

# ANCHORS AWAY

Gainesville State College Alumni Newsletter

Winter 2010

## Just Who *IS* Laker T. Goose?

Laker T. Goose is the larger-than-life mascot of Gainesville State College. He attends events, has his own Facebook page, and is quickly becoming an icon on campus and beyond.

In the mid-2000s, then-GSC student Blake Podsen turned a joke about all the Canada Geese on the campus into an idea for a mascot. He felt that it would help to create a sense of camaraderie on the campus and would give the students an opportunity to show school spirit.

A member of the Campus Activity Board, Podsen began to talk his idea up at meetings and events. He became more serious about the idea and contacted a local designer, who worked with him to put his concept into the form of a logo. The drawing captured what Podsen had imagined the "fighting goose" should look like, and the drawing helped to move forward support for the idea of a mascot.

The first public showing of the Fighting Geese image was on T-shirts for the College's Week of Welcome activities in the fall of 2006. They were a huge hit and caught the attention of the College's administration. A task force was established, led by GSC Director of Student Life Cara Skeat Ray and made

response rate, the Fighting Geese and Laker T. Goose were overwhelmingly adopted in the fall of 2007.

The Office of Student Life is the "keeper" of both the mascot, Laker T. Goose, who is the personification of the fighting geese, and the Fighting Geese logo. Both are used in the promotion of spirit, camaraderie and fun. The mascot images are only used by the Office of Student Life to market events and programs and by the College Bookstore for merchandise that promotes school spirit and pride.

Podsen graduated from GSC in 2005 and continued his education at North Georgia College and State University (NGCSU). He is currently an instructor/coordinator in the Physical Education Department at NGCSU. He looks back on the creation of the Fighting Geese concept with pride. "I am amazed, and it is heartwarming to think that something that started out as a crazy idea has gone this far," said

*See "Fighting Geese" on Page 4*



*Laker T. Goose with his creator, Blake Podsen*

up of students, faculty, staff and alumni. They tested overall campus buy-in for Fighting Geese and even explored other mascot ideas. The task force settled on the details and then sent out a college-wide survey for a vote from faculty, staff and students. With an impressive 25%

**STARLIGHT CONCERT & FIREWORKS SHOW • FRIDAY, JUNE 11, 2010**

## Did I Miss the GSC Foundation Annual Meeting?

No! The GSC Foundation has realigned its annual calendar to coincide with the College's fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. While this will provide better alignment in scholarship awards and support to the college, it necessitated some changes in timing for events as well. While everyone has looked forward to our Annual Dinner in February, our year end has now changed, and our annual meeting will take place in the fall on the

GSC campus.

We are excited about and are focusing our efforts on a special theatre event coming this April. The event will take place on the campus in conjunction with Preview Night in GSC's Ed Cabell Theatre.

A restructured February event will return in 2011 as an annual gala and fundraising event.



*2009 Annual Dinner*

# Letter from the President



The new year has brought excitement on the Gainesville Campus as Potts Construction has begun the construction of our new academic building. The building's design will enhance the beauty of the campus and add much-needed classrooms, computer labs, and offices for faculty.

The addition of 38 classrooms will almost double the number currently on campus. The timeline for the building's completion is summer 2011 so that we will be able to move in before the fall 2011 semester.

Meanwhile, our spring enrollment is up about 8% over last spring. Due to the growth, both in numbers of students, faculty, and staff, and in the complexity of the academic curriculum, the College has implemented a new academic structure. Instead of six divisions, the institution now has four Schools:

- Business, Education, Health and Wellness;
- Humanities and Fine Arts;
- Science, Technology, Engineering and

Mathematics; and • Social Sciences. Each of these Schools is led by a Dean: Dr. Maryellen Cosgrove, Dr. Cheryl Gooch, Dr. Al Panu, and Dr. Pamela Elfenbein (interim) respectively. The Schools are now planning for future internal structures that will support our faculty as they continue to focus on student success in our strong academic programs.

The College has hosted transfer "fairs," which more than 30 four-year colleges and universities attend, to inform our students of their programs. Of course, GSC also participates to tout our five baccalaureate programs.

Students, along with faculty and staff, have been engaged in fund-raisers to assist with relief efforts for Haiti.

We encourage alumni to come back and visit "your" college. We are changing, but we continue to live by our value

of promoting student success by providing a personal, caring and supportive environment with small classes and faculty/staff who truly care about the development of our students. We are committed to pursuing our vision:

***Gainesville State College seeks to be recognized as the region's premier teaching institution by building on its tradition of teaching excellence and the strength of its student-focused and learning-centered environment. As a dynamic institution, the college will continue to address the region's call for accessible, high-quality academic programs in an atmosphere that fosters student success.***

*Martha T. Nesbitt*

## GSC Breaks Ground for Academic Building

Gainesville State College held a formal Groundbreaking Ceremony for College's new Academic Building on Friday, November 13, 2009. The 130,000 (approximate) square foot building will house the Divisions of Humanities and Fine Arts; Education, Health, and Wellness; and Business; and faculty offices.

