A fateful November day in 1963 sent a 13-year-old Michael Pritchard (B.S. ’76) toward a life on high alert in the Secret Service. In his 26 years as an agent, he has protected world leaders, from presidents to the pope. Inside are the stories he can tell about his career (without having to kill you).

THE DETAIL
LEAVE A LEGACY...
SUPPORT GEORGIA STATE

Public health, says Ria Clarke, “is a way to effect a great change — something that touches everybody at once.” She has an inspiring role model in Judith Ottoson, a former Georgia State faculty member who has spent nearly 50 years educating students and communities about public health. The scholarship established in Ottoson’s name is helping to support Clarke as she seeks ways to make health care more effective for people around the world.

THE GIFT THAT I IGNITED MY CAREER

“When I first came here from Trinidad, I had just enough tuition for my first year. So this scholarship wasn’t only for me, it was for my whole family. This gave me the support to keep going.”

Please contact Laura M. Sillins, J.D., at (404) 413-3425 or lsillins@gsu.edu to discuss a planned gift today.

OFFICE OF GIFT PLANNING | giftplanning.gsu.edu
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The recognition we are receiving shows we are succeeding in our efforts. We are not just saying the right things. We are doing them.

BURNING BRIGHT
THE UNIVERSITY IS EMBARKING UPON A MAJOR CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Few colleges and universities in the country have come as far as fast as Georgia State. We should all take pride in the fact that our university is now recognized as one of the nation’s premier urban research universities and a national leader in guiding students from all walks of life to success.

Our achievements are a product of a 10-year strategic plan introduced in 2011, and that plan continues to drive us as we pursue student success, grow a robust research enterprise, lead in understanding the complex challenges of cities, develop a dynamic international dimension and grow our distinctive graduate and professional programs.

The recognition we are receiving shows we are succeeding in our efforts. We are not just saying the right things. We are doing them.

Each year, we’re graduating a higher percentage of students. Each year, we’re seeing fewer students have to cut their college careers short because of subpar grades or financial difficulties. And each year, we proudly support and educate one of the nation’s most diverse student bodies. Those are the true metrics for success at Georgia State.

As we begin a new, major capital campaign, we have a clear path forward. We are focused on fundraising that will continue to support our distinctive mission and propel us to higher levels of achievement.

Your gifts have already helped us fuel our student success programs, offering scholarship help to students across the university. You help us bring in some of the highest achieving students in the country as presidential scholars and help us keep those who are struggling financially or academically with Panther Retention Grants and Keep HOPE Alive.

You have helped us recruit and retain renowned scholars and scientists who are bringing in record research funding and addressing critical societal problems with their work. They are sharing their wisdom in the classroom, helping to train the next generation of leaders.

And you have helped us strengthen our deep connection to the city of Atlanta, with campus expansion and growth that have benefitted not only the Georgia State community, but the city at large.

Student success. Faculty excellence. Research impact. Campus expansion. You will continue to hear about these priorities as we talk about giving opportunities in the future. We want to build on our record of success and further heighten our trajectory, and we need partners to help us do it.

A commitment to Georgia State is a commitment to an institution that continues to prove its value and impact, one whose leadership and accomplishments have been endorsed by elected officials, philanthropic leaders and national news media, an institution limited only by the resources that can further drive its rapid ascent.

Sincerely,

Mark P. Becker
President
“@GSUmagazine seems in agreement over ‘Cuban standpoint’ — blaming U.S. for ever-present economic hardships. Even your header romanticizes economic squalor that is Cuba. Believe me, Cuban people couldn’t care less about their old cars.”

@swaddle24
Staci Waddle (B.A. ’89)
CLASS OF 2019
Incoming freshman class upholds high standards while breaking records.

Georgia State set records this fall for the size, diversity and quality of its freshman class. With 3,800 freshmen enrolled, the entering first-year students have a record high school grade-point average (GPA) of 3.42, and the highest ACT scores of any freshman class in the university’s history.

“With all of the opportunities that come from living and studying in a world-class city, Georgia State is increasingly a destination of choice for students,” said Timothy Renick, vice provost and vice president for enrollment management and student success.

The student body this fall will also be the most diverse in terms of international representation, with the fastest increases coming in students from India, China, Japan, Pakistan, Nigeria and Bangladesh.

The university’s Honors College is also growing, with 250 new students (and 1,590 students overall). The freshmen have a record average SAT of 1,320, up 20 points from last fall. Entering Honors College freshmen this year have an average high school GPA of 3.8.

PRESIDENTIAL NOD
Becker among Washington Monthly top 10 list.

President Mark Becker has been named one of the 10 most innovative college presidents in the U.S. by Washington Monthly magazine. It recognized Becker for leading efforts to use predictive analytics to increase student success among racial or ethnic minority groups and low-income or first-generation college students.

“This distinction is

CLOSING IN
GEORGIA STATE IS READY TO MAKE ITS MOVE ON TURNER FIELD.

THE PLAN: In May 2014, Georgia State and Carter, an Atlanta real estate development firm, announced a $300 million redevelopment of the 67-acre Turner Field property. The plans include a football and baseball stadium — Georgia State could move football out of the Georgia Dome and sports played at Panthersville to downtown — as well as retail, residential and student housing. The project will be paid for through public and private funds.

THE TIMING: The Atlanta Fulton County Recreation Authority began the bidding process for Turner Field Oct. 2, releasing a request for proposals (RFP). The deadline for submission is Nov. 20. The area in the RFP includes the ballpark and the property surrounding it.
MACHOs vs. WIMPs

The mystery of dark matter is a debate of astronomical proportions.

BY WILLIAM INMAN
PHOTOS BY BEN ROLLINS
What began as an intellectual disagreement between two Georgia State astronomers in their department’s hallway has snowballed into one of the biggest questions of all: What is our universe made of?

Todd Henry and Rachel Kuzio de Naray can agree that as much as 90 percent of the cosmos is dark matter — the part of outer space that’s not illuminated — but what they can’t agree on is just what all that shadowy stuff really is.

Henry, a distinguished professor of astronomy, bets that dark matter is made up of MACHOs, or massive, compact halo objects. MACHOs can be just about any spherical object made up of atoms — stars, planets and even black holes. The reason MACHOs can’t be detected is because they’re so faint, Henry said.

Kuzio de Naray, an assistant professor of astronomy, thinks WIMPs, or weakly interacting massive particles, are the basis of dark matter.

“WIMPs are another type of subatomic particle that doesn’t interact with stuff other than gravity,” she said.

WIMPs are hypothetical, and astronomers believe WIMPs make up dark matter because, in theory, they would be heavy and move much slower than the speed of light, thus eluding a telescope.

So, it’s MACHOs versus WIMPs for what’s out there in the final frontier.

