THE WILDLIFE

Touch the Earth gets GSU out of the city and into the great outdoors

Feet First
Ron Hunter jumps in to lead GSU basketball, p. 30

A Legend
The greatness and generosity of J. Mack Robinson, p. 34

The Guest List
Top 10 ways to reduce stress, p. 48
On May 7, former U.S. President Jimmy Carter delivered the commencement address to the graduating class of 2011. In his speech, Carter urged the graduates to constantly stretch their “minds and hearts, to explore new ideas and not be bound by custom.”

Watch Carter’s address to GSU’s largest ever graduating class at GSU.EDU/VIDEO.
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ON THE COVER:
GSU students Sauleja Satkute, Neftali Hernandez and Denise Ceron relax by the Daniel Creek waterfall during a Touch the Earth trip to Cloudland Canyon State Park in northwest Georgia.
The Student Alumni Association gives current students an opportunity to experience the strong value, lasting bonds and unique traditions that Alumni Association membership provides. By creating their own programs and participating in select Alumni events, SAA members will connect with Panthers young and old and become invested today in strengthening the interests, goals and objectives of the GSU Alumni Association.

Watch for opportunities to meet the next generation of proud Georgia State graduates through the Student Alumni Association!

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WELCOME FRIENDS & ALUMNI

MAKING AN IMPACT

I am often asked by young people for advice about how they should maximize their time in college, and I am always delighted to tell them about the many wonderful opportunities GSU offers students to “learn beyond the classroom.” One shining example that I’ve been privileged enough to take part in personally is GSU’s Touch the Earth program, which offers adventures of all kinds at attractive prices for GSU students, faculty, staff and alumni. In this issue, you’ll read about some of these experiences, organized by program director Carson Tortorige, which run the gamut from scuba diving in the Florida Keys to hiking and backpacking in Yosemite and the High Sierras, to day hikes in nearby state parks and much more (cover story, see page 24).

Also in this issue, you’ll get to know Ron Hunter, Georgia State’s new head men’s basketball coach, whose fast-paced brand of play and gusto for the game will no doubt bring new excitement to Panther basketball. But it’s his work off of the court with his cause, Samaritan’s Feet, that truly makes Hunter special (page 30).

Finally, you’ll read about one of GSU’s truest supporters — J. Mack Robinson. You’ll learn about how the namesake of GSU’s highly regarded College of Business began his long and successful career at age 10 as a newspaper delivery boy for the Atlanta Journal and eventually became one of the most influential business leaders in metro Atlanta. And you’ll learn how Robinson’s 35-year friendship with businessman Peter Blum was instrumental in securing the downtown block that will one day house facilities for GSU’s law and business schools (page 34).

This issue celebrates the many wonderful people who make Georgia State thrive as we continue to rise in prominence and stature both locally and globally.

Sincerely,

Mark P. Becker
President

GSU Magazine
summer 2011

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Top Lodge
University Commons, GSU’s 4.2-acre complex housing more than 2,000 students, was named the best overall residence hall in the country by CampusSplash.com. Based on more than 7,100 reviews, the Commons received an average of 4.5 stars, with five stars in the categories of location and convenience, quiet study environments and cleanliness.
JANNA GIBSON

Janna Gibson is a senior in the College of Education’s Birth Through Five Program who will spend the last month of her college career student teaching in China.

How did you first become interested in education?
My mom has been teaching elementary school since I was a kid, and I grew up helping her in the classroom. I initially went to school for business, but one day I said, “This cubicle is not for me.” Right then I decided to go back to school to get my education degree and fell in love with teaching.

What made you decide to pursue a study abroad experience?
When I applied to Georgia State, I specifically looked at the study abroad opportunities the university offered. After I graduate, I hope to find a teaching job in Asia, and this program would give me the chance to get some experience doing just that.

How did you raise the money to go on this trip?
I found out in December that I didn’t receive the scholarship I needed to pay for my trip. I’d made a website before for my photography, so I made one about this study abroad trip and asked for $2 donations to help pay for it. I received a third of the funds for my trip on the first day. I was blown away by the support I got. It was really humbling to see this outpouring of love.

What do you hope to take away from your experiences abroad?
It’s exciting to learn from other cultures. I’ll be there teaching, learning about their pedagogy and seeing how their children learn. I’m also working on a children’s book drive with the class I’m currently student teaching in to take books to underprivileged children in China, so it will be rewarding to complete this service learning project.

As an early childhood education major, you have had several student teaching experiences at different schools. What did you enjoy about these experiences?
This semester, I worked in Gail Williams’ kindergarten classroom at Morningside Elementary School. She has 22 years of teaching experience under her belt, so I spent the first week just observing what she did. It’s important to really absorb all the lead teachers have to teach you.

What has been the best part of your time at Georgia State?
The Early Childhood Education Department and the Birth Through Five Program in particular have been a perfect fit for me. It’s such a tight-knit group and my professors have been supportive and encouraging every step of the way.

BY CLAIRE MILLER
EXAMINING A DISASTER
Panel discusses aftermath of tsunami in Japan

On March 29, four GSU scientists and researchers from across academic disciplines convened in a panel to discuss the deadly March 11 earthquake in Japan. Topics included the potential effects of radiation emanating from the stricken Fukushima nuclear complex, Japan’s long history of earthquakes and tsunamis, the country’s response to the disaster and what the nuclear accident means for Japan’s — and the world’s — energy policy.

“We know how to deal with radiation. There is radiation everywhere, and you cannot avoid it. But how radiation affects our life is a debatable topic. … In this case, nuclear radiation is not my top concern. My concern is how to get people’s daily lives back on track.”  — Xiaochun He, professor of physics

“Japan is dependent on nuclear power, and it has plans to increase reliance on it substantially. This event has significant implications and is a major setback for its nuclear policy. It’s going to undermine Japanese energy policy and energy security, and part of that is that it is a major blow to its efforts to fight climate change by reducing carbon dioxide emissions.”

— John Duffield, professor of political science

“Volcanic eruptions and earthquakes have made Japan. Japan owes its existence to volcanoes and earthquakes, which constructed it over time but has also sometimes created destruction. … These earthquakes have come with tsunamis, which have destroyed the shorelines of Japan, and they will happen in the future.”

— Hassan Babaie, associate professor of geosciences and computer science

“For the Japanese, it was the Kobe earthquake in 2005 that helped shape its emergency management system … and the Japanese rearranged the way they looked at disasters. Emergency management in Japan is in some sense a product of World War II, in the notion that it is a central government responsibility. … The difference between us and the Japanese is that they’re less reliant on non-governmental organizations.”

— William L. Waugh Jr., professor of public management and policy

GSU State of the University Address

President Mark Becker delivered his third annual State of the University Address April 13. In it, he touched on GSU’s status with regard to the budget climate and other factors and, most importantly, where GSU is headed in the future. Visit www.gsu.edu/stateaddress to watch the address and to read the full text.

College of Law establishes pre-law scholars program

Georgia State’s College of Law was one of two schools selected by the Law School Admission Council and the DiscoverLaw.org subcommittee to receive $300,000 to establish a Pre-Law Undergraduate Scholars Program. The college will establish the G-PLUS Program, a summer residential program aimed at freshmen and sophomores from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are interested in pursuing legal careers.

The program is designed to help students develop writing and critical thinking skills that will strengthen their preparation for law, expose them to the breadth of legal career options, and demystify the law school application process.

“The goal of the program is to ultimately increase diversity within the legal community,” said Ray English, associate director of Career Services, who prepared the law school’s proposal.

“The program is aimed at freshmen and sophomores because studies have shown that candidates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are interested in pursuing legal careers.

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“The program is aimed at freshmen and sophomores because studies have shown that candidates from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups who are interested in pursuing legal careers.
Georgia State recently became a Silver Level member of the Partnership for a Sustainable Georgia within Georgia’s Department of Natural Resources for its commitment to sustainability and environmental protection.

GSU is one of only two institutions in the University System of Georgia — the other being Georgia Southwestern State University in Americus — to achieve such a high ranking, said Michael Thompson, environmental programs manager in the Office of University Research Services and Administration.

“We have so much interest on campus from students, faculty and staff to go greener,” Thompson said.

The Silver Level is awarded to state entities that have put sustainability policies in place and are keeping track of environmental statistics such as trash generation, recycling, and energy and water usage.

“One of the goals is a 5 percent reduction in water and energy usage per year over the next five years, he said.

GSU’s sustainability program dates back to 2006, when it established baseline measurements for its environmental impact and then pushed forward with efforts to reduce waste, save water and energy, and increase recycling. GSU’s Environmental Programs Advisory Committee (EPAC) oversees the implementation of these policies.

GSU faces particular challenges as an urban campus with older buildings that were built before certain standards were established, Thompson said. But the university has forged ahead with its environmental efforts in the construction of newer facilities such as the Student Recreation Center and the most recent addition to campus, the Parker H. Petit Science Center.

Last year, GSU recycled nearly three miles of fluorescent bulbs and over five tons of ballasts, Thompson said. His immediate goals are to evaluate water pipes across campus for leaks and to explore the possibility of establishing charging stations for electric cars.

Recycling containers are now ubiquitous across campus, and low-flow toilets and sinks are being installed to replace less efficient models. Rainwater is being captured by water collection tanks, and the Petit Science Center collects and reuses water that has been used for cooling purposes.

“We have a good vision for the future,” Thompson said. “The administration sees the need for good sustainability programs, and we want to improve what we have.”

BY JEREMY CRAIG

NEW HEAD BASKETBALL COACH RON HUNTER KNOCKS DOWN A SHOT AGAINST HAPLESS GSU MAGAZINE EDITOR WILLIAM INMAN. THE TWO PLAYED A VERY ONE-SIDED GAME OF ONE-ON-ONE AFTER HUNTER’S PHOTO SHOOT FOR GSU MAGAZINE. SEE MORE AT THE MAGAZINE’S FLICKR SITE.

GSU Magazine joins the social media conversation

Go online and interact with GSU Magazine through your favorite social media sites! We want to hear your comments, read your posts and tweets, see your photos and, possibly, include them in a future issue.

GSU Magazine is now on Facebook and Twitter, and we’ve also started a flickr site. Have you taken an awesome vacation recently? Do you have a new addition to the Panther family? Post your best photos to Facebook and flickr so we can see what you’re up to, and you might see yourself in the next issue of the magazine!

While you’re there, check out some extras and outtakes from our recent magazine photo shoots.

And, as always, visit us online at gsu.edu/magazine for web exclusive content, including video, photo slide-shows, updates and more.

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THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AL JAZEERA?

Oft-demonized network drove the coverage of the Arab Spring

BY SHAWN POWERS

The Arab Spring has renewed the American public's interest in the Middle East in large part due to the heroic images and stories coming out of Tunisia and Egypt. Rather than news of al-Qaeda and anti-Americanism, U.S. networks broadcast powerful images live from Cairo reminding us that Egyptians and Americans have a shared appreciation for fair, representative and transparent governance.

