

Digest

► **Jan. 13, 2010**

A newsletter for North Georgia College & State University

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USG Chancellor addresses meeting challenges

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beginning independent study, many also spend nights, weekends and holiday breaks in the labs at the Health and Natural Sciences Building. Drs. Ryan Shanks, assistant professor of biology, and Steven Lloyd, assistant professor of psychology, also spend countless hours in the lab – and on Facebook – communicating with students.

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hat-making classes, including civil war or straw bonnet and tea party hat trimming. The heritage craft class project is one of about 20-plus in northeast Georgia counties supported by the Grassroots Arts Program funded by the Georgia Council for the Arts and administered by the Georgia Appalachian Studies Center at North Georgia College & State University.

The Digest is published bi-weekly by the Office of University Relations for North Georgia's faculty, staff, students and community.

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North Georgia research explores effects of methamphetamine

Project sparks interest for undergraduates

By Edie Rogers

Spring semester began long before the first day of classes on Jan. 4 for a group of North Georgia College & State University students participating in a research project.

Not only do the students have to write a research proposal before beginning independent study, many also spend nights, weekends and holiday breaks in the labs at the Health and Natural Sciences Building.



Jessica Anderson takes care of the cells that she is using in her research on the effects of methamphetamine on the brain.

Drs. Ryan Shanks, assistant professor of biology, and Steven Lloyd, assistant professor of psychology, also spend countless hours in the lab – and on Facebook – communicating with students.

"I'm pretty sure Ryan doesn't sleep," Lloyd said with a laugh. "We do work closely with them, as much as their project needs, as much as they need."

The research, which has been ongoing for a year, is focused on "effects of psychostimulants, especially methamphetamine, on the brain, behavior and immune system." While Shank and Lloyd are leading the students, the cross-disciplinary research also involves assistance from Drs. Stephanie Songer and Irene Kokkala, biology, Chuck Robertson, psychology, and Sarah Formica, physics.

Both professors are excited by how much students are learning from the graduate-level research.

"You see the light bulb go off," Shanks said. "That is one of the coolest things. ...What's even more fun is to have them come to you with an idea you hadn't thought of and to watch them light up because they found a paper that Dr. Lloyd hasn't read before. That's great!"

North Georgia's dedication to having undergraduate students conduct research is an opportunity not available at other, bigger universities.

"Our focus is on getting students involved and exposed in undergraduate research," Shanks said. "... We're interested in the questions we're asking, but I'm more interested in having a lab meeting and hanging out with a bunch of students... or watching a student do a poster presentation all nervous for the first time, know that they're going to go to graduate school next year and have the advantage of having had that experience."

Neither professor, both of whom earned undergraduate degrees at the University of Georgia, were able to get as much experience in research as their own students are getting.

"This is really unique for undergrads to have this kind of experience," Lloyd said.

Ryan Harris, of Dawsonville, has earned a bachelor's in physics at North Georgia and said the experience will be invaluable for him as he applies to medical school.

"For someone who is interested in doing any research or science, it would be better to go to a college

like North Georgia, where – and it's not just in biology, in chemistry and physics both they have similar ideas – they can go in and get to work more one-on-one," Harris said.

Harris, who plans to take the MCATs in less than a month, is researching the immune response caused by methamphetamines.

"You know what you're doing, you're not just given a list of things to do. You will learn more here than you could somewhere where it's not that way."

Corina Oltean, a pre-dental major from Lawrenceville, said the smaller class size drew her to North Georgia.



Corina Oltean takes out a group of mice she is studying as part of her research project looking how prenatal exposure to methamphetamine affects adult mice.

"I'd gotten accepted to other schools that were pretty big, but I felt that North Georgia had a smaller ratio as far as faculty and students go, and that was an advantage," said Oltean, who is studying the prenatal affects of methamphetamine. "By having the one-on-one interactions with faculty, I think that's also going to help us when we go to graduate school as far as letters of recommendation and all that's required."

Shanks and Lloyd said not only is writing those letters made even easier by working closely with the students and getting to know them, they also see that the experience is helping guide the students' futures.

That's exactly what happened for Jessica Anderson, a senior from Buford majoring in biology. She graduates in May and already has applied to graduate school, where she plans on pursuing more research.