Henry and Kuzio de Naray argued their interstellar opinions Sept. 5 at the Georgia State Student Center. The debate coincided with DragonCon, the world’s largest fantasy and science fiction convention that brings thousands of costumed characters to downtown Atlanta during Labor Day weekend.

Heading into the showdown, Henry sized himself up as the underdog because most astronomers believe WIMPs are indeed what makes up dark matter.

“My big question is why haven’t the WIMPs found anything? It’s theoretical,” he said. “All we can say for sure is that it has gravitational pull, and that’s about it.”

Henry and Kuzio de Naray concede dark matter may be a combination of MACHOs and WIMPs.

“We want it to be stars because life couldn’t exist around a WIMP,” Henry said. Kuzio de Naray countered, “But if there were no WIMPs, there’d be no stars.”

And so the debate rages on. Even the audience couldn’t pick a winner. The applause-o-meter called it a tie.
another reflection of all of the talented and hardworking people at Georgia State who are developing and implementing the most innovative student success programs in the nation,” Becker said.

Since Georgia State created its GPS Advising system, which uses 10 years of data to keep students on track, the six-year graduation rate has increased from 32 percent to 53 percent. The program has helped to eliminate the graduation rate gap among students of different racial backgrounds.

Georgia State is a founding member of the 11-institution University Innovation Alliance, of which Becker is the vice chair. The alliance shares advances, research and experiences to help students of all backgrounds succeed.

$101 Million in research awards received in fiscal year 2015, the highest in university history.

A MOST HOSPITABLE GIFT
The Cecil B. Day School receives grant to help students continue their hospitality education.

Food service industry leader Regynald G. Washington has given a $1 million endowment to the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration at Georgia State’s J. Mack Robinson College of Business.

The endowment will offer graduate student scholarships, allow for enhanced global experiences and provide expanded teaching technologies.

“His gift will enhance the quality and accessibility of the program to business leaders from all backgrounds,” said Richard D. Phillips, dean of the Robinson College of Business.

Washington joined the School of Hospitality’s Industry Board 15 years ago. He is chief executive officer of Atlanta-based Hojeij Branded Foods and oversees 70 restaurants in 12 of the nation’s largest airports.

Washington says while he is impressed with the program and its faculty, the students are the true superstars.

“They’re grounded, respectful, hungry for knowledge and eager to learn about and grow in the industry,” he said.

SULTANS OF SEDUCTION
IN HER NEW BOOK, “AN IMPERIALIST LOVE STORY,” ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AMIRA JARMAKANI EXPLORES THE HERO OF DESERT ROMANCE NOVELS AFTER 9/11.

How has the sheikh character historically been portrayed in romance novels?
The sheikh holds a really important position in the history of mass-market romance novels. E.M. Hull’s 1919 novel “The Sheik” is one of the early inspirations. Hull’s novel was made even more famous by the 1921 silent film starring Rudolph Valentino. “The Sheik” is an alpha-male character who essentially forces himself on the heroine who subsequently falls in love with him. She is drawn to him because of his raw power, but she comes to discover his softer and more “civilized” characteristics.

And how has that changed since 9/11?
Desert romances surprisingly increased in popularity after 9/11. Though the sheikh’s defining characteristics have not changed much, what has changed is the way that authors have to frame him. Novels tend to make it clear that the sheikh seeks to align himself and his country — usually fictionalized — with U.S. and U.S.-allied powers. He also makes it clear that he chooses a white heroine for his mate because she can help him introduce women’s rights and equality to his country. Together, these alliances help him usher his country into the modern era.

If you could sum up your findings from the book, what would they be? It’s common to denigrate romance novels and especially romance readers for being duped by silly, trashy stories about being conquered by love and living happily ever after. “An Imperialist Love Story” turns that critique back on itself to reflect it on the general public well beyond the romance industry. Desert romances utilize common non-fictional narratives about U.S-allied leaders in the Middle East in order to make their fantasies believable.

Read more at magazine.gsu.edu
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS

National ranking given by the U.S. News & World Report to the Computer Information Systems graduate program in 2015.

The Online News Association (ONA) awarded the Georgia News Lab, a collaborative investigative reporting initiative housed at Georgia State, the $65,000 Challenge Fund Grand Prize for Innovation in Journalism Education.

The News Lab was one of 24 finalists for the prize, selected from nearly 200 applicants over the past two years.

The grand prize is awarded to the project “most likely to change either local newsgathering, journalism education or both,” according to the ONA.

The Georgia News Lab is a partnership among four of the top college journalism programs in Georgia and two of the leading news outlets in the Southeast. It is dedicated to training young investigative reporters and helping to increase diversity in professional newsrooms.

The partners in the project are the University of Georgia, Georgia State, Morehouse College, Clark Atlanta University, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution and WSB-TV.

“We hope that this award can help bring attention to potential solutions to the major challenges facing journalism,” said News Lab Director David Armstrong, a journalist-in-residence at Georgia State.

VISION QUEST

Researchers are working to find a cure for debilitating eye diseases.

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of severe, irreversible central vision loss and legal blindness in elderly adults. It causes damage to the macula, a small spot near the center of the retina and the part of the eye needed for sharp, central vision.

About 1.8 million Americans age 65 and older are affected by AMD, the third leading cause of blindness worldwide.

For Richard Dix, professor in the Department of Biology at Georgia State and also an adjunct professor of ophthalmology at Emory University, AMD hits close to home. His mother suffered from this disease before she died.

“It certainly made it more personal for me,” he said.

Dix is exploring the predictors and additional treatment options for AMD. His past research explored whether a common virus called cytomegalovirus, which humans acquire at an early age, could be a co-factor and contribute to AMD.

If the virus is a co-factor in the disease, looking at the quantity of the virus in a person’s blood could be a way to predict who is more susceptible to develop a severe case of AMD, Dix said.

He said researchers would like to propose for doctors to prescribe antiviral medications for patients with aggressive AMD. One option is an antiviral medicine that is used to fight this virus.

Dix was recently awarded a $1.48 million grant from the National Institutes of Health to study another blinding eye disease caused by cytomegalovirus in patients with AIDS.

STRENGTHENING FAMILY

Project Healthy Grandparents celebrates 20 years.

The Byrdine Lewis School of Nursing and Health Professions has provided much needed healthcare and social services to grandparents raising grandchildren through Project Healthy Grandparents (PHG). Nursing Professor Susan Kelley, founder and director of PHG, says that after two decades, the successes are evident.

“Many grandparents take on the extraordinary task of raising grandchildren when parents are absent because of illness, addiction, death or incarceration,” Kelley said.

In Georgia, grandparents are subbing for parents to more than
As Hanan Waite lay in a hospital bed at Atlanta’s Northside Hospital after the premature birth of her son, Ramzi, her thoughts were flooded by what could have been.

Waite suffered from complications during her pregnancy, and Ramzi was born two and a half months premature. If she would have delivered in her native Ghana, Waite doubts neither she nor her son would have survived.