Much has been made of the role that social media — Facebook in particular — had in helping organize, inform and publicize the protests that eventually pushed Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak from power. The spring of 2011 will no doubt be seen as a watershed moment for the rise and legitimation of these platforms. But to focus on the role of social media obscures the critical role that Al Jazeera played in pushing the protests into the global spotlight, dragging the international media along the way.

Al Jazeera, originally only an Arabic language news broadcaster, is now a network of English and Arabic news, sports, documentary and children's broadcasts and webcasts. It is also the most robust and uncensored news network in the region. This is not to say that the network’s news is not without flaws — in its coverage of Iraq and Israel, the Arabic language reporting clearly takes the sides of Hamas and Iraqi insurgents. That said, this spring, Al Jazeera fulfilled its mission of “providing a voice to the voiceless” by keeping the cameras rolling despite intense efforts to silence and even murder its reporters. Whereas former President George H.W. Bush described the network as “hateful propaganda” in his 2004 State of the Union address, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in March told the U.S. Congress that Al Jazeera was “real news,” juxtaposing it to American networks that simply air “a million commercials” while providing coverage that was “not particularly informative.”

What is the big difference between 2004 and 2011? This time, Al Jazeera and the U.S. State Department were on the same side, rooting for the people of the Arab world rather than their dictators. When the history of the Arab Spring is written, it will be noted that it was Al Jazeera that first broadcast the protests and violence in Tunisia that its reporters saw on Facebook, and it was Al Jazeera that drew the world’s attention to Tahrir Square while Western networks were hesitant to parachute their reporters into Egypt. Al Jazeera was a metaphorical spotlight, highlighting the heroisms and tragedies of Arab protests, oftentimes based on leads found via social media, that eventually demanded the world’s attention. While Western news networks inevitably jumped on the bandwagon, it was always Al Jazeera that drove coverage of the region, with Fox, CNN, NBC, CBS, ABC and others rebroadcasting the network’s footage when they couldn’t be there themselves.

Without Al Jazeera’s resilience, the current wave of protests could have easily stopped short. Rather than focus on Facebook, we should turn our attention — both critical and congratulatory — to the democratic force known as Al Jazeera.

SHAWN POWERS IS ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMUNICATION
GREG HODGIN, a doctoral student in political science, is founder and president of Peacebuilding Solutions.

He started the nonprofit organization to help provide the United Nations with better models for refugee camps around the world.

“Refugee camps are not built well and they are falling apart,” Hodgin said. “We want to make sure the people who are living in these refugee camps live in dignity and respect.”

Hodgin travelled to Haiti in January to research residents still living in refugee camps after the devastating earthquake of January 2010 and to meet with United Nations Force Commander General Paul Cruz.

Along with Engineering Without Borders-Atlanta, Hodgin’s organization has launched a Refugee Camp Design Case Competition for students across disciplines to provide the U.N. with an effective standardized method for the design, construction and management of refugee camps. The winning designs will be pilot tested and presented to the U.N. for implementation around the world.

BY LEAH SEUPERSAD
**WALT THOMPSON** and the After-School All-Stars are working with the City of Refuge, a transitional living center for previously homeless women and children.

After-School All-Stars Atlanta, administered by the College of Education, provides comprehensive after-school programs for at-risk students in the metro-Atlanta area. Now After-School All-Stars is partnering with City of Refuge to offer homework assistance, tutoring and enrichment programs to children at the living center.

“These kids, who suddenly find themselves homeless at no fault of their own, need to continue their education uninterrupted,” said Thompson, a Regents’ Professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Health. “These are the kids we need to serve, and they weren’t being served previously,”

After-School All-Stars recruits teachers from the Atlanta area to work in the after-school enrichment program. Teachers survey the children to see what they are interested in and tailor the programs to meet those interests.

**BY CLAIRE MILLER**
GSU’S FIRST BUSINESS DEAN

When George Manners became dean of the College of Business in 1947, he worked tirelessly to raise the profile of the college as well as that of the entire university. According to a 2001 article in *State of Business Magazine*, published by the J. Mack Robinson College of Business, Manners was known for his ability to recruit world-class faculty and for his efforts to improve the standards of not only the business program but of the institution as a whole.

Kenneth Black Jr., a former dean emeritus of the college, said in the article that Manners “will never get all the credit he deserves, but he was the only one with the vision to turn the business school around. Only Dr. Manners had the drive to accomplish all he did.”

Manners served as dean of the School of Business Administration from 1947 to 1969 and then as Regents’ Professor until he retired in 1977. He died Nov. 6, 2000.

An army veteran who earned a Bachelor of Science in Commerce in 1935 from the Georgia Tech Evening School (which would eventually become GSU), Manners is credited with making major improvements in the curriculum for business students. He worked to raise the standards of part-time M.B.A. programs for working professionals to a level of quality equal to those offered to full-time students, which helped lead to full accreditation for the College of Business Administration.

Manners’ commitment to higher education extended even beyond his school: He spearheaded a special committee for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business that helped raise the standards of academic business programs for working professionals nationwide.

He was born George Mamalakis in New York in 1910 to Greek immigrants. His family moved to Savannah, Ga., when he was a child, and as a young man he took on the surname Manners, the English translation of his Greek family name.

Manners studied opera and classical music in hopes of becoming a singer, said his wife, Claire Manners, in his *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* obituary. (This love of music led his brother, Nick Mamalakis, to persuade the widow of legendary Savannah lyricist Johnny Mercer to donate Mercer’s personal papers and the Oscar he won for “Moon River” to GSU in 1999.)

Manners, who taught at GSU as a part-time instructor as early as 1936, was president of the Alumni Association during 1938-1939 and was honored as Alumnus of the Year in 1965. In 1985, he was honored as an inaugural inductee of the J. Mack Robinson College of Business Hall of Fame.

In 2001, he was recognized for his dedication to the college when the Robinson College’s main meeting center, the Atlanta Room, was renamed the Manners Room.

A home for greatness

Georgia State’s student body has not only grown in numbers, but also in caliber. More and more academically gifted students are choosing to become Panthers.

And matching the growth of this talented student body is the formation of an academic home — an emerging Honors College.

The college is an outgrowth of the existing Honors Program and is a critical piece of the university Strategic Plan. The college will allow faculty to work with top students, encouraging research, service, scholarship and competition for prestigious awards and fellowships.

In April 2011, Provost Risa Palm announced the founding dean of the college, Larry Berman, a renowned political scientist from the University of California-Davis.

“My goal as founding dean is that our Honors College be recognized as a community for innovation, intellectual challenge and service, and to be recognized nationally in the top tier of Honors Colleges,” Berman said.

The Honors College stems from GSU’s longstanding Honors Program, founded in 1975 in the College of Arts and Sciences before opening to students across five colleges.

Honors students also have the opportunity to enroll in graduate courses as advanced undergraduates and can earn any of three special honors designations on their transcripts and diplomas.
On the Mark
Panthers senior outfielder Mark Micowski was honored as Georgia State’s Male Student-Athlete of the Year for 2010-11. The Colonial Athletic Association’s 2011 Preseason Player of the Year, Micowski has lived up to the billing this season. He ranks in the top 10 of eight separate offensive categories in the CAA, including hits, RBIs and slugging.
GOAL ORIENTED

GSU’s keeper nets success on and off the pitch

Vincent Foermer knows first-hand how formidable it can be to jump from high school in another country to college in the United States.

So Foermer, the goalkeeper for the men’s soccer team and a native of Hamburg, Germany, reached out to incoming freshman signee Caolan O’Gorman, who hails from Ireland, to help ease his transition to a new school, city and country.

“I know it can be tough,” said Foermer, now a sophomore, “so I thought I could help him.”

Foermer admits that it will be nice having another European on the squad to talk “football” with (Foermer’s favorite team is England’s Newcastle United). But for his head coach, Brett Surrency, the gesture was further evidence that the kid he put on goal as a freshman is upping his game both off and on the field.

“This just shows what kind of person Vince is,” Surrency said. “He took the initiative on his own to contact Caolan. His driving force was that he wished someone would have done it for him before he came over.”

As soon as Foermer landed at Georgia State, he set out to win the job of starting goalkeeper — a demanding position he has played since he was 6 years old. Back home in Germany, Foermer played for Hamburg, one of the top youth clubs in the country. His team competed against the best in Europe, including Manchester United’s youth team.

“It was obvious from day one that Vince was the man for the job,” Surrency said. “Vince proved day after day that he deserved to be on the field despite just being a freshman.”

After cementing a spot in the starting lineup, Foermer went on to make 75 saves, good for fifth best all-time in a season for GSU. He was named to the All-Colonial Athletic Association rookie team and finished second in the conference in saves and saves per game.

This year, Foermer leads the CAA with 82 saves and also leads the conference with 5.12 saves per game. He is also climbing up the career record chart in saves with a total of 157, which already puts him sixth on the all-time list.

Foermer is equally successful in the classroom — he majors in risk management and has a 3.9 grade-point average.

It’s no surprise that the President’s List scholar has a philosophy when it comes to his approach in both athletics and academics.

“If you give everything on the field, it’s easier to take that same attitude into the classroom,” he says.

Foermer says he gets to talk to his family a couple of times a week via Skype. His first year here, he went back home during the offseason. This summer, however, he is staying put to get ready for the season as well as take summer school classes so he can graduate early and move on to graduate school.

“I think I’ve made the best decision in my life coming here,” he said. “I love it here, so why not stay, you know?”

BY WILLIAM INMAN
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

CHRIS COLLIER is perhaps one of the most dominant post players in Georgia State hoops history.

In 1991, Collier helped lead Georgia State to its first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance by doing something only three other Panthers have ever been able to do: He averaged a double double during the season with 18.2 points and 10.6 rebounds per game.

On Feb. 12, Collier was honored as a Colonial Athletic Association Legend at the GSU men’s basketball game with Northeastern, and he was recognized again at the CAA Championships banquet March 3 in Richmond, Va.

What makes Collier’s accomplishments on the court especially impressive is the fact that he is only 6 feet 6 inches tall playing in the land of the big men under the basket.

“In college basketball, most centers are 6-foot-9, 6-foot-10. I was 6-foot-6 doing the same thing they did,” he remembers. “Probably doing it even better than some of them.”

Collier’s 49-point game against Butler on Jan. 2, 1991, is still the highest score in a game in school history. In addition, he has the second highest rebound total in a game with 23.

“I remember that night like it was yesterday,” Collier said of his 49-point outburst. “I just felt unstoppable. ... It was almost like I was out there playing the game by myself.”

After college, Collier played eight professional seasons in the CBA, the USBL and overseas. Now 41, Collier lives in metro Atlanta with his wife of 18 years and their two children. He began working with Apria Healthcare last summer after spending 11 years with Progressive Lighting.