"This project's actually kind of changed my mind from what I thought I wanted to do and I'm really excited about it," said Anderson, who is studying the effects of methamphetamine on the cells of the brain. "I thought I wanted to go one way and now, graduate school's definitely what I want to do."

Not only are students learning from their research proposals, they also are winning awards. Anderson, Oltean, Harris, and Stacia Wood all earned Beta Beta Beta Research Awards from the Tri Beta Biological Honor Society for their research proposals. The group will use the awards in April to attend the regional conference of the Association of Southeastern Biologists in Asheville.

In coming weeks, Shanks and Lloyd also are looking forward to the delivery of a new piece of machinery earned through a grant from the Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience. The equipment, an open field chamber from Kinder Scientific, will allow students to measure movement in mice to gauge how the part of the brain that controls movement is affected by psychostimulants.

Grassroots Arts Program showcases regional heritage

By Edie Rogers

Have you ever wanted to learn how to make a straw bonnet or try your hand at spinning?

A series of classes in millinery and needle arts will be offered through August at the millinery shop located on the grounds of the historic Mauldin House, located at 458 Jefferson Street in Clarkesville. Classes being offered include sewing fundamentals, spinning, making aprons, and a variety of millinery or hat-making classes, including civil war or straw bonnet and tea party hat trimming.

The heritage craft class project is one of about 20-plus in northeast Georgia counties supported by the Grassroots Arts Program funded by the Georgia Council for the Arts and administered by the Georgia Appalachian Studies Center at North Georgia College & State University.



The popular Georgia Pick and Bow, a bluegrass and old time mountain music school for children, also is supported by the Grassroot Arts Program. Students are taught by top music instructors in an effort to build skills of cooperation, teamwork, regional identity and pride and to sustain traditional music and community.

"We believe that both visitors and residents of north Georgia deserve an opportunity to experience Appalachian art, history, music, and nature," said Rosann Kent. As assistant director of the Appalachian Studies Center, she serves as the center's administrator for the program. "The Grassroots Arts Program helps the center to share this rich heritage and also creates a foundation for a culture-based creative economy."

The millinery series in Clarkesville started Jan. 9 with a course on making muslin caps and bonnet circa mid-1800s.

Local artist Cecile Metivier, a fiber and jewelry artist with a background in theater and costuming, will teach the initial classes. Prices for the classes range from \$30 to \$50 and include materials. Classes will include not only instructions on making a clothing item, but also a discussion of the materials and style of the period.

Holding the classes in the millinery shop next to the Mauldin House is no accident. Margaret Rebecca Niebuhr opened the millinery shop in Clarkesville more than 100 years ago, according to historian and artist John Kollock. Shortly after Margaret Niebuhr's marriage to O.M. Mauldin in 1894, the shop was moved to her husband's family home. Shortly thereafter, the hat shop was relocated to its present location.

"It was common in a village at that time to have home/shop operations," Kollock said. "This example is the last remaining one in Clarkesville."

The shop also houses a collection of 178 hats dating back to the 1890s and a limited number of vintage garments.

"We strive for authenticity in our representation of a village shop located adjacent to the owner's residence," said Clarkesville Downtown Coordinator E. Lane Gresham. "We want to create a tangible way to experience history by learning heritage crafts and also to increase opportunities for heritage tourism."

The upcoming courses will be a way to "tie the past to the present," she said.

"Small groups of needle artists have already been using the space to gather and be inspired," Gresham said. "We welcome anyone with an interest in learning more about traditional crafts to register for a class."

The Georgia Appalachian Studies Center is a regional partner for the Grassroots Arts Program, supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through an appropriation of the Georgia General Assembly.

For more information, or to register for one of the upcoming classes, contact E. Lane Gresham at 706-754-2220 or e-mail: lgresham@clarkesvillega.com.

Upcoming classes include:

Jan. 23: Civil War era bonnet or straw bonnet. Cost, \$50.

March 13: Sewing fundamentals. Cost, \$30.

May 8: Tea party hat trimming with afternoon tea. Cost, \$30.

June 19: Spinning. Cost to be determined

July 24: Aprons old and new, Cost \$45.