The \$37.5 million project will provide much-needed classroom and student space. GSC President Martha T. Nesbitt said, "This is not a 'nice-to-have' building, this is a 'must have' building. We have been dealing with space constraints for several years, and this new building will provide an exceptional environment for teaching and learning."

The new building will be constructed adjacent to the Hugh Mills Physical Education Complex and near the Student Parking Deck on Mathis Drive.

The five-story structure is designed with two "main entrances," one facing the interior campus from the third floor level and the other entrance, on the first level, facing the green space to the north. In addition, the building will be accessible from the wing nearest the Student Parking Deck. The building has been designed for general classroom use along with computer and other course-specific labs, faculty offices, student gathering space, and support and auxiliary space as needed.

The anticipated completion date is fall 2011.



Articles and information for the next issue of [ANCHORS AWAY](#) should be submitted to the Alumni Office by March 31, 2010.

Photos may be submitted in jpg or pdf format.

Gainesville State College Alumni Office  
P.O. Box 1358

Gainesville, Georgia 30503

Phone: (678) 717-3648; Fax: (678) 717-3618

Email: [mbrown@gsc.edu](mailto:mbrown@gsc.edu) [www.gsc.edu](http://www.gsc.edu)

**College President**

Dr. Martha T. Nesbitt

**Managing Editor**

Michelle B. Brown  
Director of Alumni Affairs

**Editor/Writer**

Sloan Jones  
Director of Public Relations and Marketing

**Layout & Design**

Debbie Krewson  
Assistant to the Director of Public Relations and Marketing

**Contributor**

Mary Transue  
Vice President for Institutional Advancement;  
CEO of the Gainesville State College Foundation

# We Heard That . . .

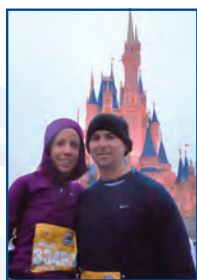
▶ **2000:** **Brandy Crisp** received the "Teacher of the Year" award at Kings Bridge Middle School, a part of the Jackson County School System. She teaches seventh grade. Her husband Joshua is employed at GSC. They are the parents of 11-year-old Caleb and twin 3-year-olds Jonathan and Anna.

After graduating from Gainesville College, **Josh Logan** transferred to Emory University and graduated summa cum laude with a B.S. in biology in 2002. He remained at Emory for medical school, graduating with an M.D. in May 2006.



Josh is currently a 4th-year resident in the Department of Urology at Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Virginia and pursuing a fellowship in urologic oncology.

**Nic Martin** & wife **Megan Stewart Martin** ran the Disney Half-Marathon on Saturday, January 9, 2010 in the



middle of a 27-degree day and sleeting rain in Orlando! The couple joined 50,000 runners at the event. The Half-Marathon started back in 2003. Megan and Nic enjoy fitness and nutrition as a big part of their lifestyles, so this race was a perfect event for them.

▶ **1999:** **Jessica Matthews** is currently working as the International Children's Ministry Director for *Helping Hands Foreign Missions*. She has also been involved with the relief efforts for Haiti.



▶ **1998:** **Jeremy Frazier** was named Co-Rookie of the Year for 2009 by the

Lanier Football Officials Association. ▶ **1967:** **Hugh Milton Mills III** joined the Cedar Shoals High School faculty after completing service in the U. S. Army. Mills established the Transportation / Automotive Program and was its only instructor for the next 30 years with a 100% safety record. Many former students went on to have careers in small engine and automotive related fields. He retired in 2002.



▶ **1987:** **Jeff Turk** has been appointed Interim Director of the Lewis F. Rogers Institute for Environmental and Spatial Analysis at Gainesville State College. After obtaining his A.S. in Geology as well as an A.A. in Business Administration from GSC, Turk went on to earn a B.S. and M.E. from Florida Atlantic University. He began his career with GSC in 1994. He is a founding member of the IESA.

▶ **1972:** **Daniel "Dan" Kellar** and his wife Carolyn currently live in Virginia. They are the proud grandparents of one-year-old McKenzie Lynne Pinese.

▶ **1971:** GSC Foundation Trustee **Larry Sparks** and wife Donnah are the proud grandparents of Robert Ladd Sosebee, who will be called Ladd. He was born to



their daughter Brooke on January 6, 2010 at 1:28 p.m., weighing in at 7 lbs. 9 ozs. and 21¼ inches long. Larry is the Planning Director for the City of Oakwood.