Collier is not only one of the best players to have worn a Georgia State jersey, he is also a champion for the (relatively) little guys.

“It’s not about how big or strong you are,” he said. “It’s the technique and how you get the job done. You have to apply those same things to life.”

BY JEREL MARSHALL
A Charitable Gift Annuity at Georgia State University

When you make a gift of $10,000 or more, Georgia State can offer you (and/or your loved ones) a fixed income for life. Charitable Gift Annuities also generate tax deductions and may reduce capital gains. Annuity rate will vary based on your age and current interest rates.

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* All trips are presented by AHI International. For more information visit GSU.EDU/ALUMNI or call 1-800-GSU-ALUM.
Joyous Act
Madama Butterfly (Mercedes McCann, center), surrounded by geishas, celebrates her soon-to-be-doomed marriage to U.S. Navy Lt. Pinkerton during Act 1 of the April 16 School of Music performance of Puccini’s opera “Madama Butterfly.”

Watch a behind-the-scenes video of the production of “Madama Butterfly” at gsu.edu/magazine.
or the Museum of Design Atlanta’s grand-opening exhibit in its new gallery space at 1315 Peachtree St., sleek post-World War II Italian motorcycles — Ducatis, MV Agustas, Bimotas and Moto-Morinis — serve as elegant examples of their manufacturers’ passion for the confluence of utility and art.

But the installation doesn’t end there. For the display, titled “Passione Italiana: Design of the Italian Motorcycle,” students from associate professor Stan Anderson’s design class were called in to create a mixed-media backdrop to further showcase the ingenuity, creativity and evolution of Italian motorcycle design.

“The curator for this exhibition at MODA wanted the visitors’ heartbeats to, perhaps, race a little more while visiting this motorcycle exhibition,” Anderson said.

The students produced a variety of concepts and narratives in video form. For example, Mario Reid, a junior design major, blended animation with photography to take the viewer on a trip from the city to the countryside, and back again, on a Ducati.

“When you’re riding a bike, you’re one with your environment,” Reid said. “You’re feeling everything. You’re sensing everything. You feel the wind, and the bugs are hitting your helmet. We used a video in juxtaposition with animation to tell that story.”

Anderson said he was impressed watching his students create videos that so effectively evoke motion and excitement.

“They wanted visual elements that would elicit the sense of speed or motion,” Anderson said. “When you’re in a museum and see a great red Ducati in person and then see a beautiful video in the background, it adds to the entire visual experience.”

Static imagery associated with the exhibit also needed to yield motion. Shivani Kapoor, a senior design major, designed a poster and T-shirt to highlight the excitement of the bikes using a bold pop of red with white and black.

“I really wanted to show how streamlined and fast the motorcycles are, because that’s what people are attracted to,” she said.

The School of Art and Design’s partnership with MODA has given students an opportunity to create designs for other exhibitions as well, including posters for the exhibition “Love Nest: Photographs and Objects,” and for MODA’s summer camp.

“It’s just wonderful,” said Brenda Galina, executive director of MODA. “It’s good for the students, and we get such unique ideas from them.”

For the students, having their work shown in a museum feels pretty good.

“I think the payoff is really cool — a museum in our city has our work in it,” said Tiffany Forrester. “I don’t know how many other times I will have the experience of having my work in a design museum in the real world.”

BY JEREMY CRAIG
COMRADES IN ARTS

Theatre with GSU roots works to bring ‘fringe’ to the forefront

However many hats the cast members of Twinhead Theatre might find themselves wearing onstage, chances are, they wear even more behind the scenes.

“Everybody kind of pitches in where they can,” says director/writer/actor/marketer Diana Brown, a GSU alumna (B.A. ‘07) who has been with the self-described “fringe” theater company since it started in 2003.

That’s when she and six other comrades in arts — all Georgia State students — joined forces to “push the boundaries of traditional theater with unique multimedia productions.”

Even today, all but one of the company’s 11 core collaborators have a Georgia State connection, says actor/writer/director/choreographer/fundraiser Molly Shepherd (B.A. ’07), also a founding member.

Like all Twinhead players, Shepherd and Brown have other means of support. Their efforts for the nonprofit theater are strictly a labor of love.

And while the company may not have a permanent home, Shepherd says, it has found its niche. “We see where we stand with our audience, and we’re like, OK, they want us to be funny and crazy,” she says.

“Our audience is pretty much made up of people who do not go to theater … but it’s not hard to get them to our shows.”

Most Twinhead productions — they average about three a year — include a lot of fake blood (“We don’t skimp!” says Brown) and combine music, dance, film and theater, usually in the form of comedy sketches unified by a theme.

Twinhead’s first feature-length film, “Loaded Guns: The Movie,” has had two showings at Atlanta’s Plaza Theatre, and they are in the process of adapting their interactive play, “Choose Your Adventure,” to a video series for their website.

Looking forward, Twinhead Theatre is partnering with the Little Five Points Business Association to spearhead Atlanta’s first fringe theater festival, shooting for spring 2012.

“They’re nationwide, and Atlanta is this huge gap,” Brown says.

“It’s basically just to show the city the art that’s happening all around us and then to show the world what’s happening right here,” she adds, pointing out with some satisfaction that the script for “The King’s Speech,” which won four 2010 Academy Awards including Best Picture, was discovered at a fringe theater in London.

BY MARGARET TATE

Kids jazz it up at GSU School of Music this summer

More than 30 students from eighth to 12th grade will attend jazz camp at Georgia State University this summer.

Hosted by the School of Music, the week-long camp gives students the opportunity to explore their love of jazz music while working with world-class GSU faculty.

“Kids need a summer musical activity, and the kids who are interested in jazz really want something that is intensive and that they can walk away from having learned a lot about improvisation,” said Gordon Vernick, coordinator of jazz studies at GSU.

The camp, set for June 27 through July 1, will include ensemble performances and improvisation instruction, Vernick said.

“Most of the kids will walk away with a greater understanding of music and especially jazz music,” Vernick said.

In addition to jazz camp, Georgia State’s School of Music will host two new training programs this summer.

From June 6-10, the School of Music’s choral area is introducing a new five-day institute for aspiring conductors.

On June 1-2, the School of Music’s Community Music Program is offering its second annual Student Leadership Institute, a two-day event designed to foster growth in high school band student leaders.

BY LEAH SEUPERSAD

The 1960s, minorities pushed for civil rights, citizens’ allegiances divided over the Vietnam War and a new generation questioned the values and beliefs of American society — with some seeking to reshape them in revolutionary ways.

These struggles and new, cheaper publishing technologies came together in just a few years to create a fertile landscape for an alternative news media that would challenge the status quo.


One question that has fascinated McMillian is why so many people became so radicalized within such a short time.

“How is it that by the early ’60s, people who are associated with activism are associated with liberal reformers and are generally well behaved, and by the end of the ’60s, you have, by one account, one million young people who answered a survey and said they were radical or revolutionary in 1969?” he said.

“Smoking Typewriters” examines this period of history through a unique lens, McMillian said, noting that many historians focusing on this timeframe zero in on the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) — the student organization that some see as the center of the era’s political radicalism.

“If you study the ’60s through the prism of SDS, you get sort of an elite or top-down perspective,” McMillian said. “If you study through the prism of the underground press, you correct a lot of those distortions.

“They were basically community newspapers; they had a lot of regional variations and they reflected the thinking of grassroots activists,” he said. “You get a more wide-ranging, bottom-up perspective if you look through these papers.”

The underground press faced many challenges. The mainstream press decried underground newspapers, and underground publishing operations faced harassment from the powers that be, including busts for obscenity, interference with street vendors and even physical attacks on their offices.

There are some commonalities between ’60s era underground newspapers and today’s use of the Internet to express views outside of the mainstream, McMillian said.

“The blogosphere has been credited with bringing like-minded people together and drawing attention to issues that the mainstream press has ignored, and it’s helping them to build a social movement,” he said. “Underground newspapers performed this role as well.”

By Jeremy Craig
Super Sub

At the Byrdine Lewis School of Nursing Laboratory, Jiwon Yoo (left) and Praveen Joseph check the vitals on the pediatric METI Man. METI Man, a full physiological model that even exhales carbon dioxide, stands in to teach nursing students like Yoo and Joseph how to treat nearly any disease, condition or injury.
SEARCHING FOR PATTERNS

Researcher works for faster ways to analyze sequences that surround us

In life, patterns abound. From DNA molecules to the habits of shoppers, there are sequences that repeat and tell researchers more about the world.

Finding these complex patterns and determining what they mean is not easy, however, and the process requires immense computing power.

Ken Nguyen is working on a way to analyze patterns more efficiently — helping scientists gain a more accurate picture of complex sequences and leading to better research in fields ranging from drug discovery to linguistics and business.

A recipient of the university’s William Suttles Fellowship for doctoral scholars, Nguyen is searching for an algorithm to speed up the analysis of multiple sequence alignments, or MSAs.

In biology, MSAs are arrangements of three or more biological sequences, like proteins or DNA and RNA molecules. They tend to repeat, and by finding MSAs and analyzing them, scientists can detect patterns that tell more about their function, or whether or not they might cause disease.

These insights could give researchers better leads on which drugs might combat a particular disease or condition, Nguyen said.

As a whole, optimally analyzing even 100 sequences could take months or years. And when examining a more complex set of MSAs, the number of sequences increases exponentially to hundreds of thousands of MSAs.

“It can take a lot of time and computing power resources, and it’s very hard to do in a practical manner,” Nguyen said.

Nguyen’s new algorithm will help researchers to not only work faster, but smarter, through more accurate analysis of the sequence alignments.

Nguyen, who is conducting his research under Department of Computer Science Chair Yi Pan, anticipates that his work will have applications beyond biology and drug discovery.

MSAs can exist in other fields, Nguyen said. For example, researchers have also used multiple sequence alignment in linguistics. In studying historical and comparative linguistics — examining languages of old and comparing them — multiple sequence alignment has been used to partially automate the method that linguists use to reconstruct languages.

In business, sequences can be seen as symbols, and the items that people purchase become repeating symbols that can be analyzed mathematically.

“You can see how people tend to buy certain things at certain times,” Nguyen said. “It is especially good for marketing research, and you can better detect certain patterns and habits.”

BY JEREMY CRAIG

ADAPTING CIRCUITS

Nguyen’s research employs a method called reconfigurable computing. Reconfigurable computing uses a logic chip that is configured to carry out a specific task but can change its physical circuitry on demand to carry out other tasks. Nguyen is also hoping to advance reconfigurable computing so that scientists in a range of disciplines can use it for their particular needs.
LIFE IN THE LAB

For **CHERYL CASE**, a graduate student of anthropology, the city of Atlanta — in particular, the Booker T. Washington Community near Vine City — is her laboratory. She’s a “strategic neighbor,” meaning she has intentionally put down roots in a neighborhood where she’s not in the majority.

