

# Digest

► **Jan. 27, 2010**

A newsletter for North Georgia College & State University

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Crossfire lunch to be held Thursday

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Conference addresses China-U.S. relationship

## Campus In Action

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and member of the Corps of Cadets, and Mimi Fortune, coordinator of student leadership and commuter services, each has family members living on the streets after the Jan. 12 earthquake that rocked the island nation.

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throughout the month of February, which also is American Heart Month. The Fitness Challenge is a five-week wellness program that uses team camaraderie to promote physical activity for university students, faculty and staff. Teams of three to five members can earn points through physical activity and healthy nutrition.

*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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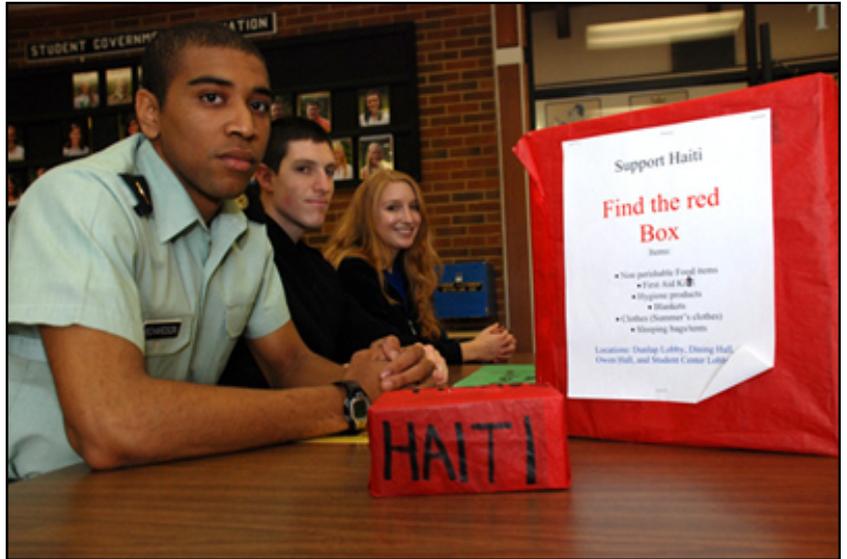
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# Student, staff member have personal ties to Haiti disaster

By Edie Rogers

Two members of the North Georgia College & State University community have very personal reasons for helping out with campus donation drives for families in Haiti.

Kyle Richardson, a sophomore and member of the Corps of Cadets, and Mimi Fortune, coordinator of student leadership and commuter services, each has family members living on the streets after the Jan. 12 earthquake that rocked the island nation.



*North Georgia students Kyle Richardson, Jared Scott and Abby Breaux helped with the "Red Box" campus donation drive for families in Haiti.*

Both of Fortune's parents are Haitian and much of her mother's family remains in Haiti.

"My aunt's house hasn't completely fallen down, but there's enough damage to the point she couldn't stay inside the house," Fortune said. "So just like everyone else, as you see it on TV, they were all sleeping outside with whatever – just on the concrete outside."

Richardson, whose father is Haitian, made a cash donation to help the Haiti relief efforts.

"It does definitely catch people off guard when I let them know that I'm half Haitian and kind of makes them look at the situation a little bit different and want to help because ... these are families of people that you're hanging out with, good friends with, that are over there and need help," said Richardson, who is from Norcross.

Richardson's uncle and his family are trying to find a way to the Dominican Republic.

"The biggest issue right now probably would just be traveling from town to town," he said. "I'm pretty sure there's a lot of people trying to make it to the Dominican Republic – those who were well-off and might have had a good situation before the earthquake."

Fortune's mother operates an orphanage and school in a mountainous region of Haiti that didn't suffer as much damage as Port au Prince. Her mother is helping to coordinate the distribution of donations from the university community.

Fortune is helping to coordinate the donation drives on campus. A "Red Box" drive conducted on campus the week after the quake by a number of student organizations netted \$202.86 in cash in just two days and donations of clothes, hygiene products, canned food and blankets.

"We had a car load, literally," Fortune said. "The back of my trunk, front seat and back seat were filled."

Cadet Jared Scott from Woodbridge, Va., said members of his organization, International Students Association, and other groups have been pleased with the donations.

"This is something we put together kind of quickly," he said. "We just try to do the best we can."