▶ **1968:** **Linda Ledbetter** was crowned Ms. Senior Georgia 2009 this past August. A native of Cherokee/Forsyth County, she was a County Commissioner from 2004-2009 in Forsyth County. Linda is a graduate of UGA, NGC&SU, and Lincoln Memorial College and received her Ph.D. from Capella University in 2002. She is currently traveling with The Georgia Classic Clubs' "Dazzling Dames," who perform at retirement events and nursing facilities all over Georgia. Linda spent many years teaching high school and Community College.



## Francine Dibben, 1949-2009

Francine Dibben was a member of the Gainesville State College staff for over 20 years. In her role as business manager of the Gainesville Theatre Alliance, she used her love of life and compassion for others as the driving forces behind her personal and professional actions. She touched countless individuals through her multifaceted talents and skills.



Everyone who had the opportunity to know Francine has a special memory of her and can recall how she made an impact on them personally and upon the greater community. We remember Francine with appreciation for all she gave of herself to others.

**Find us on**



**Become a fan of**  
**Gainesville State College**  
**Alumni & Friends**

# With Your Help, GSC Sees Growth Continue



Gainesville State College continues to grow and attract new students every semester from around the region! We have

endeavors; our teaching innovation grants; our community engagement in areas such as our GIS lab access; support in the public school settings; or our teaching internships throughout the community.

quality higher education and enhance the College's programs while helping students achieve their educational dreams.

—Mary Transue,  
GSC VP for Institutional Advancement,  
CEO of GSC Foundation

reached a record enrollment of 8,801 for fall 2009. Gwinnett and Forsyth counties are now in the top three along with Hall for our student population.

Should you prefer to designate your donation, it may be specified for a particular scholarship fund or an area within the college (Science, Math, Theatre, Education, Music, Social Sciences, Art, etc.). I would be happy to discuss additional giving opportunities or areas of interest that you may have.

## President's Club Dinner Recognizes Donors

In order to continue this growth and allow our students to avail themselves of the wonderful educational opportunities offered at GSC, we count on your support. Your contribution through the Gainesville State College Foundation helps make all this possible. Donations to our General Unrestricted Fund allow us to allocate funds where needed to support our students' educational

You may make your donation online through our secure website, [www.gsc.edu](http://www.gsc.edu), or by mail to: GSC Foundation, P.O. Box 1358, Gainesville, GA 30503.



Thank you again for your continued support, which allows us to promote

Bob Swoszowski, owner of Northeast Georgia McDonald's, and Dr. Hugh Mills, GSC President Emeritus, took a moment to catch up at the President's Club Dinner in November 2009. More than 125 attended this special donor recognition event hosted by the GSC Foundation.

## Foundation Hosts Holiday Luncheon

The GSC Foundation hosted a Women's Holiday Luncheon in December to educate and inform attendees of what is going on at Gainesville State. Over 75 women attended this year's event, where the group created new scholarship opportunities within several funds: Unrestricted, Books, STEM, and Summer Scholars. If you



Patricia Peeples, Frances Mathis



Brenda Bahel, Kathleen Carter, Carol Ann Daniel



Chantal Bagwell, Chris Crawford



Bobbie Gay, Vicki Davis

would like to become a part of this dynamic group of GSC supporters and would like to contribute to this new effort to support GSC and its students, please email: [mtransue@gsc.edu](mailto:mtransue@gsc.edu).

## Fighting Geese

Continued from Page 1

Podsen.

"My initial idea really has come full circle," Podsen said. "I am so pleased when I see students wearing their Fighting Geese T-shirts and hear them talk about being GSC Fighting Geese. The Fighting Geese mascot really has caught on and created that sense of camaraderie that I had initially hoped it would. It is mind-boggling to think that it really happened."

If you are back on campus, look for Laker T. Goose. You can also find Laker on Facebook.



## Foundation Honors Eight Retirees

The Gainesville State College Foundation hosted the Fall 2009 Retirement Reception on Wednesday, November 11, 2009 in the Herbert W. Robinson Ballroom.

During the formal program Steve Blair, Linda Brown, Janyce Cole, Byron Drew, Eugene Hendrix, Peggy Holton, Charles Karcher and Lillian Welch were honored for their service to the College. Presentations were made on behalf of the GSC Foundation, GSC Women's Organization and the retiree's individual departments/divisions.

More than 150 faculty, staff, past retirees and family and friends of

the honorees were in attendance for the early afternoon event. It was a wonderful event and a fitting tribute to these individuals. They will be missed, but good wishes follow them as they begin this new phase of their lives.