“I knew right then I had to do something to help there,” she said.

In Ghana, Waite was orphaned at eight years old. At 15, an aunt brought her to the U.S. where she put her desire to help others to work. She earned her nursing degree and is now a neonatal nurse at the very hospital where her son, now a healthy and happy four-year-old, was born.

“Ghana’s hospitals have minimal staff, rampant corruption and a lack of funds, supplies and equipment,” Waite said.

Waite founded Earth’s Angels in 2012 to provide care for young mothers and children in her native country. The organization first focused on Ridge Hospital in Accra, Ghana, and since has sent three shipments of medical supplies there.

Earth’s Angels also provides support to the Gwinnett Women and Children’s Shelter, and recently sent medical aid, clothing, infant formula and other supplies to Syrian refugees in Lebanon.

“Earth’s Angels has taught me that after 100 disappointments, there is a victory around the corner,” she said.
IN THE CITY

115,000 children, making up a quarter of all children in foster care. In addition, they have saved the state about $9.9 million in foster care costs during the 2015 fiscal year alone.

Thirty percent of these grandparents are over the age of 60 and have an income of $15,000 or less. More than a third are raising multiple children, many of whom are under the age of 12.

However, the rewards are immense, Kelley said. Grandchildren are more likely to be successful in grandparents’ homes than in traditional foster care. They maintain a sense that they are part of a family and that they are loved. They are more likely to live with siblings and stay connected to the extended family, providing an additional safety net for when they are too old for foster care.

Georgia State’s PHG program has helped more than 900 families and 2,000 children. For one year, families receive free social worker visits, counseling and advocacy assistance as well as visits from a nurse practitioner. In addition, grandparents are brought to campus for parenting classes and support group meetings.

3.2
GPA for all Georgia State student-athletes this spring, the highest on record.

CREATIVITY

BEHIND THE LENS

Stephanie Dowda (B.A. ’06) connects the visual to the textual.

Stephanie Dowda is an established fine arts photographer with a degree in philosophy. Fitting then, that Dowda dabbles in just about every angle of the arts.

She’s had her photographic work featured in The Oxford American, and she’s a studio artist at the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center, but she’s also just as busy behind the scenes in the local arts community.

“I have a lot of creative energy around organizing within the arts that I can contribute,” she said.

Dowda has been working to create a new literary annual tradition with The Letters Festival. Dowda is co-founder and creative director of the three-day gathering of independent authors for readings, writing workshops, book markets and more. Now going on year three, the Letters Festival brought PEN/Faulkner Award nominee Amelia Gray and several of the country’s renowned independent writers to town in early November.

For Dowda, the effort is about engaging and enlivening Atlanta.

“It’s my motivation to make something great and unique for the community,” she said.

PANTHER HACKERS

Georgia State students win app development competition.

Five aspiring Georgia State program developers took home first place during an application development competition called the AT&T Mobile App Hackathon.

Sophomores Zach Bloomquist, Alexander Claussen, Luis Ferrer Labarca, Caleb Lewis and Ahmed Rashid developed an app, called the Room, in just two days that crowdsources the role of disc jockey to users who join a virtual space in order to vote on what song will be played next at a gathering.

Winning ideas were judged on how well they were articulated, the originality of the idea and how creatively they were implemented. Representatives from Harmon Kardon, a home and car audio equipment manufacturer, recently met with the team to plan completion of the app.

The students are all founding members of Panther Hackers, a student organization formed to encourage entrepreneurship, help students share knowledge and develop professional and technical skills.

MEASURING UP

Georgia State’s innovation ranks highly among top universities.

U.S. News and World Report magazine has recognized Georgia State as one of the most innovative institutions in the nation and a national leader in its commitment to undergraduate teaching.

In its 2016 “America’s Best Colleges” edition, U.S. News ranked Georgia State 5th among the top “most innovative” universities, a list of schools nominated by college and university leaders.

This distinction recognizes universities “that are making the most innovative improvements in terms of curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology or facilities.”

In terms of undergraduate teaching commitment, Georgia State ranks 14th in the nation among Yale, Stanford and Duke.

ATHLETICS

ON PACE

Former cross-county star Rachel Hannah (B.S. ’09) eyes the 2016 Summer Olympics.

As a Panther, Rachel Hannah was the 2007 conference cross-country athlete of the year and just the third Georgia State runner to qualify for the NCAA Championships. Now, the 28-year-old is doing everything she can to get a race number in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Hannah is a registered dietician who works with an executive health care company dedicated to preventive medicine and wellness. She “doctors” her own diet to be able to compete and train at the highest level.

“One of my goals is to represent Canada in 2016 in the Olympics,” Hannah said. “I love this sport; it is my real passion. Running gives me increased energy and translates to my work to help counsel clients. It drives me forward and gives me a sense of accomplishment.”

She has traveled for cross country or track races around the world and is plan-
ning on coming back to Atlanta this July 4 for the annual Peachtree Road Race.

“I want to use it as a set-up race for the Olympics and catch up with more Georgia State folks,” she said.

PHYSICAL UPGRADES
New weight room for football, scoreboard for Sports Arena.

A new strength and conditioning center for Panther football, complete with a full array of equipment, opened this fall at the team’s practice facility at 188 Martin Luther King Dr. Previously, the football team was working out at the Sports Arena.

Head coach Trent Miles said the new facility will help the team keep up in the Sun Belt Conference.

“It’s a great opportunity for our players to develop, and it will really help us in recruiting,” he said.

The Sports Arena also added a new amenity: A four-display, center-hung scoreboard above midcourt.

The new scoreboard’s video displays have wide-angle visibility, ensuring a view from any seat in the arena.

THE UNDERSEA PIED PIPER
Professor develops robots to lead fish from peril.

According to the Center for Biological Diversity, it’s impossible to calculate how many fish were killed by the 2010 BP Horizon oil spill. What is known is the pollution has particularly threatened species such as the endangered Atlantic bluefin tuna. The Gulf of Mexico is an important spawning ground for the fish.

Imagine if shortly after the disaster the U.S. Army could have sent a fleet of sleek robots to convince the Atlantic bluefins to follow them out to sea and out of harm’s way.

Igor Belykh, associate professor of applied mathematics, is working on a grant from the U.S. Army research office to develop robotic fish tasked with the mission of attracting live fish to lead them from disasters such as oil spills. Belykh and his team have built the robots and have had success attracting real schools of fish.

“The biological problem is to find the right size, the right color and the right frequency of the tail movement to make the fish believe that this guy can be a leader and they would like to follow it,” he said.

Belykh says ensuring the robots move in the same coordinated manner yet perform complex maneuvers is also challenging.

“It’s a very deep mathematical problem,” he said. “They need to perform very complicated maneuvers and keep the platoon or the crowd as a whole.”

Belykh is also using the grant to develop communications for multi-robot teams to fly in formation in hostile environments, for example.

