, director of instructional technology and STEM for Bulloch County Schools.

Giveaways for the event were valued at approximately \$1,400 including donations from Qubits, Micro:bit, Georgia Public Broadcasting, Makey Makey, formlabs, the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, SITE, Nicholas Provenzano, Gary Strager and Daylight Donuts.

The event was coordinated by Instructional Technology Faculty Mete Akcaoglu, Ph.D, and Chuck Hodges, Ph.D. Additional faculty were on hand to assist in the day’s discussion including Elizabeth Downs, Ph.D., Lucas Jensen, Ph.D., and Shelli Casler-Failing, Ph.D.



Recipients of free Micro:bits given away at the Edumakers Unconference

“I am hoping the educators will stay connected to each other and to the Georgia Southern faculty involved for continued sharing and collaboration, especially via Twitter and the hashtag, #Edumakers,” said Hodges. “We are already thinking about making this an annual event.”

The College of Education offers master’s and specialist degrees in instructional technology. Students can choose to pursue instructional technology or school library media certification as well as a dual certification in both areas. For more information about a graduate degree in instructional technology, visit <https://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/itec/>

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# Upcoming National Youth-At-Risk West Conference to take place in Texas

October 10, 2017

The 2017 National Youth-At-Risk West Conference will be held on October 26 – 28 at the Hyatt Regency in San Antonio, Texas.

The conference will showcase the latest research, teaching methods and community work addressing the youth-at-risk population. Conference participants will be trained to create safe, healthy, caring and intellectually empowering educational environments that foster the well being of all children and adolescents.

The conference will feature five different themes including rural settings, urban settings, school climate, ESOL programs and a new strand this year—juvenile justice. The juvenile justice presentations will focus on the prevention and integration of youth into school settings and other topics concerning justice for youth-at-risk.

The National Youth-At-Risk West Conference is calling all people interested in the welfare of youth to attend. This includes, but is not limited to, teachers of all levels, principals and assistant principals, school counselors and psychologists, health and human service counselors and personnel, criminal justice professionals, business and community leaders, volunteer service providers, marriage and family therapists, public health professionals and social workers.

Registration is open. Group and student registration fees are also being offered. Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities are available as well.

Georgia Southern University College of Education's Eric Landers, associate professor, serves as the conference chair.

For more information about the 2017 National Youth-At-Risk West Conference, please contact the Conference Specialist Leah Edwards at (912) 478-1765 or by email at [nyarwest@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:nyarwest@georgiasouthern.edu).

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# New inclusive post-secondary education program at Georgia Southern takes flight

October 10, 2017



This fall, [EAGLE Academy](#) welcomed its first two students as fully enrolled Georgia Southern University undergraduates. An inclusive post-secondary education (IPSE) program, the Academy offers Equal Access to Gainful Learning and Employment (EAGLE) for those with mild intellectual disabilities.

What started as a ‘aha’ moment in spring 2013, grew from a dream to a passion and now reality for the College of Education’s Shelley Woodward, special education instructor and founding executive director for the Academy.

“During a candidate visit to campus, the faculty member discussed ClemsonLIFE, and that’s when we realized that programs like this existed,” said Woodward.

At the time, Georgia only had one fully operational IPSE program located at Kennesaw State University. Woodward attended the Inclusive Higher Education Conference in fall 2013, and realized she was not going to be able to let this dream go.

“I couldn’t stop talking about it,” she said. “My brain wouldn’t stop.”

The next four years were spent writing grants, visiting other IPSE programs, holding meetings and working long hours to make this program a reality alongside EAGLE Academy Program Director Karen Phipps.

“Nothing about this has been easy,” said Woodward.

“But it’s worth it,” added Phipps. “It’s worth all of it.”

EAGLE Academy is now the eighth IPSE program in the state of Georgia. The Georgia Southern program is unique in many aspects including that it offers the third and fourth years for students who have already completed an initial two-year program at another institution such as East Georgia State College.

“We are one of the only IPSE programs that is starting with years three and four,” said Phipps. “This allows students to transfer into our program, and we have a collaboration with East Georgia State that allows those students to feed into our program if they choose.”

EAGLE Academy also offers their students a custom-built academic program based on their interests. Currently, the program includes two students—Kasey and Sharaun. Both previous students from East Georgia State’s IPSE program, CHOICE, they are currently taking courses in the areas in which they hope to have future careers.

Sharuan wants to work in graphic design, and is taking an introductory digital art and design course, while Kasey is considering a career in recreational activities with disabled children or nursing home residents and is taking an introductory therapeutic recreation course this fall.

“EAGLE Academy is thinking outside of the box,” explained Phipps. “We create a program based on the student. This gives our students the same opportunity every other student has in this country. They can be productive members of society, but they need to be trained just like anyone else.”

Students attending Georgia Southern through the EAGLE Academy program also have the opportunity to become fully-ingrained in campus life. Both Kasey and Sharaun live in on-campus housing where they can easily access academic buildings and campus events.

As a part of the EAGLE Academy program, students also train for employment through internships or paid jobs. Kasey is working in childcare at the First United Methodist Preschool while Sharaun is employed with Walmart Distribution Center.

The Academy is also incorporated into the undergraduate education curriculum for special education and dual certification (early childhood and special education) degree programs. Students taking assessment courses in these majors are introduced to the EAGLE Academy teaching philosophy and process. They are also given the opportunity to volunteer to work with the Academy’s enrolled students to serve as peer coaches, academic mentors and social mentors.

“Often these students will just stop by the Academy and check in to see how the students are doing and how the program is going,” said Woodward. “They are invested and want to see both the EAGLE Academy and our students succeed because they know how important a program like this is for students who have disabilities.”

Phipps and Woodward explained that there are 700 graduating high school students in the state that qualify for IPSE programs.