North Georgia at hub of fiber optic network

By Edie Rogers



North Georgia College & State University got a late Christmas present on Jan. 5 when Gov. Sonny Perdue presented a check for \$2.5 million to help build the North Georgia Network — a project to bring broadband connectivity to northeast Georgia.

The presentation of OneGeorgia Authority funds came just weeks after Vice President Joe Biden visited the region to announce \$33 million in funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The OneGeorgia funds are included in the \$9 million in local matching funds from private and

public entities committed to the \$42 million project.

The university will be a vital hub on the network, a 260-mile regional fiber optic network connecting 12 counties.

Government, business and education representatives from across the region filled the third floor of the university's Library Technology Center as Perdue lauded the partnerships that helped make the project happen.

Perdue said the network will benefit North Georgia and other educational institutions across the region, as well as businesses and industry.

"This network will provide gigabit speeds for this college, 82 public schools and six other colleges," he said. "...The new network also will give this eight-county region the connectivity and reliability needed for economic development and economic diversification."

Both Perdue and North Georgia President Dr. David Potter said the project will support future growth and advancement for the region.

"This project holds the promise of transforming our region's economic base and our prospects for the future by propelling North Georgia into the global 21st century economy," Potter said.

Potter also noted the network will allow North Georgia to expand its online and distance learning educational offerings, including high-demand nursing programs and language education courses that can be transmitted to other locations throughout the region and state.

Construction on the network will begin in the first quarter of 2010 and will be completed by 2012, bringing an estimated 800 direct jobs and 21,000 indirect jobs to the region.

Chancellor says institutions will play a larger role in meeting challenges

By Kate Maine; USG reports

University System of Georgia (USG) Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr., in his annual "State of the System" address to the Board of Regents on Jan. 12, evoked the challenges the first board faced in 1932 and said that to progress, the system cannot continue to do "business as usual."

Davis called for a three-level response to the challenges posed by \$323 million in budget cuts, record student enrollment and the end of \$147 million in federal stimulus funding in 2012. "First, we will unleash the collective brainpower of this great System," Davis said in outlining the three points. "Second, the Board of Regents will develop and set the key principles that will guide our institutions in their work and third, we will encourage our institutions to experiment with new ways of accomplishing our mission."

With the creation of University System of Georgia in the midst of the Great Depression, Davis said, "Gov. Richard Russell Jr. reinvented higher education in Georgia." He said that that first board understood the need to invest in the future, despite the short-term economic crisis, and that the same philosophy holds true today.

The response to the economic situation, Davis said, must include an evaluation of the current academic model coupled with a back-to-basics approach. "It is going to be challenging to pay more attention to basics while at the same time calling for expanded innovation," he said.

Institutional presidents must be given greater freedom to innovate and to collaborate with one another, Davis said. One of the areas of renewed focus will be on institutional missions. "I would prefer to see more institutions sharpening, honing and tightening their missions rather than seeking to expand them based upon institutional aspirations versus true state need," he said. This may mean that some activities cease in order to align missions with reduced resources, Davis said.

Davis called upon the board to approve a set of principles that will be developed to guide the institutional presidents. "This work must begin immediately, as it is the most important step," Davis said. He noted the development of principles would be a focus of subsequent board meetings this year.

These principles also will help direct innovation at the campus level, especially Davis said, among faculty. "We have over 40,000 minds out there that can address our challenges. Our faculty in particular have the capacity to blaze new ground," he said.

The chancellor also gave a glimpse of some of the expected outcomes of this new approach to public higher education, which include best practices, some of which can be implemented system wide and some, which will be unique to an institution. He cautioned that along with some "stunning successes" would come some failures. "Remember, at one point Babe Ruth not only held the record for home runs, he held the record for strikeouts as well," Davis said.

The full text of Davis' remarks can be accessed on the [USG Web site](#).

General Studies degree authorized for North Georgia

The Board of Regents has authorized North Georgia to offer a Bachelor of Science in General Studies, beginning fall 2010. The program will be housed in the Department of Political Science & Criminal Justice.

