

# Digest

► **April 15, 2009**

*A newsletter for North Georgia College & State University*

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professional and graduate programs. The two-day Honors Conference was an opportunity for the campus community to become a multi-disciplinary melting pot of ideas where faculty, staff and students shared undergraduate research, academic activities, student advocacy work and professional development.

## North Georgia prepares for Parents-Alumni Weekend



Across campus, faculty, staff and students are preparing for the university's annual Parents-Alumni Weekend. Hundreds of parents, alumni and friends will be on campus beginning Friday, April 17, and continuing through the final events on Sunday, April 19.

Highlights of the event-packed weekend include the annual golf tournament, Corps of Cadets Fun Run, dedication of North Georgia's historic drill field, Alumni Association Awards Banquet and Military Awards Review.

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

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The next scheduled publication date is April 22. The deadline for submissions is April 17.

# In-depth student research headlines Honors Conference

By Joshua Preston

North Georgia's top students participated in an annual academic event on April 7 and 8 that showcased the university's best offerings in the liberal arts and several of its pre-professional, professional and graduate programs.

The two-day Honors Conference was an opportunity for the campus community to become a multi-disciplinary melting pot of ideas where faculty, staff and students shared undergraduate research, academic activities, student advocacy work, and professional development within each of the university's four schools.



*Students took center stage during the Honors Conference: Sarah Witherington explored social groups in a school cafeteria, Kyle Owenby dissected Christian influence in the Roman Empire and Tiffani Foltz and Elizabeth Bauman looked at how hair influences men's attraction to women.*

*(Photo: Joshua Preston)*

## What's for lunch?

Sarah Witherington, former student government president, decided she could best conduct her sociology research in the field, so she spent four days a week for 10 weeks last semester studying the social dynamics of a high-school lunchroom.

Her presentation "What's for Lunch?," part of a School of Arts & Letters' panel, focused on identifying behavioral norms within different social groups in Lumpkin County High School's cafeteria.

"It's the social capital of the school," Witherington said. "It has a huge effect on the social layout of the school."

Her findings were complex and sometimes confounding: teachers would interact and eat with only the "in-crowd" students; males controlled the social situations within groups; females were more territorial than males; and some groups didn't even speak, too focused on their cell phones or laptops.

The sociology senior endured unrelenting glares from female students and an incident of broccoli being thrown at her before she concluded in her research that the groups she observed were merely "identity groups rather than relationship groups."

The social groups existed so that students could have an identity, but they didn't help the students to build an identity, she said.

## Service learning projects meet public education needs

Improving the educational experience of school-aged children was the main focus of a group of senior students from the School of Education who presented the results of projects they conducted during their internships in area schools.

"The design of the projects was based around the premise of giving something back to the school systems," Cindy Sherrill, education faculty member, said. "Teachers work with our students and mentor them over a two-year process, and we felt it was important to give something back."

More than 20 service-learning projects were conducted by 80 teacher education seniors, who surveyed school administrators and teachers to identify the biggest needs within their schools and then implemented solutions. The students shared project research and results among all the groups at the Honors Conference.

"The service-learning helps them to be seen as leaders in their environment," Sherrill said. "It really places them in a new light in terms of their ability to move to a higher level of service in their particular schools."

### A case for renewable energy

On day two of the Honors Conference, Steven Pamplin and Johanna Arnold, physics and engineering dual majors, tried to make their case for renewable energy sources with their presentation, "Sustainable Energy: Wind Turbines," during a panel for the School of Science & Health Professions. In a theme that migrated from the 2008 event, the students focused on North Georgia's nascent green movement.

"It would have been an awesome solution to get industrial turbines," Arnold said after the presentation. "Two industrial turbines could have supplied two-thirds of the campus's power consumption before the [new] library was built."

The two freshmen were encouraged to get a head start on their undergraduate research by Dr. Robert Fuller, who taught the introduction to engineering course that was a basis for the turbine project.

Arnold and her group even calculated what it would take to keep the lights on in classrooms – the equivalent of 5-mph winds sustained for one day out of every four days of the year would give the campus a major alternative energy source, one with limited costs after the initial investment in the turbines.

### Turning experience into GOLD

While solutions for the planet's future were being impressed on some audiences, business students across campus in the Mike Cottrell School of Business were engaged in more immediate concerns, such as sharpening their job-hunting skills and getting free financial tips.

During the school's GOLD Conference, an acronym for Great Opportunities for Leadership Development, Lindsey Nelson received a fair amount of business advice and shared her own experience on a panel of students talking about internships.



*Lindsey Nelson, a marketing senior, presented and attended sessions at the second annual GOLD Conference in the business school. (Photo: Joshua Preston)*

The senior marketing major interned for the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce and helped plan its events, an experience that left her wanting more.