AS TOLD TO JEREMY CRAIG

I first moved to the area because it was an under-resourced neighborhood in the shadow of the Georgia Dome. I felt very moved to come alongside the community to address issues there. I really wanted it to be people-centered, and if there was going to be development, I wanted it to really help indigenous neighbors living there so it wouldn’t be a gentrification process that pushed people out. So, I wanted to be schooled in that, and to give my neighbors an opportunity to tell their stories.

In my research, I’m helping assistant professor [of geosciences] Katherine Hankins at GSU and assistant professor Andy Walter at the University of West Georgia to perform a larger online survey, talking to urban ministries and also talking to strategic, intentional neighbors from across the United States.

Here in Atlanta, the issue seems to be a divide between whites and African-Americans, and when you zoom out, it’s not the same thing. Elsewhere, it goes across all of the different ethnicities. For many strategic neighbors, one of the major issues is the breaking down of the trust barriers around class and race stereotypes. They’re building relationships by being good neighbors — even something as simple as bringing cookies, helping a neighbor understand a light bill or helping a neighbor plan for a birthday party for her daughter.

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Learning Language

For four decades, scientists from Georgia State and other institutions across the nation have been working with humans’ closest relatives in the animal kingdom to discover more about the origins of language and the nature of thinking.

GSU’s research with non-human primates like chimpanzees and monkeys marks its 40th anniversary this year, with an aim to continue these discoveries and to see more about how we have evolved to become the species we are today.

“The questions in some cases have changed, but the unique place that non-human primates have for answering fundamental questions about what it means to be a healthy, functioning cognitive organism remain quite relevant,” said David Washburn, director of the GSU Language Research Center.

The endeavor started in 1971 when Duane Rumbaugh, chair emeritus of the Department of Psychology, founded the LANA (Language Analogue) Project. The project evolved into the GSU Language Research Center (LRC), which opened in 1981.

The continuing research with chimpanzees and monkeys places GSU in a unique position, Washburn said.

“The legacy of the LRC is going to be the unbroken commitment that GSU has made for over 30 years to support this research that is unique in the country,” he said.

BY JEREMY CRAIG
Touch the Earth gets GSU students, alumni, faculty and staff out of the city and into the great outdoors.
“IT’S CALLED A ‘LIESEGANG,’” says Carson Tortorige, pointing up to a curved, reddish-brown band of iron embedded in an enormous sandstone outcrop along the Waterfall Trail in Cloudland Canyon State Park.

As a handful of hikers gather around, Tortorige — coordinator for GSU’s popular outdoor recreation program Touch the Earth — explains that Liesegang bands are common in porous rocks like sandstone and are easily identified by their concentric or ring-like appearance.

Sauleja Satkute, a freshman art major from Lithuania, tunes in to Tortorige’s impromptu geology lesson for a moment before her attention drifts back to the hemlock trees and mountain laurel and the falls of Daniel Creek roaring hundreds of feet below in the canyon.

“At home, we have hills,” she says, “but nothing like this.”

For the record, Aukštojas Hill, the highest point in Lithuania, is 964 feet. Before the sun goes down, Satkute will have hiked down to the canyon floor and back up, eventually reaching the highest point in the park at the top of the gorge — close to 2,000 feet above sea level.

This trip is one of about 100 that Tortorige and Touch the Earth operate each year. The journeys range from jaunts to nearby parks such as Cloudland Canyon in northwest Georgia, to extended spring break and summer excursions to Alaska’s Kenai Fjords for sea-kayaking or to California’s Yosemite National Park and the High Sierras for camping and backpacking. The program offers up trips for all experience levels and provides equipment, transportation and leadership and handles all the logistics.

Over the course of a year, Tortorige estimates, Touch the Earth gets more than 1,200 GSU students, alumni, faculty and staff out of downtown Atlanta and into the wide open outdoors.

“For me, that’s fantastic to think about,” he says.

On the Cloudland Canyon excursion, Tortorige isn’t the leader — it’s simply impossible for him to lead every hike — so he counts on volunteer leaders like Andy Mycroft.

Mycroft, the stormwater program manager for Fulton County, has been hiking the Georgia backcountry for more than two decades. He learned about Touch the Earth a few years ago when he was taking economics classes at GSU, and he has been offering his outdoor expertise ever since.

“The big thing, for me, is that the kids are cool,” Mycroft says, “and it’s great to be able to give something back.”
Tortorige says he has a stable of around 30 volunteer leaders — with backgrounds ranging from whitewater rafting to fly fishing — who lead the trips in exchange for nothing more than being a part of the adventure.

Jim Hudson, a research technician at Emory University, has been leading whitewater rafting and canoe trips for more than three decades.

“In May of 1975, I was on a weekend run down Section III of the Chattooga and a group of canoes started to pass us and I noticed the ‘GSU’ stenciled on their sides,” Hudson remembers. “I was a student at GSU going to evening classes, and I had no idea that there was a recreation program there.”

The reason Hudson was unaware was because, at the time, the program was barely a year old. It began in the early ’70s as the Touch the Earth club — nothing more than a group of GSU students who got together for caving, canoeing, kayaking, backpacking and climbing.

As the popularity of the group grew, the university realized that it needed guidance, so they brought it into the Department of Recreational Services in 1973, says John Kraftka, associate director of the department.

The following Monday, Hudson said he signed up for Touch the Earth’s four-day whitewater tandem canoe school.

“By the fall, I was an instructor and leading trips,” he says.

These days, Hudson guesses he has led more than 100 trips, teaching whitewater skills and safety to its participants. Every year, he leads an intensive four-day canoe school on the Chattooga River for the “never-ever beginner.”

“If you really want to see what has driven me the last 36 years, and you are up for an adventure, you should join us for the four-day whitewater tandem canoe school,” Hudson implores. “Because many of the trips have been real adventures and along the way, I have made lifelong friends.”

With Hudson’s help, Tortorige says, many people who have never even paddled a canoe are ready to take on Class III rapids.

For Tortorige, cultivating and maintaining good relationships with volunteers is paramount. So, oftentimes, he tags along during volunteer-led trips. “It’s how we have our meetings,” he jokes.

Here, 900 feet down into Cloudland Canyon, he and Mycroft are discussing the potential for a two-day combined bicycle and skydiving trip when hiker Neftali Hernandez, a junior psychology major who has skydived with Touch the Earth before, chimes in.

“Count me in!” Hernandez says, recounting the last time he jumped out of an airplane: “It was insane!”

Besides keeping up with his volunteers, the trips are also a way for Tortorige to maintain his proficiency as a guide, he says.

“If I’m not familiar with all the rules and regulations, then something may not go right,” he says. “So, I’m never out of the office…

“This,” he says, gesturing toward the cascading waterfall, “is the office.”

Tortorige figures he has spent most of his life outdoors. As a boy in rural southern Illinois, he would wake at dawn to feed his family’s horses, and after the chores were done, he would stomp through the nearby creek in search of tadpoles.
“I’ve always enjoyed being able to help foster friendships on these trips, and help students adapt to campus life and get away for the weekend to free their mind.”

CARSON TORTORIGE

“Some of my great friends growing up were attached to action figures and the Nintendo,” he says. “Me, I was always outside pushing dirt around.”

As soon as he was old enough, Tortorige was in the Boy Scouts. It was in the Scouts where — already equipped with a deep understanding and appreciation of nature — he emerged as a leader. By 17, he was an Eagle Scout.

“It just seemed that I was able to retain information about the outdoors better than others,” he says. “When I looked at a tree, I knew what kind of tree it was.”

When he was just 19 and a freshman working for the recreational program at Southern Illinois University, Tortorige was picked to lead a weeklong spring break trip to the Grand Canyon. It turned out that he was the youngest person on the trip — the next youngest was 26.

After graduation, he worked as a rock climbing and kayaking guide in Asheville, N.C., before returning to his alma mater to take over the outdoor recreation program there and earn his master’s degree in outdoor education.

“I’ve always enjoyed being able to help foster friendships on these trips, and help students adapt to campus life and get away for the weekend to free their mind,” he says. “And, hopefully, teach them a little something about the outdoors and to help them develop an appreciation.”

His boss, Debbie Rupp, director of the Department of Recreational Services, says Tortorige’s passion is contagious, as evidenced by the dozens of new trips he’s created and the increased level of participation since he took over the program three years ago.

“He has a knack for sharing his enthusiasm with everyone, from the never-been-hiking rookie to the seasoned whitewater veteran,” Rupp says. “He takes great pride in being able to educate folks about the environment, safety and even survival, and he does it while everyone is having the time of their lives!”
THE OUTFITTER

Touch the Earth isn’t just about the trips. They also operate a climbing wall and bouldering cave at the Recreation Center, as well as a rental center where students, faculty and staff can check out gear at minimal cost for their own excursions.

The rental center — also the central office for Touch the Earth — is stocked with tents, packs, sleeping bags, stoves, canoes — just about anything one would need for a trip to the outdoors.

The bouldering cave, a 583 square foot grotto complete with a crash pad, opened in April for bouldering — a style of rope-free rock climbing normally limited to shorter climbs.

The 36-foot climbing wall offers up challenges for traditional and lead climbers of all skill sets, and Tortorige leads certification and climbing clinics. He also leads a kayak roll clinic in the Rec Center pool.

Touch the Earth also just recently opened a bike shop, and a mechanic is on duty to handle basic services.

The organization also operates a challenge program at GSU’s Indian Creek Recreation Area, which features a lodge and a ropes course. The program offers up team building sessions, innovative problem-solving techniques and tips for effective communication and trust-building within a group.

ABOVE: TORTORIGE ESTIMATES THAT TOUCH THE EARTH EMPLOYS MORE THAN 50 PEOPLE. CENTER: THE RENTAL CENTER OFFERS CANOES, KAYAKS AND MUCH MORE FOR THE GSU COMMUNITY. BELOW: “ALIEN INVADERS” GET SET TO STORM THE STREETS OF ROSWELL, N.M.
Sometimes, Tortorige says, the dynamic of a group can
take on a life of its own.

“You can have it all planned out to a T, but if the group
doesn’t jive with it, then, well, you have to throw it all out
and recalibrate,” he says. “But it always seems to work out for
the best.”

Once, he said, during the tail end of a 2010 spring break
backpacking trip to Big Bend and Carlsbad Caverns, he let
the group’s participants decide their next destination. They
picked Roswell, N.M., site of the infamous 1947 “Roswell
UFO incident.”

Mickey Luckovich, a junior managerial science major who
got on the trip, remembers it this way:

“We were all feeling like we had just conquered the world
and had the freedom to ramble around the country as we
saw fit,” he says. “So, somebody said, ‘Let’s go to Roswell!’
and with very little deliberation, we drove hundreds of miles
out of our way to see what all the fuss in Roswell was about.
We spent the rest of the trip constructing the most elaborate
masks and tin outfits possible.”