The program is ideally suited for students who desire an interdisciplinary degree or who are at risk of exceeding credit hours requirement eligibility for receiving financial aid and need to obtain a degree. Students enrolled in the program must complete 15 hours of 3000-4000 level coursework in each of three focus groups. They may choose from focus groups in various fields (fine and performing arts, natural sciences, social sciences, business, international, leadership, military science, humanities,

math and computer science, or pre-professional programs such as athletic training, nursing, PE, or teacher education. A capstone course of 3 hours is also included in the curriculum.

More information about the program will be included in the 2010-2011 Undergraduate Bulletin, which is scheduled for completion this spring.

Core curriculum assessments may replace Regents' Test

In the future, USG students may be given a different assessment of learning than the current Regents' Reading and Writing Skills Requirement, known commonly as the Regents' Test. In its January meeting, the Board of Regents approved a change to its current policy requirement that will allow an institution to petition the Board of Regents for an exemption to administering the Regents' Test.

The policy change, which will only allow exemptions for institutions that satisfy the board's criteria, follows the October 2009 approval of a new core curriculum for the USG. The new core curriculum requires all USG institutions to develop learning outcomes and assessment measures in multiple subject areas, a requirement that could make the current Regents' Test redundant.

Under the new core curriculum, to be fully implemented across the state by 2012, student learning assessments will be required in the following areas: communication, math, humanities, the fine arts, ethics, the natural sciences, technology, the social sciences, United States and global perspectives, and critical thinking.

"One of our goals in developing a new core was to make learning outcomes and assessment integral throughout the curriculum," said USG Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer Susan Herbst, "The Regents' Test was, and still is, an important assessment tool. We will continue to use it as well as other measures to assure that our graduates are prepared to take their place as members of a global society."

To be granted a waiver to giving the Regents' Test, institutions must demonstrate that they have in place a rigorous learning assessment program that uses methods superior to the Regents' Test. Herbst said that initially only a limited number of institutions will be allowed to stop using the Regents' Test. Additional institutions will be added, as they implement the new core curriculum and demonstrate the effectiveness of their assessment measures.

Student fee policy changes

Also in its Jan. 12 meeting, the Board of Regents approved five major revisions to its mandatory student fee policy; changes that give clear direction of the purpose of such fees and how such fees are developed, approved and applied.

Mandatory fees are fees charged to all students at an institution to cover the cost of specific services provided for students that are outside the academic programs covered by tuition. For example, such fees cover student activities, technology, intercollegiate athletics programs, healthcare, parking and transportation, and new facilities.

First, the regents inserted a statement on the philosophy behind student fees: "student fee revenues are to be used exclusively to support the institution's mission to enrich the educational, institutional and cultural experience of students."

The four additional revisions are:

- Student-fee advisory committees should be comprised of at least four students to encourage broad participation in the fee process (the current policy required 50 percent student committee membership);
- An institution's five-year plan for each of its auxiliary-enterprise operations should provide for adequate reserves (associated with mandatory student fees) for the continued viability of the programs;
- Board approval is required for any fee or charge that is mandatory for all full-time undergraduate students or all undergraduate students in a specific degree program. All other elective fees will continue to be approved by USG presidents; and
- Specific course fees for supplementary materials shall be approved by USG presidents (this is a clarification of the definition of course fees).

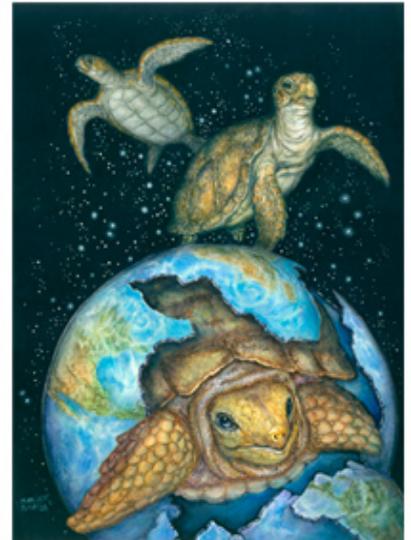
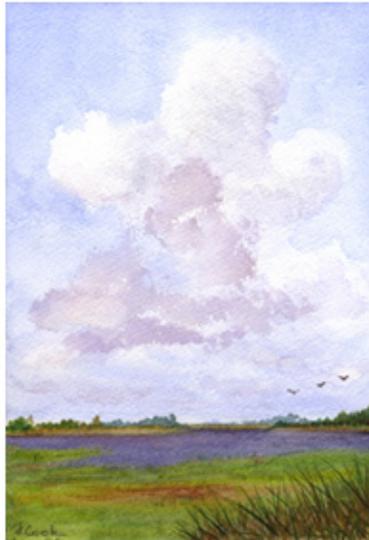
"Student fees enrich the college experience for students by funding programs and services that help to build relationships between students and their institution," Usha Ramachandran, vice chancellor for fiscal affairs, said in presenting the proposed mandatory fee revisions to the regents. "Mandatory fees also help our campuses meet the high expectations students have for certain levels of service."

