

# Newsroom

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Georgia Southern University

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# Celebrate Worldwide Pinhole Photography Day at Georgia Southern's Armstrong Campus

APRIL 17, 2018

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*A photograph produced from a pinhole camera created from a pumpkin.*

The Georgia Southern University Armstrong Campus in Savannah will host a workshop for [Worldwide Pinhole Photography Day](#) from noon to 5 p.m, April 29, in Fine Arts Hall, room 211. The workshop is free and open to all ages and skill levels.

Worldwide Pinhole Photography Day is an international event that celebrates the art of pinhole photography, a method of producing a photograph that requires only a light-tight container enclosing any photosensitive surface with a tiny hole in one side. Existing cameras can be adapted, or one can be purpose-built for pinhole photography.

"A pinhole camera can be created out of any hollow object that can be made light-tight," said Assistant Professor of Photography Bridget Conn, who is hosting the workshop. "If the opening that allows light to enter the chamber is small enough, say a pinhole, the rays of light will be focused on the image, and photographic paper will capture it. I've seen cameras made out of a car, a book, an ice cooler, a green pepper and an airplane hangar – just about anything can be turned into a camera."

The workshop will provide a look at photographic techniques that were in use prior to modern technological advances.

# Alumna partners with University for enhanced student experiences

APRIL 17, 2018

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As director of scientific research at Effingham College and Career Academy (ECCA), Georgia Southern University alumna Michelle Thompson, Ed.D., ('00,'05,'11) is constantly looking for ways to challenge and encourage the creative growth of her students and has found that her alma mater can help.

ECCA is a ninth through 12th grade charter program school that serves Effingham County high schools. Students from both Effingham and South Effingham high schools attend classes and earn professional certifications and credentials in nursing, allied health, sports medicine, engineering, robotics, web design, computer science, culinary arts, automatic technology and maintenance and logistics.

Thompson works with students completing the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) research program, a four-course sequence that requires students to conduct both individual and group interdisciplinary research assignments.

"What is neat about what I get to do is that it really takes someone who has had experience in multiple science disciplines to be able to run an interdisciplinary research course," said Thompson.

After teaching science in the classroom for more than 15 years, Thompson has a multitude of educational experience. She completed a bachelor's in kinesiology from Georgia Southern, with intentions to pursue a career in sports medicine or cardiac rehabilitation. Thompson worked at a cardiology office running stress tests and conducting patient education, until a patient suggested she should be an educator.

"She told me I had what it took to be a teacher," Thompson remembered. "It kind of stuck with me, and the more I thought about it, the more I liked the idea."

At 23, Thompson landed her first teaching job at a private school in her hometown of Savannah, Georgia.

"Being at a small private school, I had to teach a variety of science classes," she explained. "I taught everything—biology, chemistry, physical science, and I even taught a medicinal magnet class. It made me very well rounded in content."

During that time, she also earned a master's in broadfield science education from Armstrong State University to gain professional certification. Thompson then moved to Jenkins High School in Savannah where she taught Advanced Placement Chemistry for eight years. It was there that she met and collaborated with Georgia Southern College of Education's (COE) Kania Greer, Ed.D., and Bob Mayes, Ph.D.

Greer, the coordinator of the College's Institute for Interdisciplinary STEM Education (i2STEMe) and Mayes, former director of the Institute and current COE faculty member, partner with schools in the region that assist with STEM education resources and curriculum.

"Dr. Thompson is someone who is willing to challenge herself as a teacher and get out of her comfort zone in STEM education," said Greer. "We have worked with her on a multitude of projects from classroom support, to providing faculty expertise or helping to make connections with other STEM industries or professionals."

From those experiences, Thompson realized what a vital asset Georgia Southern could be—not just for furthering her education, but also partnering with her to provide unique learning opportunities to her students.

Faculty from various colleges and departments of Georgia Southern have provided assistance to Thompson's students, who look to find solutions to some of the world's biggest energy, water and infrastructure crises. Once their projects are completed, students have been invited to present their research at the University's Interdisciplinary STEM Teaching and Learning Conference and other venues.

"This partnership is mutually beneficial for i2STEMe," said Greer. "When Dr. Thompson has a question or wants to see if there is something we can help with, she picks up the phone and asks. She also brings her students to participate in our STEM Experiences each semester. We support each other."

The partnership with Georgia Southern, she believes, gave her an edge over other candidates for her current directorship at ECCA.

"What set me apart from other candidates was my connection with Georgia Southern," she explained. "By showcasing my collaboration, it helped me solidify this job. I have not only an academic connection to the University, but also a professional connection with the STEM Institute and the College of Education as well."

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