Luckovich says that when they arrived, they roamed
around in search of something “alien–related” all the while
“freaking out people who saw us dressed like invaders.”

When the group found the UFO Museum and Research
Center, they decided to really wreak some havoc.

“We stopped traffic, invaded shops, made a scene and got
a huge reaction from everybody who saw us.”

For Luckovich, the experience was one he’ll never forget.

“During that ride to Roswell, I told everybody in the van
that someday I would work for Touch
the Earth because I had never experi-
enced anything close to that sense of
freedom and accomplishment before in
my life,” he says.

Luckovich was true to his word.
Soon after, he signed up to be trained as
a volunteer raft guide and got certified
as a driver for the organization. Later,
Tortorige hired him as a student em-
ployee. Now, he works in the bike shop
and at the climbing wall, and has led a
handful of trips.

“I regard Touch the Earth as one of
the most positive influences in my life,” Luckovich says.

“I have been able to explore America, escape from the city
and meet people who will be very dear to me for the rest of
my life. Touch the Earth has made my experience in college
stellar and remarkable.”

“And it taught me to climb,” he says. “For that, I love it.”

**WEB EXCLUSIVE**

Watch a video from the
Touch the Earth trip to
Cloudland Canyon at
[gsu.edu/magazine](http://gsu.edu/magazine).
On the court and with his cause, RON HUNTER is ready to make an imprint at GSU

Story By Jack Wilkinson
He talks about his dislikes: Negativity. The threat of that shot clock expiring (“I’ve never had a shot clock go off in 17 years!”). And the inevitability of becoming “Shoeless Ron Hunter.” No, not of coaching a game in his bare feet, which Hunter has eagerly done once a year since 2008. Rather, of running out of shoes yet again on a mission for the humanitarian organization Samaritan’s Feet — whether it is distributing thousands of shoes to impoverished children in Peru, South Africa, Costa Rica or, come June, Nigeria.

“There are just so many kids,” Hunter says. “We never have enough shoes. Never.” And he shakes his head in dismay.

‘EVERYTHING I DO IS UP-TEMPO’

On this first Thursday in April, however, Hunter is in an exceptionally upbeat mood. The new Georgia State men’s basketball coach is sitting in his office, smiling. “I had a normal morning today,” he says. “I got my car and my electric toothbrush.”

A friend had driven his truck down from Indianapolis, where Hunter was head coach at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) for 17 seasons before he was introduced as head coach at Georgia State March 21. It’s hard to say what pleases him more: having his vehicle, or his electric toothbrush.

“Everything I do is up-tempo,” Hunter says. “When I get up in the morning and brush my teeth, it’s up-tempo. I’ve got the little fast thing, the electric toothbrush. I can’t use the regular one. It’s too slow.”

And here’s the icing on the cake: it’s April 7. “Today is my birthday,” beams Hunter, now 47. “I love birthday cakes. White icing. White cake, with something written on it.”

And not necessarily “Happy Birthday.” “Sometimes, I go and buy a birthday cake, even when it’s not my birthday,” Hunter says. “Sometimes, I leave messages for my kids on the cake.” These funny or inspirational messages from this paternal, eternal optimist go to his daughter, Jasmine, now in medical school, and his son, R.J., a junior in high school and a 6-foot-6 shooting guard. R.J. currently has offers on the table to play for Wake Forest and Cincinnati among others, but Hunter hopes “he’ll come play for his dad.”

“My kids will look at the cake, and look at me like, ‘Daaaaad...’,” Hunter says, smiling.

Dad can’t help himself. He’s always been like that. Amy Hunter understands. They met as undergrads at the University Miami of Ohio. Amy is an elementary school guidance counselor in Indianapolis. They’ll celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary in June.

‘I WANT TO BE HERE’

The little inner-city boy has come a long way from the West Side of Dayton, Ohio, where his childhood pals included best friend Ron Harper, a teammate at Miami who later won five NBA titles with the Bulls and the Lakers, and Keith Byars, an All-American running back at Ohio State who played a dozen years in the NFL. Having successful friends never shook Hunter’s confidence in his own abilities.

“My mother always says, ‘If you don’t believe, no one else is going to believe it,’” says Hunter. As for communicating, “I never had trouble talking. If I wasn’t in coaching, I was going to be on television.”

After his freshman year at Miami, Hunter came home that summer and coached a Little League team in Dayton. “And that’s when I knew I wanted to coach,” he says. “It excited me. Even in wintertime, I couldn’t wait for summer for baseball to come around.”
After six seasons as an assistant at Wisconsin-Milwaukee from 1987-93, and one at his alma mater, Hunter got the head coaching job at IUPUI. “If I can sell kids on IUPUI, I can sell kids on anything,” says Hunter, who in 17 years took that program from NAIA status to a Division I independent to the Summit League.

“The glass is always half-full,” Hunter says. “I will not have people around me who are negative, that won’t believe. We do not use the words ‘can’t’ and ‘never’ in this program.”

In his first meeting with Georgia State’s high-energy athletics director, Cheryl Levick, Hunter knew he’d found a kindred spirit. “We’re like two little tornadoes running around,” he says. “And I love President [Mark] Becker’s vision” to position Georgia State as one of the nation’s premier urban universities.

“The most important thing I want people to know is that I want to be here,” Hunter said. “I’m not an assistant [using] this as a stepping stone. I’m a head coach, and I had a great situation. I want people to know that this is a great situation.”

He’ll coach as he always has: his players will run and press, press and run while their coach prowls the sideline, stomping the foot he once fractured in a game from bringing it down too hard.

“I’ve been down this road before,” Hunter says. “I’ve already coached the first seven games in my head. I know how it’s going to play out — not from the players’ standpoint, the coach’s standpoint. Even without knowing who we’re going to play. Doesn’t matter.

“It’s ‘The Vision,’” Hunter says. “How we’re going to play, going to look, how I want the game to go, how I dictate the game. I mean, the entire game. What people are going to say when we walk out in the arena here and on the road. What I’m going to say in the first media timeout as the head coach at Georgia State.”

Hunter fully intends to upgrade Georgia State to the Colonial Athletic Association penthouse — this despite the fact that the CAA, one of the toughest mid-major conferences in the country, sent three teams to the NCAA Tournament last season with Virginia Commonwealth reaching the Final Four.

One more thing Hunter insists on: “It’s important to me that the GSU community embraces Samaritan’s Feet.”

‘THE VISION’

First, he will court the student body to come out and support the team. “It has to start with the students,” Hunter says. “We’ve got to get the people inside the house excited before we can get the people outside the house excited.

“In an urban situation, you’ve got to create a vibe,” he continues. “I’ve been there. I did that at Wisconsin-Milwaukee, with local kids. In Indianapolis, with George Hill [the former IUPUI star now playing for the San Antonio Spurs]. We’re going to do the same thing here.”

‘THERE ARE NEVER ENOUGH SHOES’

Samaritan’s Feet is the Charlotte, N.C.-based charitable organization that Hunter has embraced since 2008. Its mission: to collect and distribute millions of pairs of shoes to poor children around the world.

HUNTER WON 254 GAMES IN HIS 17 SEASONS AT IUPUI AND LED THE JAGUARS TO THEIR ONLY APPEARANCE IN THE NCAA TOURNAMENT IN 2003.
Growing up, Hunter always had a pair of Converse sneakers to wear. He also attended a Catholic grammar school and high school, which he says instilled in him a sense of discipline and compassion for others.

In November of 2007, Hunter was approached by representatives of Samaritan’s Feet, including a friend named Todd Melloh. They were hoping to bring attention to the charity’s goal of providing shoes to shoeless children. “We need a coach who will go barefoot in a game,” Melloh said.

“Yeah,” Hunter remembers saying enthusiastically. “Who can we get?” Then it dawned on him. “They were looking at me.”

On Jan. 24, 2008, Hunter took off his size 13-1/2 shoes and socks and worked the sideline barefoot during a home game with Oakland University. He chose that date because it was the game closest to the birthday of his childhood hero, Martin Luther King Jr. Many other coaches worked barefoot, too, and thousands upon thousands of shoes were donated to Samaritan’s Feet. Every season since, Hunter has gone shoeless for a game.

In the summer of ’08, Hunter took his team to Peru to play a series of exhibition games. He also brought along thousands of pairs of children’s shoes. After loading up an old bus in the capital of Lima and driving “out to the middle of nowhere,” Hunter, his players and others began handing out the donated shoes. First they washed the children’s feet, then slipped on the socks and shoes. For many children, those were the first socks and shoes they’d ever worn.

Hunter will never forget one little girl, a 6-year-old who was living in a home for abused children. “She was crying,” he says. “She was scared of the process. She’d never had socks before, and now I was washing her feet.”

To calm the girl, Hunter picked her up. “I gave her a sucker,” he remembers. A lollipop. “And then she put the sucker in my mouth.” They both smiled.

“I always wonder, whatever happened to that little girl?” he asks now. “I even had people calling me, wanting to adopt her.”

When the group ran out of shoes to distribute that day, as they invariably do, Hunter says, the people started shaking the bus. Many of them, including mothers holding babies and young children, had stood in line for four hours. Hunter even took off his oversized shoes and gave them to a kid. “But we just didn’t have enough,” he remembers.

The same thing happened last summer in South Africa and will probably happen again this June in Nigeria. “The hardest part to me is the trip home,” Hunter says. “I’m always drained. I see the poverty there. We go to a village and …” He twirls his index finger around in a circle. “There’s a long line of children and there’s never enough shoes.

“What we were giving them was hope,” he says. “The first time you see the look in a child’s eyes when you give them shoes and a pair of socks, it’s incredible.”

Hope — it’s what Ron Hunter brings to Georgia State where, in brogans or barefoot, he’ll stand and stomp and coach ’em up for the full 40 minutes.

“I wear out the court during games,” Hunter says. “The sideline at Georgia State, it may not say, ‘Ron Hunter Court.” (Indeed, the court is already named for Charles “Lefty” Driesell, the former Panthers coach and College Basketball Hall of Famer.)

“But,” Hunter says, “I will leave my imprint there.”

In many ways.
ROBINSON’S WAY

J. Mack Robinson’s big gifts and small gestures have remade the GSU campus and expanded student horizons

Story by Michelle Hiskey
SWEATING THE SMALL DETAILS helped put Winifred Akande through Georgia State, and details were many the night of May 7, 2009. An intern at the Robinson College of Business, she was anchored in the foyer of the St. Regis Hotel in Buckhead, helping VIP guests check in for the business college’s Hall of Fame dinner. By the time she found the seat her boss had assigned her, dinner had started. Her salad was missing. “I’m sorry, I may have eaten yours by mistake,” businessman Peter Blum told her, ordering another. She quickly forgot about the baby field greens, Belgian endive and Cajun walnuts dressed with fig-balsamic vinaigrette. She introduced herself around the table, coming to the distinguished couple across from her: the famous Atlanta businessman, J. Mack Robinson, and his wife, Nita. Akande had just found out they would help fund her study abroad trip to South Africa.

