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Scholarship honoring Bonds family announced for students pursuing degree in education

March 8, 2021



The Dr. Charles and Dr. Lella Bonds Scholarship, created in honor of two exceptional Georgia Southern University alumni and former members of the College of Education (COE), is available to students pursuing degrees in education.

“What distinguishes a college beyond the caliber of the faculty who teach the courses and the rigor of the curriculum are its alumni,” said COE Interim Dean Amy Heaston, Ed.D. “Dr. Charles and Dr. Lella Bonds had extraordinary careers serving students from elementary schoolers to college students.”

Charles, a two-time graduate of the COE in reading education, was the first Black faculty member at Georgia Southern when he joined the University in 1972 as an instructor for the Right to Read program. He left to pursue his doctorate and returned to Georgia Southern to teach graduate-level reading education courses. Affectionately known by his students as the Reading Professor, Charles was also the first Black faculty member to earn tenure at Georgia Southern and retired with Emeritus distinction in 1996. He also served on the Bulloch County Board of Education for 16 years.

Lella earned an Education Specialist in Early Childhood Education degree at Georgia Southern and served as a demonstration teacher at the University’s Marvin Pittman Laboratory School where student teachers interned at the on-site lab school. She served as a mentor for early childhood pre-service teachers while also educating students of Bulloch County.

During their time as faculty members at the University, the Bonds served as advisors to student organizations including the Black Student Alliance and Greek chapters for minority students. They also wrote books and researched and documented historical aspects of Bulloch County. Today, they continue to serve the community’s youth through their efforts with local organizations including the Original First African Baptist Church.

In honor of their contributions, members of the COE and the Bulloch County community donated funds to endow an undergraduate education scholarship in their name.

“They have given and continue to give their time freely to volunteer efforts that strengthen our dynamic and diverse society,” said Heaston. “It is an honor to be a part of the efforts to bring a

lasting legacy to this education duo that will serve to provide for students who would like to walk the very same path the Bonds did years ago.”

The Dr. Charles and Dr. Lella Bonds Scholarship is accepting applications at this time via the MyScholarships portal accessible from [My.GeorgiaSouthern.edu](https://my.georgiasouthern.edu).

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/R2 institution founded in 1906, offers approximately 140 different degree programs serving almost 27,000 students through 10 colleges on three campuses in Statesboro, Savannah, Hinesville and online instruction. A leader in higher education in southeast Georgia, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. Visit [GeorgiaSouthern.edu](https://georgiasouthern.edu).

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