"I liked the non-profit side of fundraising," the future event planner said. "The fundraisers aren't necessarily about the chamber just raising money, but rather how to take that money and help its members."

Nelson said that the GOLD Conference is a valuable resource designed to "prepare you for the real world." Students interacted with working professionals to gain knowledge from their experiences at the conference, which is in its second year.

"I think it helps tie in what everyone has been telling you," Nelson said.

## North Georgia prepares for Parents-Alumni Weekend

*By Christian Pennington*

Across campus, faculty, staff and students are preparing for the university's annual Parents-Alumni Weekend. Hundreds of parents, alumni and friends will be on campus beginning Friday, April 17, and continuing through the final events on Sunday, April 19.

"It is an exciting time for parents and alumni to return to North Georgia to see new additions to the campus, catch up with old friends, and visit their children attending the university," Mark Howarth, director of alumni affairs, said.

Highlights of the event-packed weekend include the 31st annual Morrison Moore Golf Tournament at the Achasta Golf Course, home course of the university's new NCAA golf teams. Later that evening, from 7 to 11:30 p. m., alumni from the classes of 1948-1954 will gather for a reunion at the Alumni Center.



Saturday offers another fun-filled day of activities, beginning at 8 a.m. with the Corps of Cadets Fun Run, sponsored by the Boar's Head Brigade and open to parents, alumni and friends who wish to run with the Corps.

Visitors will have an opportunity to tour the newest facilities on campus at 10 a.m. and watch or participate in an alumni soccer game for all past men and women players on the drill field at 10:45 a.m.

Greek parents and alumni who have been part of North Georgia's fraternities and sororities are invited to attend a picnic at noon at Pine Valley.

The entire campus community is invited to attend a ceremony to dedicate North Georgia's historic drill field in honor of Gen. William J. Livsey, a 1952 graduate and the university's only alumnus to achieve the rank of four-star general. The ceremony will take place at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday at the reviewing stand.

"This is an opportunity for the university to pay tribute to an outstanding officer and patriot," Dr. David Potter, university president, said. "The drill field is central to the campus's life, and its new name will serve as a lasting reminder of the leadership and service North Georgia graduates have provided to their country and communities."

Closing the evening will be the Alumni Association Awards Banquet, which features suspenseful entertainment in the form of a murder mystery dinner.

Sunday's highlight is the Military Awards Review at 1:45 p.m. on the drill field. All military alumni are invited to form up with the "Alumni Militia" to pass in review with cadets.

While the registration deadline has passed for some of the larger activities, there are many more events, including concerts, an art exhibit, and membership meetings for the Alumni Association and Parent Association, that do not require reservations. For full details on the weekend's events, please see the [Parents-Alumni Weekend brochure](#).

# Greek philanthropy plays large role in student leadership

By Joshua Preston

Greek organizations at North Georgia came together Wednesday to show the collective effort they have made through philanthropic activities this academic year to support people in the community and around the country.

During the kickoff to Greek Week on the Hoag Student Center's plaza, students put up displays about their charitable causes, and Greek members answered questions and explained their involvement in various fundraisers.

Delta Zeta Sorority's most recent of five fundraising drives, called Turtle Tug, the sorority's version of tug-of-war, had challengers fighting to avoid being pulled into a pool of gelatin and is expected to put the group's total contributions to charities at more than \$3,000.

"Being a part of Greek life helps me appreciate what I have, allows me to give to the community, and lets me see what others don't have," Lorraine Villasenor, president of Delta Zeta and an English education senior, said.

Each of North Georgia's 13 Greek organizations supports a primary charitable cause and reaches out to local organizations for service projects.

Rich Stewart, a member of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity, said that community service is something that can be rewarding when he and his friends do it together.

"This is my family," the history education junior said. "With community service, on your own it's not so much fun, but if a few guys decide to go and help out somewhere, we can support a good cause and have fun doing it."

Groups and individuals alike have benefited from Greek students' commitments to serve the community — No One Alone and the Community Helping Place are among the non-profits that receive volunteers from the university's Greek community, and students often visit and help individuals in need, ranging from breast cancer survivors to senior citizens.

"At the local level, the girls see the benefit of their work," Villasenor said. "When you go to take that big check to the hospital, it's very fulfilling and humbling."

"This has allowed me to do something besides studying all the time," Emma Greear, a member of Alpha Gamma Delta Fraternity and pre-nursing major, said. "I'm actually making a difference."

Through Greek life, many students are also discovering their talents as servant leaders.