HOW CAN I put into words how much their gift meant? These people are so lofty and high up. What do I have in common with them?

Therein lies the mystery of a mythic figure, one whose name is etched, thanks to his $10 million gift, on her school. How to humanize a monumental figure, who fought with “The Greatest Generation,” who influenced so much and so many — lest his name become simply words on campus buildings and signs?

The night of May 7, 2009 is one postcard, a small tableau of Robinson’s extraordinary impact on the university he briefly attended. Present are friends, colleagues and beneficiaries like Akande — people who help sum up his style, reach and status. These relationships point to Robinson’s significant investment and growth — both geographical and human — that will shape the university in the next decades.

Earlier that same evening, at a VIP reception upstairs in the St. Regis, Robinson, whose banking and insurance fortune was valued by Forbes in 2005 at $1 billion, celebrated his 86th birthday with a modest two-layer cake. Now, while he still goes into the office most days, there is more looking back on a remarkable life and its lessons for the next generation — Akande’s generation.

THE ST. REGIS had been open barely a month when it hosted GSU’s 25th Annual Hall of Fame dinner in its Astor Ballroom. The 26-story Buckhead hotel was an offshoot of the New York original founded by the Astors during the Gilded Age, and boasted that “the art of saber ing a bottle of champagne is still practiced ... and hand-rolled cigars remain an after dinner staple.”

Robinson has dined and stayed at elegant hotels all over the world. He has started, bought and sold countless companies, his most famous being the fashion house he founded with a young French designer named Yves Saint Laurent. Yet Robinson never appears ensconced in these rarified comforts. He carries an air of unforced gentility, formed first in a more provincial Atlanta, where he sold solid, everyday things like newspapers and used cars. His personality has remained unchanged as he built an empire in the intangibles people needed, like credit and insurance. Even as his business ramped up internationally, his gentle nature and easy Southern drawl did not waver.

At the St. Regis, a newer acquaintance greeted him. GSU President Mark Becker, in his fifth month on the job, had been in the same spot where Akande now stood. Shortly after his arrival in Atlanta, Becker lunched with Robinson at the Ritz Carlton, a few blocks from the St. Regis. As Becker strove for the words to acknowledge Robinson’s philanthropy, Robinson would have no honorifics.

“I didn’t do anything big or
important,” Robinson told Becker at their lunch. “I’m just a hard-working person from Georgia.”

Also greeting Robinson in the St. Regis that night was prominent alumnus A.W. “Bill” Dahlberg (B.B.A. ’70). The former Southern Company CEO and president, says he admired Robinson for rising in an era where bootstraps outweighed an M.B.A., where wiring didn’t replace face time. Stopping short of saying the pace of today’s business world was more likely to produce a Skilling or Madoff, Dahlberg suggested that Robinson’s way of building integrity may be even more relevant now as new graduates balance on a tightrope of ethics, transparency and a difficult economy.

“This was a generation that took more than business seriously,” Dahlberg says. “They also took society seriously. They wanted to make a difference in the city where they live.”

Seven decades earlier, Robinson had taken one course at what was then called Georgia Evening College, before Pearl Harbor interrupted his education. That barest of tethers to the forerunner of Georgia State turned into such a strong cable out of pragmatism. Helping the business college helped Atlanta, which in turn helped his businesses and him personally. “Mack was not a learn-everything-out-of-the-book man,” Dahlberg says. “He was more practicalist, if that’s a word…and if you want to be successful, you’ve got to think practicalities.”

THAT EVENING, former GSU President Carl S. Patton not only was inducted into the Hall of Fame but also worked the crowd, feeding the relationships with big givers like Robinson that in turn rippled into a much bigger pool of donors.

Robinson’s philanthropy, Patton noted later, drew attention from a deep web of business leaders and contacts who followed his spending like investors follow Warren Buffett. More than one acquaintance has noted Robinson’s “E.F. Hutton effect,” for his influential gravitas. “Donors check out what other donors give to before they give,” says Patton. “They look at others for advice. They want to make sure it’s an important cause that other people believe in. “When one makes that decision, it helps others decide to give. That’s why they put the list of the donors in magazines, to validate the organization. And when you name a college or building after someone, you hope that person will inspire others toward philanthropy. If people know the person, that’s what makes them give. We all look for validation one way or the other.”

That heft of power infused the St. Regis’ ballroom like the scent of the bouquets of white roses wafting from the round tables. Photographers snapped photos of Atlanta’s current business leaders John Aderhold, A.J. Robinson and Herman J. Russell. Bill Curry stopped by, 11 months into coaching the Panthers’ new football team. The crowd listened to speeches by inductees Patton and Neville Isdell, the outgoing CEO of The Coca-Cola Company. The man who would succeed Isdell two months later, Muhtar Kent, also spoke, and shiny red bottle-shaped cans of Coke dotted the place settings, including where a pink-cheeked, hearty Robinson sat.

On a night like this, “A lot of things are said between good friends without words exchanged,” Patton said later. What transpired at Robinson’s table would change the university’s footprint in 2011 and beyond.

THAT PETER BLUM ate Akande’s salad was not out of character given the comfort level he enjoyed with Robinson, his closest friend. Blum is a real estate investor who connected with Robinson more than 20 years ago through their mutual interest in horse racing. Blum, who studied classics at the University of North Carolina, makes his friends based on deeply shared values,
and these values also influence his business decisions.

Robinson and Blum soon found that they complemented each other well. While Blum doesn’t like driving in unfamiliar places, Robinson loved driving, so he usually took the wheel when they were together. Blum reciprocated in his own way, convincing Robinson to break his Chick-fil-A habit every now and then to try Pano’s & Paul’s.

Blum recognized a depth in Robinson as they traveled to racetracks like Gulfstream, Keeneland, Belmont and Saratoga. They mingled with “a who’s who of well-known businessmen,” Blum recalls. He remembered hearing Barry Schwartz, the founder of Calvin Klein, call Robinson his hero. Blum watched how Robinson never limited himself to the suite life, but instead reached out to stable workers to make them feel they were VIPs.

“He changed my life for the better,” Blum says. “He made me appreciate the goodness in the world. We all get caught up in material things and the tendency to look at goals, objectives and achievements. Mack is such a unique man because his work ethic was not to become the wealthiest, but to uphold a manner of treating people well. He did not say an unkind word even when there were reasons for it.”

Robinson’s insatiable quest for knowledge impressed Blum. Every night Robinson would read stacks of articles and books. Blum also saw a deep sense of duty the day his teenaged son Josh was to shadow Robinson. Instead, Robinson tutored the boy. “If you go to school, get a good education and work hard,” Robinson told Josh, “you will be able to achieve as much as I have.”

When Blum tried to thank Robinson for that, he learned his friend’s highest value came from being a father of two girls. “If you want to do something nice for someone,” Robinson told Blum, “you do it for their children.”

Naturally then, at Blum and Robinson’s table at the St. Regis, there would be students. With his $10 million naming bequest in 1998, the largest cash gift in the university history, Robinson had in effect adopted the business students at Georgia State. He was placing a bet on their futures, not unlike thoroughbreds, only the results weren’t immediate. He may not live to see the next J. Mack Robinson, but the glimpses greatly pleased him.

That night at the St. Regis, there was Winifred Akande, a sophomore accounting major.

Like Robinson, Akande was an Atlanta native, entering the world in March 1988 only blocks from GSU as a “Grady baby.” She had never known anything but a long road to the American Dream. Two years before her birth, her parents had emigrated from Nigeria, with advanced degrees that did little to help them set up here. Her father, Dolapo, drove a taxi and took classes at Georgia State before graduating in business from Mercer and becoming a database administrator and consultant. Her mother, Bola, worked at restaurants and banks while going back to school and becoming a computer programmer for the state Department of Natural Resources. Not all educations are equal, they told their eldest daughter. Make yours count.

So Akande worked. During high school, she became a teller at Washington Mutual, and she left that job right before the 2008 economic meltdown to take an internship in the Robinson College of Business. Her contacts there encouraged her to study abroad in international business and pointed her to the Nita Robinson Scholarship. The Robinsons had endowed these in 2000 to equip students for success in an increasingly diverse, global business world.

The grants, says Robinson College of Business Dean H. Fenwick Huss, build a bridge from Robinson’s age, race and wealth to young adults with need and potential mirroring his own six decades before. “He relates to students who are the first generation of their family to go to college, like he was,” Huss points out. “He truly enjoys knowing he’s had

“I MAY BE TRAINING PEOPLE ON U.S. TAX LAW, AND I WOULD HAVE NEVER CONSIDERED ANYTHING LIKE THAT IF I HAD NOT STUDIED ABROAD. I HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF PAYING IT FORWARD.”

- Winifred Akande
some positive impact on their lives, and truly wants to help them do what he did.”

Akande had dreamed big, choosing GSU’s priciest study abroad option, almost $6,000 to go to South Africa for 17 days through Cape Town, Pretoria and elsewhere. She would receive credit for studying international tax and management. Family friends had chipped in $20 and $50. Akande wasn’t sure she would make the full payment — then word came of the Robinson grant of $2,500.

At the St. Regis, when she saw the couple for the first time across the table, the lump in her throat grew.

They’re still in love. See how attentive she is, looking after him. See how essential family is to any success in life? As Akande began to thank them, she got choked up. “I couldn’t help it,” she said later. Other Robinson scholars came by to thank the couple, creating an even more emotional encounter.

Across the table, Blum was deeply impressed. He could see Robinson was moved too, as he wished the students the best on their travels. What was past for him was the future for these students. “Mack believes the greatest thing he ever did in his career was investing in the university,” Blum says. “There was a certain sense of longing that he did not get an education [like that].”

The filial bond between Robinson and the students stuck with Blum. He himself felt a deep admiration and loyalty. What could he do to honor his friend? What could he give a man who had so much? If you want to do something nice for someone, do it for their children.

FOR YEARS, Georgia State had reached out to Blum for a single purpose that had nothing to do with fancy dinner invitations. Blum held a 2.45-acre prime block next to the campus. The wedge at John Wesley Dobbs Avenue and Park Place, between Woodruff Park and the Georgia-Pacific building, had taken Blum four decades to painstakingly assemble from 15 tracts and a web of leaseholds.

“The Kennedys owned the Chicago Merchandise Mart for more than 50 years,” Blum says. “Their strategy was to buy good real estate and hold it. I’m not a motivated seller, either.”

He still has an unsigned contract from 1989, he says, for $36.9 million.

The university, especially under urban land planner Patton, kept after Blum. In one meeting, Patton rolled out a big map, pointed to Blum’s plat and declared it GSU’s “best opportunity to really cement its future,” Blum recalls. Says Patton, “Ted Turner said he only wanted to buy land adjacent to his, and by definition, we looked for any piece that touches Georgia State. You can’t have a landlocked campus. And everyone wants to be on Peachtree.”