CONT’D ON P.15
Satvinder “Pearly” Dhingra sees a world where everybody can be a “citizen scientist.”

Dhingra, a former health scientist at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention turned entrepreneur, envisions a future where cell-phones, smart watches, fitness trackers and other devices will connect with networks of scientists and lay people to allow researchers to make huge strides in improving health for everyone.

Today, many discussions about health start with data gathered the old fashioned way — through random phone calls. Of course, the number of people with land-lines is shrinking rapidly. And many people simply won’t answer their cellphone if they don’t recognize the caller’s number.

Dhingra says it’s time to ditch such techniques, which can take more than two years for data to become available.

“You wouldn’t try to run a company on two-year-old data,” he said. “But that’s what we do in public health.”

Taking inspiration from the growing number of Americans willing to participate in online market research, Dhingra has been working on an app called Quantex-ualHealth — or Q.

Dhingra sees Q as a platform to help researchers connect with study participants, and as a tool that empowers individuals who want to track their own health or monitor the condition of an elderly relative.

A social element will connect people with similar health challenges — such as diabetes — with peers who can offer moral support and practical tips. It can also be used to connect to a caregiver or coach. Some may choose to keep their encrypted health record in the system. Users will be able to share as much, or as little, as they want.

“It’s your data,” he said. “That’s your choice.”

Dhingra also envisions traveling nurses in rural areas using the app to be more effective in the field.

Researchers at Georgia State, Duke University and the University of Washington, as well as scientists in Brazil and the Middle East, have tested Q through the summer. The free app is rolling out on iOS, Android and desktop platforms this fall.
“That’s something I’m very proud of,” he said. “I was blessed to be able to play college basketball after overcoming a dreadful disease.”

Today, Nordmark is the president and CEO of The Nordmark Consulting Group, which specializes in working with healthcare organizations. He spent 18 years with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia, including the last three years as executive vice president for external affairs. Nordmark is past president of The Rotary Club of Atlanta and past chair for the Rotary District 6900 Polio Plus Campaign. He’s also on the board of the Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

He says it’s those connections he made as a student-athlete that helped to propel his business career.

“I still see my classmates years later in the business community,” he said.

Those hardwood moments (“My college basketball games were played at the O’Keefe Gym over near Georgia Tech,” he remembered) were also extremely formative for him.

“I’m still very healthy at 66 years old, and I’m thankful that I got to play basketball for Georgia State because it’s been a big part of my life,” he said.

SCHOOL’S NEVER OUT
For Priscilla Oliver (M.P.A. ’81, Ph.D. ’89), imparting knowledge is a lifestyle

Priscilla Oliver is a life scientist with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, but she still spends plenty of time at schools — in downtown Atlanta, across Georgia and beyond.

In addition to her day job, she also mentors aspiring medical students and spreads the gospel of environmental health in the hopes of bringing a new generation of health scientists and physicians into the field.

Oliver gives Georgia State credit for kicking off a rewarding career that’s lasted four decades and counting.

“I tell students, ‘Find something you’re passionate about so that it doesn’t feel like work,’” she explained. “Before you know it, you’ve got 30, 40 years in, and it still doesn’t feel like work.”

Oliver also maintains a faculty appointment as a professor at the Morehouse School of Medicine, where she helped start the Master of Public Health Program and wrote several grants to increase personnel and infrastructure at the school.

Oliver also founded the Physician and Undergraduate Student Educational Partnerships Foundation Inc.

“It’s like a mini-medical school for pre-meds,” she said. “They get greater exposure to the science of medicine.”

She makes frequent visits to colleges and universities to increase students’ awareness of her field’s importance and of the many job opportunities they’ll find once they graduate. She also stays involved with her own community through Ebenezer Baptist Church and Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc., which honored her with a Torch Award earlier this year.

Even when she mentions retirement, she talks about it as an opportunity to spend more time in school, and expresses gratitude for the opportunity to serve.

“When I retire, I would like to teach,” she said. “One reason why I started teaching early in my career is so I could be prepared for retirement. It doesn’t feel like work to me. It’s like going to have fun every day.”

Got a promotion? A new addition to the family? Go ahead, brag a little. Visit magazine.gsu.edu for news from your classmates and fellow Georgia State alumni.
During his 26 years with the Secret Service, Michael Pritchard (B.S. '76) has lived life on high alert, protecting U.S. presidents, world leaders and important figures. These are the stories he can tell about his career (without having to kill you). By Tony Rehagen

Georgia State University Magazine Winter 2015

Photos by Gregory Miller
THE DETAIL. 
DURING HIS 26 YEARS WITH THE SECRET SERVICE, MICHAEL PRITCHARD (B.S. ’76) HAS LIVED LIFE ON HIGH ALERT, PROTECTING U.S. PRESIDENTS, WORLD LEADERS AND IMPORTANT FIGURES. THESE ARE THE STORIES HE CAN TELL ABOUT HIS CAREER (WITHOUT HAVING TO KILL YOU). 
BY TONY REHAGEN
Today, any American who was alive at the time can tell you where he or she was on Nov. 22, 1963. But on that day, the Friday President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, Michael Pritchard realized where he was going. ¶ Pritchard was 13 years old, sitting in Coach Morris’s sixth-period math class at Atlanta’s Campbell High School when the speaker on the wall suddenly crackled to life with the voice of Walter Cronkite. The president had been shot in Dallas. ¶ School let out at 2:30 that afternoon. Pritchard went home and planted himself in front of the family’s console TV, where he watched history play out in black and white. He saw the silent film of the president’s convertible limo cruising through Dealey Plaza, Kennedy waving to the crowd from the backseat when his body suddenly went limp and sagged toward the first lady beside him. Over and over, he saw Jackie Kennedy panic and stand up, reaching back desperately for a strange man in a dark suit who immediately leapt onto the moving vehicle and threw his body over her and her wounded husband. Newscasters identified the stranger as Clint Hill, a member of something called the Secret Service. A hero at a time of unthinkable tragedy. ¶ “The president was dead, so the journalists were looking for anything positive,” Pritchard says. “As an eighth-grader, it was pounding into my head that these guys walked on water.” ¶ By the following week, young Pritchard was convinced. “I knew I couldn’t be an astronaut,” he says. “But I thought I might be able to become one of those guys.” ¶ Pritchard was excited to tell his parents about his new plans. “That’s nice dear,” he remembers them saying. “Now finish your dinner.”
More than half a century later, Pritchard sits in the study of his home in a mountain-lake community outside of Asheville, N.C. The walls are lined with tall, deep shelves packed with rows of memorabilia: cufflinks, matchbooks and decks of playing cards bearing the seal of the President of the United States, and racks of coins commemorating participation in assorted Secret Service and joint-agency task forces. A framed “Wanted” poster offering $25 million for the capture of Osama Bin Laden, signed in wild Sharpie — With best wishes to my friend — George W. Bush. Framed photos featuring Pritchard at various stages of his now graying hair, with every president from Gerald Ford to George W. Bush.