“That’s why it is so important that we keep talking about this program and the vision we have,” said Woodward.

EAGLE Academy is currently taking fall-only admission applications. For the future, they hope to expand the program to include the initial first and second years for their program as well as pursue dual enrollment options. Long-term goals also include expansion to additional campuses.

“How do you sell this program?,” Phipps asked rhetorically. “You don’t. These students sell this program when they go home and say ‘I want to go to college, and now I can. Here’s how.’”

To operate, EAGLE Academy utilizes a five-year Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) grant they received from the U.S. Department of Education starting October 1, 2015. For tuition assistance, the academy has also partnered with the Statesboro branch of Synovus (formerly Sea Island Bank).

“We couldn’t do this without the incredible support we have had from the College of Education, especially COE Dean Koballa, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Teacher Education and Accreditation Deborah Thomas and Department of Teaching and Learning Chair Bruce Field, as well as the generous financial support from our partners at Synovus,” said Woodward.

For additional information about EAGLE Academy, visit <https://coe.georgiasouthern.edu/eagle-academy/> or follow them on facebook ([@EAGLEAcademyatGeorgiaSouthern](#)) or twitter ([@EAGLEAcademy4](#)).

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# Counselor education program hosts multi-agency suicide prevention summit

October 10, 2017



School representatives worked together to discuss suicide prevention strategies.

On September 7, 2017 Georgia Southern University's counselor education program hosted the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) 2017 Suicide Prevention Summit.

The summit, titled "Understanding Data and Prevention Strategies for Addressing Suicide Deaths Among Children Ages 10-17," is a multi-agency collaboration bringing together the GaDOE, the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation Child Fatality Review Board and Children's Healthcare of Atlanta.

The invitation-only summit reaches out to school systems who have experienced one or more school-aged suicides in the past five years. For each school, several members of the student support and/or site leadership team including counselors, social workers, school psychologists, school nurses and administration were invited to the event. This year, the Department of Education partnered with Georgia Southern to not only host the summit, but to open up the event to currently enrolled College of Education (COE) students.

COE students attended sessions and were debriefed with Department of Education leadership.

John Holt, graduate student in the counselor education program, explained that the information gained at the summit was invaluable for his future profession.

"Attending the Suicide Prevention Summit was a great experience for me because it brought in a new perspective of learning that I will always have moving forward through the clinical mental health program at Georgia Southern," Holt said. "Sitting in with the school members first-hand, [they] answered all of my questions thoroughly, breaking down step-by-step how they would implement different techniques if faced with a variety of situations."

Counselor Education Graduate Student Renae Kibler also attended and stressed the importance of suicide education.



“Suicide prevention should be incorporated in trauma-informed care across all mental health disciplines,” she explained. “It is real, prevalent, and might show up when we least expect it. The importance of preparation and accurate resources is paramount to preventative interventions.”

The summit was coordinated by Richard Cleveland, Ph.D., assistant professor of counselor education and Department of Leadership, Technology and Human Development Chair Beth Durodoye, Ed.D.

The GaDOE offers multiple resources on suicide prevention. Visit <http://www.gadoe.org/External-Affairs-and-Policy/Policy/Pages/Suicide-Prevention.aspx> for more information.

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# Teacher appreciation football game to take place November 18

October 10, 2017

*College of Education to host alumni tailgate prior to the game*

On Saturday, November 18, the College of Education is partnering with [Synovus](#) and [Georgia Southern Athletics](#) to host a teacher appreciation football game! The last home game of the season, the Eagles will take on South Alabama at 3 p.m.

As a part of this event, discounted tickets will be on sale for any teacher and educational professional by entering the promotional code "HeresToTeachers" when purchasing tickets on [GSEagles.com](#). Using the code, educators can choose to buy a \$17-20 ticket in sections OO, PP, F and B for up to a 50% discount.

College of Education Dean Thomas Koballa, Ph.D., said he is excited to see teachers come together in one space and be recognized for their hard work and dedication.

"It is vital that we take the time to honor those who choose a career in teaching as they are providing the foundation in which all knowledge is built for the future of this state, country and even world," he said. "I hope to look out into the crowd on November 18 and see a multitude of education professionals standing to be recognized during halftime."

To redeem the promotional code, teachers can visit [GSEagles.com](#) and select to purchase "[single game tickets](#)." On this website, enter the promo code "HeresToTeachers" and select "go." The website will reroute to Teacher Appreciation Day ticket options. Click "find tickets," and select the section and seats preferred. For questions, contact the Georgia Southern Athletic Ticket Office at 1(800) GSU-WINS.

## **COE Alumni Tailgate**

Before the 3 p.m. kickoff against South Alabama, the College of Education is hosting an alumni tailgate from 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. to welcome all COE alums back to campus to enjoy some food, fun and fellowship.

The tailgate will take place outside the COE buildings in the courtyard facing the fountain. Free food, giveaways, music, bounce houses and games will all be provided for our alumni and their families. Alums are encouraged to park their cars in [Lot 42](#) near the College of Education building for easy access to the tailgate and a short walk to catch the game-day shuttle to Paulson Stadium. The shuttle service will begin at 12:30 p.m. and continue to run an hour after the conclusion of the game.

"We hope our alumni will utilize this opportunity to reunite with their former classmates and faculty on behalf of the College," said Koballa. "We plan to have a great event complete with traditional tailgate cuisine, games and even some giveaways and raffle items."

Attendees are asked to RSVP for this free event so that the College can adequately provide food and fun for all. To RSVP, visit: <http://attend.com/COEAlumniTailgate>

When arriving at Allen E. Paulson Stadium, be sure to stop by the College of Education tent, located in front of the Bishop Field House from 1-3 p.m., for photos with the "Why I Teach" and College of Education photo props.



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