The Latino American Student Organization and the Office of Multicultural Services also helped in the drive.

Abby Breaux of Cumming, also a member of the International Students Association, said students stepped up and wanted to conduct the donation drive.

While the Red Box drive has concluded, Fortune said donation drives still are being conducted by many campus groups including leadership class students, the athletic department, Greek Life and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

Many families in Haiti have lost their homes and all of their belongings, Fortune said.

"They've lost everything. ... There are more people out there who don't have any clothes," Fortune said. "When I say everything, they have lost everything – every single thing they've ever owned. Everything."

Though a distant cousin was killed in the earthquake, Fortune said her family feels "very blessed" to have survived the disaster. Fortune said her sister narrowly missed being caught in her office building when the earthquake struck.

Her sister left work 15 minutes early on Jan. 12 and the quake struck as she was driving to pick up her daughter, Fortune said.

"As she was driving, she saw a three-story building fall and the electrical lines and the poles were just falling ... and the car started shaking but she just stayed in the car and waited until everything stopped," Fortune said. It took her sister two hours to walk home, where she found her family safe and sound. The next day, Fortune's sister returned to her office building to find it had collapsed.

"Fortunately, the manager of the office was fine, but everyone else perished," Fortune said. "She would have been one of those (killed). ... We say that God spared her life for a reason and we're very, very thankful."

Fortune said she believes it will take Haiti many years to recover from the disaster.

"Haiti has always been a country that has, unfortunately, suffered with poverty," She said. "They don't have a government anymore. It's going to be a complete rebuilding process. It's like starting a whole new country – that's what it's going to take ... and I suspect it's going to take years."

## Free Fitness Challenge can help boost your willpower

*By Edie Rogers*



Have you lost momentum on your New Year's resolution to get fit in 2010? Then the university has just the shot in the arm that your willpower needs.

And the best part is that it's free.

The Fitness Challenge is luring staff members and students alike to commit to leading a healthier lifestyle throughout the month of February, which also is American Heart Month.

The Fitness Challenge is a five-week wellness program that uses team camaraderie to promote physical activity for university students, faculty and staff. Teams of three to five members can earn points through physical activity and healthy nutrition.

The interest in the new program has been good so far with 12 teams with an average of four people

per team already signed up, said Laura Balkcom, assistant director of Student Health Services.

"People are excited about it. They are thankful for the opportunity," Balkcom said. "They hear the buzz on campus and are putting their teams together."

The opening ceremony is Monday, Feb. 1, and at least one team member must attend. Teams will have the chance to ask questions and will receive materials such as a calendar of events and a points tracker sheet for each individual. Each participant also will get a free t-shirt.

Power points and prizes will be awarded to the top teams at the closing ceremony on March 8. Balkcom said the prizes will include things like exercise videos and dumbbells that can be split among team members to help them continue their active lifestyles.

Friday, Jan. 29 is the deadline to register your team and even if you don't have enough people for a full team, Balkcom said she can pair up partial teams.

"I think we have a great mix (of participants). We even have students pairing up with faculty and staff members, so that's a good way to build that relationship between students and employees," she said.

The program is free for participants thanks to the Staff Council and Academic Affairs, Balkcom said.

"We're just excited for the opportunity and the support we've gotten from the campus community," she said.

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The new *Daily Digest* will feature news headlines, announcements and upcoming events from across campus. We will be working closely with regular contributors to develop a streamlined process for submitting announcements, but you may always submit your announcement and news suggestions (at least one week in advance, please) by e-mail to [universityrelations@northgeorgia.edu](mailto:universityrelations@northgeorgia.edu). We thank the staff in IIT for helping make this possible!

### Featured on North Georgia News:

#### [Series of events planned to mark Black History Month](#)

North Georgia College & State University plans the Heritage Event Series to mark Black History Month in February, starting off with the Unity March set for Feb. 2 on the university's drill field.

#### [Two North Georgia students earn scholarships to study abroad](#)

#### [Winter illnesses spreading on campus](#)

#### [Campus skyline marked by construction](#)

## Take note...

### Discussion set on smoking policy

A town hall meeting to discuss the university's smoking policy on campus is set for 1-2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, in the Hoag Auditorium. This meeting is to give all the chance to contribute to the discussion and get a consensus of opinion from faculty, staff and students before any recommendations are made.