*Fall 2009 Retirees (L to R): Janyce Cole, Lillian Welch, Chuck Karcher, Linda Brown, Eugene Hendrix, and Steve Blair. Not pictured: Byron Drew, Peggy Holton.*

## Board of Trustees Holds Quarterly Meeting

The Gainesville State College Foundation Board of Trustees held its quarterly meeting at the College in late January. The Foundation provides financial support to benefit the college and student population, and the efforts of the Trustees are vital to this mission. Donations through the Foundation are used to support initiatives such as student scholarships, teaching innovation grants, Honors Programs, Study Abroad, and enhancements to technology. This funding benefits the students, faculty

and staff as well as the surrounding communities by enhancing the overall excellence of the educational programs of GSC.



*The 30 members of the Trustee Board are led by the Executive Committee: (L to R) Rich White, Development Chair; Mary Transue, Vice President for Institutional Advancement and CEO of the Foundation; Vicki Davis, GSC Alumni Association President; Kurt Hanson, Chairman of the Board; Martha T. Nesbitt, GSC President; Ricky Pugh, Treasurer; and Bob Pennington, Immediate Past Chair.*

## Director's Corner



I am excited about the possibilities that 2010 brings for GSC and the Alumni Association. We are reenergizing the Alumni Council and the activities they coordinate under the effective leadership of GSC Alumni Association President Vicki Davis.

Recent developments include a meeting of the full Council to outline the efforts for the year. The focus is shifting toward engaging our current students as well as the entire alumni base in a push to boost scholarship funding.

Planning is already underway for our annual events that include the Starlight Concert & Fireworks Show and the Golf Open. We are exploring ways to expand the scope of these important fundraising events and their impact on students and the community.

There are so many alumni who are already engaged and making a difference. I applaud their efforts. If you would like to make a difference, please give online at: [www.gsc.edu](http://www.gsc.edu).

**Donate Now!**



—Michelle B. Brown  
GSC Director of Alumni Affairs

## Don't Miss These Exciting Gainesville State Events

- 2/18-3/18 Etched and Pulled: An Exhibit of Prints.** Roy C. Moore Art Gallery, Gainesville State College.
- 3/4-3/6 Big Band Show.** Ed Cabell Theatre. Featuring the GSC Jazz Band, Jazz Combo, and Chorale.
- 4/1-4/28 Graduating Art Students Show.** Roy C. Moore Art Gallery.
- 4/13-4/24 Eurydice.** Ed Cabell Theatre.
- 4/14 Spring Retirement Reception.** Continuing Education/Performing Arts Center, Gainesville State College.
- 4/27 GSC Spring Music Concert I.** Ed Cabell Theatre. GSC Jazz Ensemble and Combo and GSC Chorale.
- 4/28 GSC Spring Music Concert II.** Ed Cabell Theatre. GSC Brass Ensemble, String Ensemble, Symphonic Band.

**ANCHORS AWAY**

A publication for Alumni and Friends of Gainesville State College  
P.O. Box 1358  
Gainesville, Georgia 30503  
[www.gsc.edu](http://www.gsc.edu)

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 38  
GAINESVILLE, GA  
30501

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**PARENTS:** Help us keep GSC graduates well informed! Forward **ANCHORS AWAY** to your son or daughter, but first send the corrected mailing address label for your GSC graduate to the Alumni Office, Gainesville State College, P.O. Box 1358, Gainesville, GA 30503.

# Meeting of the Gainesville State Alumni Council

## GSC Alumni Council

- Vicki Davis, President*
- Brenda Adams*
- Tonya Black*
- Marie Braswell*
- Haley Carter*
- Lesley Congdon*
- Michael Gazaway*
- Kimberly Godfrey*
- Melissa Gooch*
- Scott Grogan*
- James Holden*
- Heather Howington*
- Jennifer Jacobs*
- Terri Johnston*
- Kristen Lathem*
- Jamila Hunter Leavell*
- Kim Leverette*
- Michelle Lindsey*
- Alan and Stacy Louis*
- Kerry and Barry Moose*
- Sherri Parker*
- Michele Piucci*
- Sandi Simpson*
- Jody Spain*
- Scott and Tracie Webb*
- Craig and Patti West*

On February 11, a meeting of the entire Alumni Council Board took place on the GSC Gainesville Campus. A majority of the 28 members were in attendance.

After comments by Gainesville State College President Dr. Martha Nesbitt,

Foundation CEO Mary Transue, and Alumni Director Michelle B. Brown, the group divided into committees. Each committee was charged with exploring ways to increase giving to the Alumni Association through students, alumni, and events.



*A Group of Council members discussed ways to engage current GSC students in giving to the Alumni Association.*

## New Members of the GSC Alumni Council

*Marie Braswell*



*Haley Carter*



*Kimberly Godfrey*



*Terri Johnston*



*Jamila Leavell*



*Not pictured: Michael Gazaway*