"The sorority has taught me skills I otherwise would not have acquired," Villasenor said. "Working with 90 females, you have to have a lot of flexibility."

North Georgia's Greek community is defined in large part by the charitable work its members do. The money it has raised — close to \$32,000 this year — shows the strong commitment Greek students have to serving others.

"We do get out in the community; we make a difference," Villasenor said. "We're not just here to wear cute letters and party."



*Delta Zeta's president Lorraine Villasenor promotes her sorority's cause of helping the speech and hearing impaired.*

*(Photo: Joshua Preston)*

## Take note...

### Political Science and Criminal Justice departments to honor distinguished artist

The Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice will host a reception on Thursday, April 16, for Brooks Lansing, artist and father of North Georgia faculty member Brooks Lansing, Jr., who is donating two original paintings to the department. The paintings will highlight the "homes" of the department, West Main Hall and Young Hall, and will be displayed in the department's office. The unveiling will take place at 1 p.m. in the department office, 304 West Main Hall, followed by a reception in the department conference room.

### Bob Owens Art Gallery to host two gala events

On Friday, April 17, the university's Bob Owens Art Gallery will host two gala events. First, the reception and award ceremony for the Hal B. Rhodes III Student Exhibition, the North Georgia annual juried show of work by students in the Department of Visual Arts, will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m. in the Hoag Student Center Great Room.

The Rhodes Exhibition is a celebration of the creativity and talent of North Georgia students in the studio art, art marketing, and art education programs. The theme of this year's show is "Folks and Food: Feast to Famine Food." Students were asked to explore their responses to and memories of food, resulting in a smorgasbord of images and objects. This year's juror, independent film maker Carrie Schrader, will begin the awards presentation just after 5 p.m.

In addition, SPECTRUM, the North Georgia art club, will host an art auction of watercolor drawings to benefit the summer food drive for the Community Helping Place. The works were featured as part of "Key Ingredients," the traveling Smithsonian Institute exhibit recently showcased at the Learning and Technology Center. Reproductions of the works will be included in an illustrated history of cookbooks to be published by professor Joyce Stavick. Some of the framed original illustrations will be sold in a silent auction throughout the reception, and the remaining works will be sold through a live auction at approximately 6:15 p.m.

### North Georgia to celebrate Earth Day

On Monday, April 20, North Georgia's campus community will celebrate Earth Day with music and a tree planting event. Earth Day is actually on April 22, but since that is the first day of exams, the event has been pushed forward. The Earth Day celebration will include the music of Zak McConnell, beginning at 11:30 in front of the Chow Hall. At 11:45, there will be a brief ceremony that culminates in a tree planting. The event is sponsored by SGA, Mu Epsilon Delta and Kappa Delta.

### North Georgia Staff Council to elect new members

North Georgia's Staff Council is accepting nominations to serve on the council for the 2009-2011 term, which begins in July. With this election, the Staff Council is increasing its membership from 12 to 14 members, with three alternate members. To accomplish this task, the council needs nominations for eight members and three alternates. Participation on the Staff Council allows one to collaborate with all campus entities and engage and assist national and regional non-profits. For more information on the Staff Council, visit its [Web site](#).

## Campus in Action

### Byrne leads nursing organization

Dr. Michelle Byrne, nursing, is currently the president for the Competency & Credentialing Institute (CCI). She was involved in the National Nursing Convener Organization meeting, addressing the formation of a National Nursing Quality and Safety Alliance, held at the George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., on April 8. This project's outcome is to create a unifying voice of nursing and consumer constituents for safety and transparency in health care.

### Henderson presents at conference

Nancy Henderson, assistant professor, learning support, presented a workshop on "Making Memory Connections" at the 7th Annual Teaching Matters Conference on March 28 at Gordon College in Barnesville, Ga.

### Herbert wins teaching award

Dr. Brad Herbert, professor of chemistry, has won the 2008-2009 G. E. Philbrook Teaching Award for

Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching. The annual award is given by the Northeast Georgia section of the American Chemical Society (ACS) to a teacher who is an "effective, innovative and dedicated teacher of undergraduate chemistry." The award will be presented at an awards banquet at Georgia Botanical Garden on April 16.

### **Miner accepted as an Academic Fellow**

**Dr. Jonathan Miner**, political science and criminal justice, has been accepted as a 2009-10 Academic Fellow with the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies. He will participate in an educational program, from May 30-June 10 in Israel, that focuses on the threat of terrorism to democracy. The program consists of an intensive series of lectures by academics, diplomats and military officials from India, Israel, Jordan, Turkey, and the United States, as well as field trips to military, police and immigration facilities throughout Israel. The program's goal is to educate participants about terrorism and how democratic states combat the threat.

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