### Crossfire lunch to be held Thursday

The Political Science Student Association presents the next Crossfire lunch at 12:45 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, in the second floor lounge of Young Hall. This week's topic is *Obama's First Year: Success or ...?* The event is free and open to everyone, so bring your opinion, your lunch and a friend. Future topics include: Budget Crisis in Education, Political Promises Kept and Broken, Second Amendment Rights, The Economy, Sunday Alcohol Sales, HOPE Scholarships, Legalization of Drugs, Iraq and Afghanistan, Terrorism, Growth at North Georgia.

### Live shows to preview nationally ranked baseball, softball teams

Live preseason preview shows for the baseball and softball teams will be held next week at local restaurants. Rusty Brown, the voice of the Saints for the 2009-10 season, and Sports Information Director David Beall will interview players and coaches and give fans an inside look into both programs.

The softball show will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2, at Roosters Cafe in Dahlonega with 10th year head coach Mike Davenport and players. The baseball show will be 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4, at Shenanigan's Irish Pub in downtown Dahlonega featuring 11th year head coach Tom Cantrell and players from the nationally ranked team.

Fans and the media are invited to attend both events.

### Want to see a staff member with pie on their face?

The Staff Council is hosting a Pie-in-the-Face contest from 3-4 p.m. Feb. 15. The candidates are: Chief Mike Stapleton, Public Safety; Mark Howarth, Alumni Affairs; Jeff Davis, Auxiliary Services, and Milton Hansen, Materials Management.

Votes are 50 cents each and the candidate with the most votes gets a pie in the face. Please look for ballot boxes in these areas: Barnes Hall, office of Tiffany Yeoman, 114A; Dunlap Hall, office of Valerie Fambrough, 303B; Library, office of Susan Hughes; The Rec Center, office of Susan Miller, 109.

### Make-A-Wish, Peace Corps to visit campus

Representatives from two organizations will be coming to campus in February to give information sessions and also are willing to give individual class presentations during their visits.

The Make-A-Wish Foundation will hold an hour-long, general information session at 12:45 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2, in Newton Oakes Center, Room 107. The U.S. Peace Corps will be holding an hour-long, general information session at 12:45 p.m. in Newton Oakes Center, Room 107.

If you would like to invite representatives of either group to speak to your class on these days, please contact Dora Ditchfield, director of Career Services, at extension 1951 or [dditchfield@northgeorgia.edu](mailto:dditchfield@northgeorgia.edu).

### Conference addresses China-U.S. relationship

The 2010 North Georgia Arts and Letters Conference, Feb. 26-27, will host speakers on a variety of topics from a variety of fields. Organized with an interdisciplinary approach, this year's conference addresses the question, "What are the potential benefits and challenges of the growing relationship between China and the U.S.?" Scheduled sessions include presentations on philosophical links between the two countries, as well as literary, social, and political connections.

A discounted conference registration fee of \$50 is being offered to those in the University System of Georgia; the fee is \$100 for non-USG participants.

You can visit the [conference Web site](#), for more details, including information about registration, conference schedule, and featured speakers.

## Campus in Action

Michael Marling de Cuellar, visual arts, received the 2009-2010 Georgia Art Education Association's Higher Education Art Educator of the Year Award for service and scholarship.

Three assistant professors in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science have earned a grant. Drs. Brad Bailey, Karen Briggs and Tom Cooper received a grant, titled "The Moore Method in Precalculus," for \$12,415. The purpose of the grant is to study the effects of different teaching methods on student outcomes as well as students' attitudes and beliefs about mathematics. The trio learned Dec. 31 that they had received the grant from the Educational Advancement Foundation.

### Staff Council recognizes Employee of the Month

Congratulations to Jamie Moss in the IIT department who has been awarded the December Employee of the Month. Jamie was nominated by members of the business office who wrote, "Some folks only offer one solution that allows them to complete their work order and move on, but not Jamie, he makes sure the solution is what we want and need and makes sure we are happy. He'll never just give you a band-aid....he fixes the problem. Jamie is customer service; he is NGCSU through and through."

*North Georgia faculty and staff are invited to submit news of professional accomplishments for the Campus in Action section to [digest@northgeorgia.edu](mailto:digest@northgeorgia.edu).*