The revisions were prompted by an ongoing effort within the university system to review and update all board policies. Other areas previously reviewed and updated include business and ethics policies.

Take note...

Bob Owens Art Gallery introduces exhibit

Sapelo Sojourns: Works by Marjett Schille and Jeannine Cook will be featured at the Bob Owens Art Gallery through Feb. 4. The gallery, located on the third floor of the Hoag Student Center, will host a reception on Thursday, Jan. 14, from 5 to 6:30 p. m., which will be followed by an artists' discussion at 6:30. *Pictured: Paintings by Jeannine Cook (left) and Marjett Schille (right)*



Workshops help students adjust to college life

Transition to College Week workshops, presentations for students by students, are scheduled for the week of Jan. 19 as follows. All of the workshops will be held in room 163 of the Library Technology Center.

Tuesday, January 19

Welcome Reception @ 5:00 pm

Time Management Seminar @ 5:30pm

Wednesday, January 20

Study Strategies Seminar @ 5:00pm

Test Taking Skills @ 5:30pm

Thursday, January 21

Stress Management @ 5:00pm

Math Skills @ 5:30pm

Tuesday, January 26

Writing Skills @ 5:00pm

Research Skills @ 5:30pm

Chapman to present piano concert featuring Chopin and Schumann

Dr. Joe Chapman, music professor at North Georgia, will mark the bicentennial of Frederic Chopin and Robert Schumann with a free concert on Saturday, Jan. 23, at 4 p.m., in the Hoag Student Center Auditorium. Regarded as two of the leading composers of piano music during the Romantic period of the 19th century, Chopin and Schumann were born just a few months apart in 1810. The program will feature Schumann's Sonata in G Minor, along with a complete performance of Chopin's Ballades. Chapman has performed in the United States and eight foreign countries as a pianist, conductor, vocalist and accompanist. He has presented solo piano recitals across Georgia and throughout the southeast, including programs for public radio and television. Chapman also is an active arranger and composer. For more information, contact the Department of Performing Arts at 706-864-1423.



Mountain Laurels call for submissions

Mountain Laurels, the university's art and literature magazine is seeking submissions for its spring 2010 issue.

Original creative writing may include fiction, creative nonfiction, drama, or poetry. Original artwork may include photography, paintings, drawings, comics, sculpture, ceramics, or textiles.

All submissions must include a title. Creative writing is limited to 1,000 words per item. Submissions are limited to students, faculty and staff at North Georgia College & State University. Student work is given first consideration for publication. All submissions are blind reviewed by student editors and outside reviewers.

Please e-mail your MS Word or JPG entries to ngcsu.mountain.laurels@gmail.com. Include your full name, and indicate whether you are student, faculty or staff. The deadline is Feb. 8.

For more information, contact Dr. Amy Childers Mansfield at 706-864-1961 or achilders@northgeorgia.edu.

Campus in Action

Dr. Michelle Byrne, professor of nursing, had an article, "The Professional Portfolio: An evidence-based assessment method," published in the December 2009 issue of *The Journal of Continuing Education in Nursing*.

Dr. Barry Friedman and Dr. Michael Reese, faculty members in the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice, wrote entries that were published in the *Encyclopedia of the U. S. Constitution* in 2009: Friedman, "Incorporation" (pp. 371-373) and Reese, "American Indians and the Constitution" (pp. 26-30).

North Georgia faculty and staff are invited to submit news of professional accomplishments for the Campus in Action section to digest@northgeorgia.edu.