Blum envisioned passing the land to his son, and sought advice from the man who had become somewhat like a father to him. Robinson refused, only speaking of it in an unexpected phone call to Blum one night about three years ago. “Peter, Georgia State very much wants to own your property. They asked me to talk to you,” Blum recalls him saying. “I told them I wasn’t about to, and you need to hear that from me first. Don’t feel any pressure from me to sell to the school. I am not going to interfere.”

The job of winning over Blum fell to a young alum connected to Robinson through his diploma. Jamie Hargather, an agent of Wilson, Hull and Neal Real Estate, was a 2005 graduate of the Robinson School of Business. Hargather was both professionally and personally driven to help shape his alma mater’s geography. A soccer player for the Panthers, Hargather saw loyalty and trust as his keys to business success, much like Robinson had at his age. Hargather was already banking on his patience to make the deal eventually happen.

As time passed, the emotion Blum felt for his friend couldn’t help but transfer to the property. The more Blum got to know Patton, then Huss and Becker, the more he saw why Robinson liked and

“I DIDN’T DO ANYTHING BIG OR IMPORTANT, I’M JUST A HARD-WORKING PERSON FROM GEORGIA.”

- J. Mack Robinson
respected them and adopted his belief that the “best days for Georgia State lie ahead.” For Blum, the deal was no longer strictly a business transaction.

“Peter has a tremendous relationship with Mack and that was influential,” Hargather says. “We wanted Peter to feel really comfortable about selling, and that played a decent amount of influence. It was part of the deal. J. Mack’s name was on the business school, and this land is where the business school [and law school] was going to be.”

In December 2010 — almost two years after the St. Regis dinner — Blum’s gift became official. He sold the block for $17.8 million in a transaction described as part sale, part gift. In February, Robinson told Atlanta Business Chronicle columnist Maria Saporta that the block reminded him of his early days downtown. He would look out from his fourth floor office in the Candler Building and see the hotels that occupied the property when Blum first started assembling the block. He was pleased that the acquisition did not “disturb the friendship” with Blum.

Meanwhile, Akande is wrapping up a Master of Taxation degree at the Robinson College of Business and planning another study abroad trip this summer to Russia. She’s taken a job with Ernst & Young, and will look into its global exchange program to India. “I may be training people on U.S. tax law, and I would have never considered anything like that if I had not studied abroad — if I hadn’t gotten that [Robinson] scholarship,” she says.

Eventually, she would like to return to Atlanta and invest personally at Georgia State, as a mentor or maybe more, depending on how her career takes off. “I have a strong sense of paying it forward,” she says.

With Robinson as her example, Akande will work out those details.

Michelle Hiskey is a freelance writer based in Decatur, Ga.

INTERNATIONAL EXPOSURE

More than 140 countries are represented in Georgia State’s student body, and that diversity helps pique the interest of locally grown students to see the rest of the world.

The Nita Robinson Scholarship has helped business students like Jeremy Dollar and Dionne Corn travel while earning academic credit. Dollar spent May 2010 in France at the Institut d’Administration des Entreprises de Paris (IAE de Paris), the Sorbonne’s graduate business school. He also took a side trip to Brussels to visit the European Union.

The two-week Maymester program earned him the six elective credits needed to complete his finance degree at the Robinson College of Business. This was also his first trip outside the United States.

“Everyone seemed a little bit more at ease than they do in America, and it almost makes them more successful,” says Dollar, 26, also a philosophy major. “They’re not so stressed about the minor details of everything.”

Corn, 23, packaged the Robinson scholarship with two more grants to fund her study trip to Greece and Turkey in the summer of 2009. It was her first-ever use of a passport.

The adventure showed her ancient ruins and current roots. “I was most influenced by the Greeks’ modern-day family life,” Corn said. “They really have strong family units there, generations in the same household that you don’t really see here as much.”

That picture stuck with her as she wrapped up her accounting degree at GSU and remains to pursue a masters in the same. “Study abroad speaks to dealing with diversity and being sensitive to what different cultures bring to the table,” she says. “In [international] accounting and auditing, you have to interact with everyone.”

Without the Robinson funding, both Corn and Dollar say their horizons would still be limited to the view from Atlanta.

“I’ve been anxious to travel ever since,” Corn said. “I want to see what the world has to offer. What I had only seen on the Internet was even more amazing in person.”

Michelle Hiskey is a freelance writer based in Decatur, Ga.

A NITA ROBINSON SCHOLARSHIP ENABLED DIONNE CORN, A 2010 GRADUATE IN ACCOUNTING WHO EXPECTS TO Finish HER MASTER’S IN SAME FIELD, TO STUDY ABROAD IN GREECE AND TURKEY IN 2009. THIS PHOTO, HER FIRST TAKEN DURING HER STUDY ABROAD TRIP, IS AT THE PARTHENON IN ATHENS, GREECE.

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Baking the Brand
Kat Cole (M.B.A. ’10), chief operating officer of Cinnabon, is building the brand of the worldwide company, whose motto is “life needs frosting.”
A SWEET JOB

Kat Cole (M.B.A. ’10) has always viewed the world with no borders or boundaries.

She went from being recommended as one of the best young employees serving wings at a Hooters of America restaurant in Orange Park, Fla., to eventually rising to vice president of the company.

When she was just 19, Cole was hand-picked by the company to travel to Sydney, Australia, to help open the country’s very first Hooters. By the time she was 20, Cole was supervising all employee training at all Hooters, traveling the world and opening new restaurants.

Cole, 33, left Hooters in January to take over as chief operating officer of Cinnabon, a company that sells cinnamon buns and sweet baked goods at more than 800 locations.

“Both are powerful global brands but have very different business models,” Cole said. “In my role with Cinnabon, I have more responsibility over the entire company. It’s a multi-brand corporation that provides more opportunities to learn and grow with a large licensing division.”

Cole has a long list of goals for Cinnabon, including building the team, growing the company’s licensing division, increasing its philanthropic presence and reinvesting in the core of the brand as the company extends beyond the traditional bakery.

Cole’s efforts at creating success stories aren’t just in the business world. She also is passionate about her work in Rwanda — she worked alongside novelist Elizabeth Dewberry during the first Miss Rwanda pageant since the 1994 genocide there — and she has volunteered and helped to raise awareness and funds for organizations such as the Atlanta Union Mission and Families First, a transitional program for homeless young mothers.

“I’ve experienced constant dissatisfaction with the status quo, and I have a natural curiosity to learn and grow,” Cole said. “I also have an affinity for other cultures and joys in helping others grow and succeed.”

BY LEAH SEUPERSAD

Class notes are the perfect way to share your news with friends and classmates. Read about your classmates in this issue of GSU Magazine, then share your own news, achievements, accomplishments and photos. Mail your class notes to GSU Magazine, P.O. Box 3983, Atlanta, GA 30302-3983 or e-mail them to winman@gsu.edu.

1960s
Kenneth P. Davis
(M.A. ’68) was 2010 recipient of the John L. Wolfgang Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Leadership to Scouting in the National Capital Area Council. Having earned an Eagle Scout Badge and the Air Explorer Silver Award in his youth, he has been involved with scouting for 53 years. Davis was a career U.S. Army officer, retiring from military service with the rank of colonel in 1999. He retired from civilian service with the General Services Administration and the Defense Logistics Agency in 2002.

1970s
Debra Atkins
(B.S. ’77, M.Ed. ’80, Ed.S. ’86) retired after 30 years as an elementary school media specialist and is currently the children’s librarian at LaGrange Memorial Library in LaGrange, Ga.

Brenda Fitzgerald
(B.S. ’72) was recently named director of the public health division of the Georgia Department of Community Health. She will oversee the division’s seven main program areas; health promotion and disease prevention; maternal and child health; infectious disease and immunization; environmental health; epidemiology; vital records; and the state public health laboratory. She will also direct the state’s 18 health districts and 159 county health departments.
Parker H. “Pete” Petit (M.B.A. ’73), namesake of GSU’s Petit Science Center, was inducted as a fellow in the National Academy of Engineering (NAE). The NAE has more than 2,000 peer-elected members and foreign associates, senior professionals in business, academia and government who are among the world’s most accomplished engineers.

**1980s**

Richard Clement (B.A. ’89), a Grammy-winning tenor, recently joined the Southern Crescent Chorale in a presentation of Mozart’s “Requiem” at Spivey Hall. Clement is currently an assistant professor and artist-in-residence at Georgia State University.

Nancy Kassel (B.Mu. ’85), cantor at Temple Beth Tikvah in Roswell, was one of 20 American cantors chosen to perform in November at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels and the Martyrs in Rome. The group, made up of members of the American Conference of Cantors, sang works by prominent Jewish composers and also held discussions with Vatican officials and other clergy.

Ron McBride (Ed.S. ’82, Ph.D. ’90), professor of education technology and coordinator of the graduate program in education technology at Northwestern State University, has been named the first recipient of the Melba Law Steeg Endowed Chair in Educational Technology Leadership in NSU’s College of Education and Human Development.

**1990s**

Heather Alhad (B.S. ’98) is a senior transportation planner in Perkins Will’s Atlanta Urban Design practice, where she moved last year after serving as the City of Atlanta’s director of transportation planning.

David G. Allen (Ph.D. ’99) was promoted to full professor at the Fogelman College of Business and Economics in Memphis, Tenn. A three-time recipient of the Suzanne Downs Palmer Professorship award for research, Allen is past president of SHRM-Memphis, and he was recently elected to the Division Chair Track for the HR Division of the Academy of Management.

Bill Balzer (B.I.S. ’98) and his wife, Peggy, were honored with the Turner Downtown Leadership Award from Central Atlanta Progress. The award recognizes those who step forward to do good work on behalf of downtown Atlanta.

Gregory Derian (B.B.A. ’98) recently joined the Oradell (New Jersey) Board of Education. Derian is employed with UPS in system development, and he will serve on the Board of Education through the April election.

Lynda Ellis (B.A. ’90) recently joined Olde Town Gallery and Studio in Conyers, Ga., as education coordinator for public art classes at the gallery. She teaches adult classes in acrylic, oil painting, watercolor and drawing.

Adolph “Dolph” Ward Goldenburg (B.S.W. ’94, M.P.A. ’99) is executive director of the Living Room, a housing information, placement and financial assistance agency for low-income people who are homeless or risk homelessness due to HIV/AIDS.

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**Alumni Association creates legacy scholarship**

Alumni Association Assistant Vice President Christina Million (M.S. ’00) figures that GSU alumni and their children are one big family, so she set out to create the Alumni Legacy Scholarship to continue the Panther tradition.

“We really want to provide another way of supporting GSU and giving back to current students,” Million said. “By creating a legacy scholarship, we are recognizing those students who are achievers and have affinity to GSU that spans one or more generations.”