Over a 26-year career, Pritchard protected six commanders in chief, from Ford through the second Bush. He protected presidential hopefuls Ted Kennedy and Jesse Jackson. He was even a body man for visiting dignitaries like Queen Elizabeth and Pope John Paul II, twice. (“I’m not Catholic,” Pritchard says. “But watching him perform mass in front of 1.5 million people; he was almost God-like.”) During the second Papal visit, he was star-struck for the only time in his career, meeting Clint Eastwood (“The first time I saw women swoon”).

After a lifetime of playing the stoic sentinel, Pritchard is free to be a natural talker who can lead a casual conversation through a pinball machine of fascinating tangents. He has enough behind-the-scenes war stories to start a second career as a professional cocktail party guest. And those are just the anecdotes he is at liberty to divulge.

“There are so many decisions that presidents make and can’t really tell the American people about,” he says. “A lot of them in reference to things the people know nothing about.”

What Pritchard can tell you is that he has conducted missions to investigate or protect in 93 countries on seven continents; has surgically inserted titanium in his knee and neck; has felt a bullet whiz past his ear; and yet spent far more time training, studying, waiting and joking with presidents and fellow agents than in action-hero mode. And it’s been far more rewarding than the 13-year-old Pritchard could have ever dreamed.

Even though Pritchard’s image of himself in sunglasses and an earpiece was conjured in his childhood home, it began to materialize at Georgia State. After a brief stint with the Marines, Pritchard came home in 1971 and joined the Atlanta Police Department (APD). At the same time, to bolster his resume, he enrolled in the criminal justice program at Georgia State. After sitting in class, studying police response to burglaries, assaults and murders, he’d head home, sleep and don the APD blues to report for 11 p.m. patrol, where he would respond to burglaries, assaults and murders. His teachers understood if he had to miss class to go to court. Soon Pritchard was promoted to homicide detective.

Then in the fall of 1975, Lynette Fromme, a disciple of Charles Manson, tried to kill President Gerald Ford in Sacramento, Calif. Secret Service agents tackled her before she could fire her pistol. After a second failed assassination attempt less than three weeks later, the Secret Service announced it would be hiring 200 additional agents the following year. Pritchard saw his chance. In January 1976, the 24-year-old walked into the Atlanta field office and left with an application the size of a phonebook. Next came a five-hour written exam — math, vocabulary, reading comprehension and an observation portion to test his short-term recall. The minimum passing grade was 70. Pritchard scored a 71.

“I later learned that 70s to 82s made the best agents,” he says, with a wry grin. “Anything above an 82 would raise eyebrows.”

Pritchard was now an agent, a member of the same brotherhood as his hero, Clint Hill. But to his chagrin, his first detail was not to a car tailing a president’s parade limo. In fact, it wasn’t even in Washington, D.C. Instead, Pritchard reported to his new post in the 12-man field office in Memphis, Tenn., where he traded his souped-up APD squad car for a 12-year-old Chevy Impala with no air-conditioning and an A.M. radio.

“That’s not to say Pritchard didn’t have any fun. During the 1976 election, he was sent to Plains, Ga. for 36 days to protect Jimmy Carter. He set up sting operations for an organized-crime task force, where he bought back stolen treasury bonds. And there was the first Papal detail: While visiting a Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Pope handed Pritchard a heavy, wrapped gift for the congregation to free his hands for blessing — it turned out to be a brick from the tomb of St. Peter. Pritchard was also assigned to Ted Kennedy in the fall of 1979, when JFK’s younger brother was considering his own run for the White House.

But it turns out, Pritchard, not Teddy, was the one ticketed for Washington in 1980 — though still not Pennsylvania Avenue. Instead, he was transferred to the D.C. field office, to Ford’s detail, following the former president on a tour around the world. He then headed to Florida, where he worked intelligence and counter-terrorism under Ronald Reagan, one of the few agents who spent time with the 40th President at his California ranch. Pritchard also collaborated on task forces with a Scrabble rack of other agencies — FBI, DOD, DEA.

During one operation, Pritchard helped buy 2,000 kilos of cocaine from the Russian Mafia.

“FEDERAL AGENCY OFFICER, YOU’D THINK YOU’D BE POWERFUL,” Pritchard says. “But it’s the uniformed cop who actually has the power. He can take someone off the street immediately. A federal agent has to have a federal statute.”

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In terms of witnessing history as it was being made, however, it didn’t get bigger for Pritchard than in 1986, when he was dispatched to provide security for the first-ever meeting between Reagan and Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev in Geneva, Switzerland. After overhearing U.S. and Soviet pilots debate whose country’s cargo plane was biggest, Pritchard had a front-row seat as the principals of the superpowers shook hands at the height of the Cold War.

“Reagan was fabulous,” says Pritchard. “He had a way of connecting with people. Just a great guy.”

Pritchard has never voted in a presidential election. He says it was important for him to separate his politics from his job. Besides, he figured he didn’t want to end up working for — or taking a bullet for — someone he’d voted against. As a result, Pritchard has a fairly unadulterated impression of each head of state he worked with. To him Reagan was the most impressive, the greatest leader — but the most intimidating in person, when necessary. George H.W. Bush was the most pragmatic. Bill Clinton was the best politician.

Being a body man, practically a shadow, to the most powerful men in the world, Pritchard saw them pushed to and, sometimes beyond their limits. He saw them at their most vulnerable, but he also saw them relax and loosen up. Letting their guard down knowing that Pritchard was always there. He witnessed them at their most human. He got to know them, at least a little. And he more Pritchard got to know George W. Bush, the more he liked him.

Pritchard first met the younger Bush as part of his detail during the run-up to the 2000 election. Bush, Pritchard says, was well known for giving everyone around him silly nicknames. Pritchard got tagged with the relatively mild “Mikey.” One of the first campaign stops was at a high school in Orlando, Fla. The candidate was walking along the crowd barricade, shaking hundreds of outstretched hands, when a boom seemed to rattle the ground. Within .2 seconds, Pritchard was huddled over his charge, ready to whisk him away, when Bush yelled: “It’s the band! It’s the band!” The marching band had launched into the school’s fight song, five bass drums pounding in unison, simulating the cannonade that Pritchard mistook for real gunfire.

After that incident, the bond between Pritchard and Bush
strengthened so much that when Bush won the controversial general election, the president-elect requested “Mikey” to be the leader of his personal detail. Finally, Pritchard could be the man in the dark suit riding in the black Suburban behind the president’s car. After 24 years, the job he had longed for almost all his life was his for the taking.

Pritchard was working out of the Secret Service branch in Houston in 2000 when his wife suddenly discovered cancer had spread from her kidney throughout her body. Stage Four. She was dying.