Children, stepchildren and grandchildren of GSU graduates are eligible for consideration. Applicants must have a current GPA of 3.0, and a personal essay and a letter of recommendation from the legacy relative are required.

The deadline to apply for the scholarship for the 2011 fall semester is June 17, and the award date is Aug. 1. For more information, visit the Awards and Scholarships page on the Alumni Association website or call 800-GSU-ALUM.
ON THE FRONT LINE OF PUBLIC HEALTH

When the public's health is in danger, Robert L. Jones (B.S. '77, M.S. '79, Ph.D. '86) and the Centers for Disease Control are there. For the centers to do their jobs, they need science — not just epidemiology, but an army of laboratory scientists developing cutting-edge methods for detecting a wide range of threats.

Jones is one of the people responsible for keeping that science up to date. He started his career as a research chemist after being the first student ever to earn a Ph.D. in chemistry from Georgia State. Today, he is chief of the CDC's Inorganic and Radiation Analytical Toxicology Branch.

One of his proudest moments was heading the project team that developed the world's first portable instrument for measuring lead in blood samples. The instrument has been a big hit in America, where doctors use it to test their patients, avoiding the time and expense of external laboratories.

"We've taken the portable lead instrument to Russia, to Egypt," Jones said. "One of our staff members jumped off a boat in Micronesia, waded up onto an island, and found a lead contamination problem no one even suspected."

More recently, Jones and his division have been working on possible terrorist threats. One group is developing methods for quickly assessing whether a patient has been exposed to radioactive material, and how severely. Another group is working on methods for use in cases of chemical terrorism, where the attacks might involve poisons like arsenic or mercury.

"I know our lab work can benefit hundreds of thousands of people," Jones said. "I get great pleasure and fulfillment from that."

BY ANN CLAYCOMBE

FROM LEFT: 1) STUDY ABROAD TRIP TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND INDIA, MAY, 2010. PICTURED IN OLD DUBAI ARE (L-R): JUSTIN HILL (P.M.B.A. ’10), MATT REIBLING (P.M.B.A. ’10), DEREK PRESCOTT (P.M.B.A. ’10) AND PROFESSOR SUBHASHISH SAMADDAR; 2) P.M.B.A. PEACHTREE-DUNWOODY 2010 GRADUATION PARTY, DECEMBER; 3) P.M.B.A. PANTHER FOOTBALL GATHERING, OCTOBER, 2010; 4) SENIOR CELEBRATION, APRIL. (L-R) STUDENTS BARBARA PINA, DAISY MORA, SAA MEMBER FLAVIA CANCIANI AND DEBORAH PINA.

1990s

Lidija Polutnik (Ph.D. '94) is a professor of economics and division chair at Babson College near Boston. Her research interests are strategic cost management, labor economics and public finance, and she examines the role of institutions in countries in transition.

Andrew Sullivan (M.B.A. '93) was recently recognized as a top financial advisor and named to the LPL Financial Executive Council. This distinction is based on a ranking of all registered advisors supported by LPL Financial LLC, the nation's largest independent broker-dealer, and is awarded to less than 1 percent of the firm's more than 12,000 advisors nationwide.

Jeff Weikert (M.B.A. '91) has been named vice president of Sales for RewardsNOW, a leader in integrated, turnkey loyalty programs for financial institutions. Weikert brings with him over 30 years in the financial services industry in a variety of executive roles.


2000s

Coy Bowles (B. Mu. '04) plays guitar, piano and organ as a member of the Zac Brown Band. The group was nominated for four 2011 GRAMMY Awards: Best Country Album for “You Get What You Give;” Best Country Collaboration With Vocals for “As She’s Walking Away” (with Alan Jackson); and Best Country Song and Best Country Performance By A Duo Or Group With Vocals for “Free.” The group took home the GRAMMY for “As She’s Walking Away.”
Mr. Marvelous

For David Liss (M.A.'93), creating polished, awe-inspiring fictional characters is nothing new. But now, instead of crafting his own protagonist, the best-selling author is writing from the point of view of a bona-fide Marvel Comics superhero: The Black Panther.

Last year, Liss made the jump from novels to comics when he was hired to pen the adventures of “Black Panther: The Man Without Fear.” With Black Panther, Liss, who is white, brings to life the adventures of the first African-American superhero in mainstream American comics.

Liss has published six other novels and has one in the pipeline now. His debut novel, “Conspiracy of Paper,” won Best First Novel in 2001 from both the Edgar and Macavity awards, two of the most prestigious awards in the mystery genre. The book was the first in a series of acclaimed thrillers featuring the lead character Benjamin Weaver, an 18th century “thief-taker” — an investigator hired to capture criminals.

Liss said his passion for writing grew while he was in GSU’s graduate program in creative writing. He said the staff helped bolster his confidence as a writer. In particular he credits associate professor of English Murray Brown for providing invaluable advice that helped shape him into the writer he is today.

“They helped me with my intellectual growth as a writer, and that I’ll never forget,” Liss said.

Now, as the ongoing writer for the Black Panther series, Liss dismisses any challenges he has faced while chronicling the black superhero.

“I don’t think you need to be of a particular race or ethnicity to write about someone,” he said. “Writers take imaginative leaps. That’s our job, and the important thing is to make every effort to do it well.”

By Marcus Key (B.A. ’11)
FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Page Love (M.S.’90) has worked with athletes from around the country to improve their health and performance. Currently the nutritionist works with the Atlanta Braves organization and the ATP and WTA Professional Tennis Tours to maximize athletes’ energy and performance.

Her journey started back in 1976 in grade school when she complained about the dreaded mushy vegetables and mystery meat she saw in school lunches. Love wrote a letter to Georgia’s then-governor, George Busbee, about how unappealing school meals were, and the governor responded, stating “the foods we like the most are not always the ones that are best for us.” Ever since, Love has advocated for better nutrition for all.

“I really got all fired up,” she said.

As founder and proprietor of Nutrifit Sport Therapy, she not only works with professional athletes, but with clients in the general public to improve the way they eat, helping them address problems from obesity to anorexia.

Numerous factors are contributing to the obesity crisis in America, Love said. Going back to school lunches, she notes that many include too many refined carbohydrates, and even though they include vegetables, kids often don’t find them palatable because of how they are prepared.

“They’re not getting enough quality, and many kids skimp on meals at school,” Love said. “And this leads to them being hungrier by the time they get home, and they crave more refined food.”

Love said that many people — even if they are not athletes — may actually need to eat more, not less, but the meals should be spread out over the day and must be healthy.

“So many people skimp during the day and become ravenous at night,” Love said. “In America, we often do the opposite of how you should fuel yourself.”

BY JEREMY CRAIG
Henry Lee (B.S. ‘76, M.Ed. ‘85) and Marilyn Lee (B.S. ‘75, M.Ed. ‘78) met at GSU in the early ’70s and got married shortly after.

They are proud football season ticket holders and can be found at the Alumni Tailgate Party before every home game. Henry is retired from the Georgia Department of Corrections and Marilyn currently works for Atlanta Public Schools as an educational diagnostician.

What made you choose GSU?
Henry: I visited Atlanta when I was younger and decided it was a place I would like to live, so when I got out of the military I moved here. I started working at the jail, and I enrolled in GSU because it was right across the street.

Marilyn: I had a neighbor that attended, and after we attended his graduation, my mother encouraged me to come here.

What is your proudest accomplishment?
Henry: Being able to retire comfortably. I feel like it is quite an accomplishment to work hard and save all of your life and then be able to retire and enjoy your time.

Marilyn: Throughout my career I’ve been teaching and working with special education and intellectually disabled students, and when I see children that I’ve worked with grow up and have normal productive lives, there is no better feeling.

What’s your favorite GSU memory?
Marilyn: The streakers! We used to have a 10 a.m. break every day and people would gather on the Plaza and, sure enough, someone would come streaking through without a stitch of clothes on. It was absolutely hilarious.
THE GUEST LIST

REBECCA BEATON

Rebecca Beaton (M.S. ’95, Ed.S. ’97, Ph.D. ’00), founder of the Anxiety and Stress Management Institute in Atlanta, shares her top 10 ways to reduce stress.

1. **Pay attention to your self-talk.** People tend to focus on the negative in an attempt to survive all the “what ifs” in life, but we end up spending more of our lives worrying than living.

2. **Remember to breathe — especially deep, slow diaphragmatic breathing.** Slow, deep breathing reduces your heart rate, lowers blood pressure and activates your parasympathetic nervous system (the opposite of the flight-or-fight response).

3. **Be sure to get plenty of sleep, eat well and drink plenty of water.** Most Americans are truly running a deficit on all three of these, and they are critical to our mental and physical well-being.

4. **Exercise or take a brisk walk.** Exercise is one of the best ways to burn off stress hormones and improve your mood.

5. **Learn to meditate.** People who take time to meditate or intentionally relax on a regular basis have been shown to weather daily stress more successfully and with better overall health.

6. **Maintain relationships with people and pets.** People who have healthy relationships with friends or family have fewer stress-related illnesses. Also, just petting an animal has been shown to lower your blood pressure.

7. **Allow extra time for projects or even to get ready in the morning.** Rushing actually triggers a stress response in our body, producing all the harmful stress hormones that alter mood negatively and may eventually turn into illness.

8. **Do your best to live in the present and practice mindfulness.** This is all we really have, and it’s easy to miss the moment if we’re focused on the past or future.

9. **Listen to your body’s signals.** If we don’t pay attention to our emotional and mental stress, physical issues begin to emerge. The longer you wait to listen to your body, the louder it will have to speak to you.

10. **Think about the big picture.** Increased levels of stress hormones in our brain actually cause our brain’s seat of long-term memory to waste away. So, the next time you’re stressed out, ask yourself, “Is stressing out over this really worth shrinking my brain?”

Visit the Anxiety and Stress Management Institute at [http://www.stressmgt.net](http://www.stressmgt.net).
First-year membership for new grads is ONLY $20! Join within 90 days of graduation and get a FREE T-SHIRT when you pick up your membership packet in person!

Membership benefits include:

- Free entrance into the alumni tailgate at all 2011 home football games
- Alumni networking event invitations
- Library privileges
- GSU Magazine
- Discounts on Kaplan Test Prep Courses and much more!

CLASS OF 2011
CONGRATULATIONS
NEW GRADUATE!

We’re at 133 Dahlberg Hall (formerly Alumni Hall) Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Call us at 800/GSU-ALUM, e-mail us at ALUMNI@GSU.EDU or visit us on the web at GSU.EDU/ALUMNI.
Face to Face w/ Ludacris
Grammy Award winning hip hop superstar, actor, philanthropist and former GSU music management student Chris “Ludacris” Bridges returned to his old stomping grounds in April for a performance at the Sports Arena.

Watch Ludacris reminisce on his time at GSU and talk shop about the industry at www.gsu.edu/video.