“She had seemed so healthy,” Pritchard says. “It just hit us like a ton of bricks.”

She could not be moved to Washington, D.C. For Pritchard, facing such personal loss, the job had lost much of its allure. Besides, he had been to Washington working special ops, had protected president after president. He was 51 years old. He says he had no regrets.

Bush understood. The president-elect made Pritchard a deal: Instead of moving all the way to D.C., simply transfer to the Secret Service office nearest the Bush ranch in Crawford, Tex., where he could still watch over the commander in chief during his frequent retreats. That office was in Dallas. Pritchard agreed. And nearly 40 years after an assassin’s bullet killed President Kennedy, Pritchard arrived at the Dallas branch, mere miles from Dealey Plaza, to sit in the same chair once occupied by Clint Hill.

After two years, Pritchard retired from the Secret Service, accepting a corporate job with a Dallas-based oil company where he headed up global security, mostly in the Middle East. He fully retired from that post last year.

Pritchard has lived most of his life on high alert. He has been shot at on multiple occasions and faced off with criminals from every corner of the earth. He has met Dirty Harry and practically tackled the 43rd President of the United States. Sixty-five, sitting in his study among the tokens of that career in yellow shorts and a polo, he says he’s enjoying civilian life.

But the transition can still be tricky at times. He still pauses when entering a convenience store to make eye contact with the cashier to make sure he or she is relaxed at the counter — not being quietly held up by a would-be robber. Recently, he and his new wife were biking in the mountains when he noticed a red car, foreign make pulled off on the side of the road, as if the driver had just walked into the woods. Without thinking, he memorized the number on the North Carolina license plate. When they reached the top of the mountain, he asked his wife if she had noticed the vehicle. She said she had not and that he was driving her crazy with his cautious habits.

Fitting then that Pritchard enjoys attending the annual Association of Former Agents, U.S. Secret Service Conference in D.C. There, he can compare detailed observations with the most vigilant retirees in the world. During this year’s gala dinner at the Grand Hyatt, Pritchard was having his picture taken with his first boss from the Secret Service office in Memphis when he recognized a white-haired gentleman at the table beside him. Pritchard eagerly invited him to be part of the photo. The man was Clint Hill.

Tony Rehagen is a freelance writer based in Atlanta. He is a contributing writer for Atlanta magazine. His work has also appeared in ESPN The Magazine, Men’s Health and the book “Next Wave: America’s New Generation of Great Literary Journalists.”
WHEN THE CONSOLIDATION OF GEORGIA STATE AND GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE IS OFFICIAL, THE UNITED INSTITUTION WILL BECOME ONE OF THE BIGGEST IN THE NATION. HERE'S THE BIG PICTURE OF WHAT THAT MEANS, WHAT'S HAPPENING AND WHAT'S NEXT.

By H.M. Cauley ILLUSTRATION BY JAN KALLWEJT
Dispelling Rumors

While the devil may be in the details, Georgia State Vice President and Vice Provost Tim Renick keeps a close eye on the big picture: student success.

“When Chancellor [Hank] Huckaby announced the consolidation last January, he said explicitly that this is first and foremost about student success, about providing opportunities for students to succeed at levels they are not,” says Renick. “Georgia State has been a national leader in this effort. We have raised graduation rates, conferring more degrees than five years ago, and closed the achievement gap of graduation rates between whites, African-Americans and Latinos, upper- and lower-income students. Few public universities can make that claim.”

At the same time, Georgia Perimeter has not fared as well, Renick points out.

“Students there are graduating at low rates with achievement gaps that need to be overcome. We have innovations that are scalable across both campuses, and we’ll take what we’ve developed to track and support students at Georgia Perimeter in a way that will help them be far more successful.”

A consolidated university will capitalize on connections that already exist between the two, Renick says. For instance, GPC is the largest single source of students enrolling at Georgia State. In the fall 2015 semester, about 7,000 students at Georgia State had taken courses at the two-year school.

“That’s a point we’re building upon,” says Renick. “Another is that many of our faculty have worked together, and many have studied at Georgia State, too.”

Under the one-university umbrella, GPC students will no longer be told they’ll have to achieve certain benchmarks before applying at Georgia State.

“There’s no reason we can’t make that a seamless process, just as it is when a student moves between the College of Arts and Sciences and the business school,” says Renick. “We can collaborate with them more closely to help them move from one to the next, all while being supported with the tools they need to succeed.”

It’s no surprise to Renick that a project as massive as connecting the 100-year-old, 32,000-student Georgia State with the 51-year-old, 21,000-student Georgia Perimeter has sent the rumor mill into a tailspin. But many of the questions have been settled, he said, and the answers aren’t as complicated as some of the imagined scenarios.

University Board of Regents is on track to give its final approval to the consolidation between Georgia State University and Georgia Perimeter College (GPC) in January. But that momentous vote won’t be the starting gun for the massive consolidation that will turn Georgia State into one of the largest universities in the country.

Since the first announcement of a consolidation was released earlier this year, committees across both institutions have been working behind the scenes to make the marriage work. As is often the case in the early stages of a relationship, there have been a few bumps in the road. In working to overcome obstacles, there have been two guiding principles: doing what’s in the best interest of the students, and an awareness that “we’ve always done it this way” is no longer an option.
Georgia State degrees will be “watered down” by this consolidation.

“Absolutely not,” says Renick. “We looked at this very carefully and found a number of models for what we’re working to achieve. The University of South Carolina has a number of two-year institutions across the state that feed students to the main campus for their bachelor’s, master’s or doctorate degrees. Penn State University has the same system. Here in Atlanta, Emory has a two-year college at Oxford, and no one claims Emory’s degrees decline in status because of it.”

However, there will be a distinction between being admitted to an associate’s program at Georgia Perimeter or a bachelor’s or master’s program at the downtown campus, which will continue to be the university’s academic center — a fact supported by the number of students who want to be there: For the 2015-16 year, more than 13,500 applications came in for about 3,800 spaces.

“We do want to continue the momentum of the downtown campus that has become an incredibly desirable location for students,” says Renick. “At the same time, we realize the access role Georgia Perimeter plays in the Atlanta area. We can provide better support for these students so they can maximize their efforts to gain the degree they’re seeking, and at the same time, wisely invest their tuition dollars.”

Georgia State will make it much harder to get into Georgia Perimeter.

Not so, says Renick. “I’ve also heard people say [GPC] tuition will be hiked, but that isn’t the plan either. Georgia Perimeter’s tuition will be competitive and comparable to what other state colleges charge for two-year programs. And we’ll support those students with better systems and technology so more qualify to be admitted into a bachelor’s program at the downtown campus.”

Learning support courses will be eliminated at Georgia Perimeter.

Another falsity, says Renick. Learning support for students who need additional help with math, reading and writing is an essential component of an access institution.
“But at the downtown campus, we offer almost none of those classes,” he pointed out. “We have few students who are engaged in learning support, whereas at Georgia Perimeter, the numbers are in the thousands.”

The Georgia Perimeter faculty and staff will change dramatically.

There are no plans for immediate changes for faculty at either institution as the consolidation moves towards its first full academic year in the fall of 2016.

“That’s not to say we won’t evolve,” says Renick. “But the reality is that the consolidation will not have a direct impact on jobs and roles.”

In fact, it’s quite possible that more jobs will be created at GPC to provide better student support systems.

“Right now, they have an inadequate number of academic advisers and support staff in areas like financial aid and counseling,” says Renick. “Our commitment is to bring a higher level of support to these students, and the model will be taken from what we’ve done downtown.”

Georgia State students will be able to take classes on GPC campuses.

Not immediately, if at all, is the short answer to an issue that Renick says will have to play out over the next few years.

“Students will be admitted to programs that require them to take courses on the campuses where those programs are offered,” he says. “We aren’t going to just mix students together. However, there are recommendations coming forward that will give students some limited options to do that type of thing, but again, the courses have to be appropriate to their program.”

900-Plus Jobs to Do

The massive project of combining two institutions looks a tad less overwhelming when Peter Lyons puts it in the context of tasks to be accomplished. The associate provost for institutional effectiveness has it narrowed down to just a few more than 900.

“That’s what the Board of Regents told us had to be completed to ensure the consolidation was going to work,” he says. “So we set up a system to distribute those tasks around different groups. We’ve had 43 groups and dozens of subgroups working on hundreds of tasks, everything from the governance of the institution and how we merge the faculty senates to how to develop a general education core. We need to integrate technology systems, especially around student data. The recommendations from the various groups will formulate the formal plan, which will be presented to the Board of Regents at their first meeting in January.”

From that long list, certain tasks have higher priority, particularly if they relate to getting students enrolled for the fall 2016 term. Revamping the core of general education classes was one. Another was getting those classes into a Georgia State-based system so students can register in the spring.

“Integrating our systems was an enormous task,” says Lyons. “Others that are less critical may spill into the new year, and some will be works in progress.”

Some decisions were made swiftly.

“We know Georgia Perimeter will be a stand-alone college at Georgia State,” says

Georgia Perimeter Timeline


Founded in Clarkston by the DeKalb Board of Education
Decatur campus opens
Dunwoody campus opens
Schools become part of the University System of Georgia
Covington campus opens
Name officially changes from DeKalb College to Georgia Perimeter College

“WE REALIZE THE ACCESS ROLE GEORGIA PERIMETER PLAYS IN THE ATLANTA AREA. WE CAN PROVIDE BETTER SUPPORT FOR THESE STUDENTS SO THEY CAN MAXIMIZE THEIR EFFORTS TO GAIN THE DEGREE THEY’RE SEEKING, AND AT THE SAME TIME, WISELY INVEST THEIR TUITION DOLLARS.”

TIM RENICK, VICE PROVOST AND VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS
Lyons. “We will have one president, Mark Becker. We will have two centralized administrations, but a number of positions will be eliminated, and those affected may apply for other positions in the new reporting structure. On the academic side, we want to grow the number of students coming through Georgia Perimeter, so we’re not looking at reducing the number of faculty. We also have to keep the place safe, so we’re not looking at reducing policing. And we have to keep the facilities open and functioning, so we need people to do that.”

Throughout the process, Lyons and his staff have been collecting ideas and suggestions from faculty, students and staff about ways to improve experiences at both campuses.

“We’ve heard a lot around Georgia State’s distance education and online programs,” Lyons says. “Georgia Perimeter has a very robust digital platform with lots of online education. How we bridge that to the multiple initiatives we have around those same ideas at Georgia State is something we’ll work on. We’re collecting all those ideas and will review them to find the best way forward for the whole institution.”

Many of the changes to GPC’s structure eliminate duplicated efforts and save money, which was one of the chief goals of the consolidation to begin with. “I think cost savings can be redirected to make a better educational experience for students at both campuses.”

As the associate vice president for facilities management, Ramesh Vakamudi oversees campus planning, design, construction, maintenance and operations. It’s a daunting job, given Georgia State’s 11 million square feet of campus and about 60 buildings spread across downtown, Dunwoody and Buckhead. Now add to that sprawl Georgia Perimeter’s 1.8 million square feet and at least another 35 buildings in five separate locations — some as far as 50 miles from Georgia State’s downtown hub.

“When one of our buildings goes down, I get calls from deans and faculty members, and within a half an hour, we sort it out,” says Vakamudi. “But if a chiller goes out, and you’re 50 miles away, how do you get there and come back in Atlanta traffic? What happens if I can’t even get off the Connector?”

Vakamudi and his GPC counterparts are working on a support system for all locations and a master plan that will provide the framework and footprint for future growth.

“It’s a long, drawn-out process,” Vakamudi admits. “We don’t know yet what needs to be done. [Georgia Perimeter] has felt the impact in the last few years with budget cuts, so we’re taking time to understand their building conditions. They have a relatively good system, with support teams at different locations. Just how to assimilate them into our procedures, well, it’s too soon to make conclusions.”

One of the top priorities the facilities team is getting Georgia State signage in place as soon as the consolidation is officially approved. Design concepts, colors and exact locations are in progress for 13 to 15 new signs.

“We do know the signs will say ‘Georgia State University Clarkston Campus,’ for instance,” says Vakamudi. “Will they be metal, ornamental signs or precast stone? And what about getting the [Georgia] Department of Transportation to change street signs? That’s a process that could take six months alone.”

When the fall 2016 semester opens, Georgia State will have about 21,000 GPC students on the rolls. And just about every one of them will be taking a general education course. Establishing common ground for what those students will learn has been the task of the Arts and Science Consolidation Committee that rewrote the catalogue of offerings in about six weeks.

“Any course offered at either campus had to be in the new catalogue,” explains Lynée Gaillet, who took over as chair of Georgia State’s English department in August. “For instance, our literature surveys are one semester; GPC’s are two. They have a 2000-level creative writing class that we don’t. We had to meet in the middle to come up with course names, descriptions and hours.”

As soon as the consolidation was announced in early January, Gaillet met with her English counterparts at GPC and shared syllabi, catalogues, required textbooks lists and other resources.

“We had to figure out what GPC English will look like and ways to blend, to meet in the middle to get the same outcomes,” she says. “I saw it as a Venn diagram — where did we overlap? In our case, we had a great advantage: Unlike some other consolidations, we weren’t trying to merge two 4-year schools, so there were fewer classes.”

The result is a streamlined set of course offerings that will make a student’s transition from GPC to Georgia State even easier.

“For instance, we won’t have to see if classes count for transfer,” says Gaillet. “The two catalogues now match.”

Gaillet describes the English collaboration as extremely collegial. One contributing factor was that Gaillet served for several years as the Lower Division chair and has a working knowledge of general education courses. In addition, she has taught many of the GPC teachers she met with.

“One of the top priorities was getting Georgia State signage in place as soon as the consolidation is officially approved. Design concepts, colors and exact locations are in progress for 13 to 15 new signs.”
As the leaders of the university’s colleges and schools, Georgia State’s academic deans foster top-notch research, teaching and service as they work to develop the next generation of leaders. Here are their visions for our next decade.

WITH OUR DISTINGUISHED faculty pioneering the latest advances in research and technology, Georgia State continues to lead with new approaches to higher education and student success. Spurred by the pluck that has always defined the university, our students, faculty, staff and administrators have collaborated to drive Georgia State to the forefront of a national discussion over education in the 21st century — and we’re leading that conversation. Amid the fanfare that accompanies record enrollment, retention, research endowments and national rankings, eight individuals work behind the scenes day and night to ensure our colleges continue to climb. These are our deans. A dean doesn’t simply oversee faculty. And a dean doesn’t merely secure funding for the college’s most vital research projects either. And while no special degree program, international exchange or study abroad venture can move forward without the dean’s oversight and approval, our deans still do more. They continue to lead their fields as faculty-scholars, addressing crucial scientific and societal problems that have a major impact on people around the world. They’ve been working to keep us on the rise and, over the next 10 years, will do their part to grow Georgia State into a consistently great, global university.
Our vision for the future of the Andrew Young School is to expand our contributions to policy conversations on all levels, whether community, state, regional, national or international. We envision our students, faculty and graduates contributing to a world where evidence-based policy analysis better meets the rapidly growing demand for public accountability at every level in government.

We want to bridge the worlds of public engagement and decision-making in the management of private, public and nonprofit organizations. We will graduate greater numbers of public, private and nonprofit leaders who can work to improve the design, financing, evaluation and administration of socially and fiscally responsible programs.

We will continue to attract the most talented and deserving students from diverse backgrounds, as well as top-level faculty and research associates who will challenge our students to transform themselves and their communities.

Our alumni — both undergraduates and advanced — will find the knowledge they gain at Georgia State vital to strengthening communities in Atlanta, Georgia, our nation and across the globe.

And in achieving this vision, as our school becomes a model for creating and translating scholarly policy work into practical community action, we will rise to join the top five percent of the nation’s best public policy schools.

Mary Beth Walker's area of expertise is applied econometrics and statistics. Her research has spanned areas in education economics, public finance and health economics.

In the U.S., seven out of every 10 deaths can be attributed to chronic diseases, also referred to as non-communicable diseases. By 2020, that’s expected to be true across the globe. We see our students, faculty and graduates playing a major role in developing solutions for urban populations in Atlanta and around the world.

We see the School of Public Health becoming a leader in the research and delivery of large-scale programs that will address chronic disease, urban health disparities and other pressing public health problems.

We are in a unique position to focus on the public health challenges of cities and to grow our global reach. Though we are a young program, we have more than 500 alumni, most of whom work in metro Atlanta, and we are a top destination for Fulbright Scholars. More than 50 international health professionals have trained at the school through the prestigious Fulbright program and are now working to improve health in their home countries.

Diversity in our student body and faculty is also a strength. In coming years we will grow enrollment, continue to recruit internationally recognized faculty and expand our reach in the world of public health. We strive to be the program of choice for students and researchers who want to join us in finding hands-on solutions based on rigorous scientific study.

Michael Eriksen is an international public health expert and founding director of the School of Public Health. He is author of the Tobacco Atlas, the most comprehensive resource on the tobacco epidemic.
The mission of the Honors College is to recruit diverse, motivated and dedicated students who seek to make a difference in the world. By expanding the quality and quantity of scholarships offered, we will demonstrate that students from all backgrounds can achieve academic and career success at high rates.

We will be at the forefront of the university’s efforts to provide engaged students with unparalleled undergraduate educational experiences. Through our innovative programs, faculty mentoring and interdisciplinary curriculum, our students will be challenged to explore their intellectual curiosities.

We will develop a global experience for our students by creating pathways, regardless of financial circumstances, to expand their world while studying abroad. This experience will set our students apart from the mainstream and give them the opportunity to thrive in a global environment.

Our students and graduates, prepared for a lifetime of achievement, will include public and private-sector leaders, as well as Goldwater, Marshall, Gates and Rhodes scholars. We will become a national model for developing undergraduate scholars into global leaders and an epicenter for excellence and opportunity.

We envision a Byrdine F. Lewis School of Nursing and Health Professions that will lead the Southeast in healthcare research and clinical education to deliver the best new healthcare professionals available to the marketplace.

At some point in life, everyone will need a healthcare professional. The Lewis School will create models of purposeful and practical leadership for educating the “people who treat people” and ultimately providing exemplary care to all patients.

Expanding our scholarship base will allow us to bring in top undergraduate and graduate healthcare students who can anticipate and meet the healthcare needs of multi-cultural, urban populations.

Larry Berman is the founding dean of the Honors College and an internationally heralded scholar on the American presidency and the war in Vietnam.

Larry Berman is the foundi...
The College of Arts and Sciences — which offers more than 80 degrees in subjects ranging from astronomy to philosophy to more than 15,000 students — is at the heart of Georgia State.

We are the primary educator of Georgia State undergraduates, the largest graduate program and an essential driver of our ascendance as a research university.

The college has also grown in stature as a place of impactful research. We call it “research with a purpose.” To give just one measure of our growth, our federally sponsored research has doubled over the past five years. Our faculty are, quite literally, working on a cure for cancer (and other diseases), discovering new solar systems, combatting the recruitment of young people into terrorist networks, writing award-winning novels and producing new forms of artistic expression through their creative works.

The college continues to evolve to meet the needs of today’s students and society by preparing the next generation of leaders, researchers, creators and teachers.

This innovation and progress benefit one of the most diverse student bodies in the nation. Many universities pursue excellence by excluding people. At Georgia State, we do it by including people. I look forward to working with our alumni and friends to offer more access to ever more excellent programs as the College of Arts and Sciences advances.

Growing the environment for visiting scholars, named chairs and endowed professorships will help us to expose our students to top experts in healthcare education. Continuing to improve our simulation labs will also boost our students’ educational experience.

Enhancing community partnerships allows us to place our students in the best clinical training facilities, and building our study abroad programs provides a more robust international clinical experience.

William Long’s fields of scholarly interest include health diplomacy, international cooperation and conflict resolution, international political economy and international trade.

Nancy Kropf is a gerontologist and social worker who researches older adults as care providers for younger generations.

WILLIAM LONG

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
In the next decade, we will expand our reputation for preparing professionals to work in some of our most challenged communities and contributing to the interruption of intergenerational poverty.

By offering creative degrees, we will provide students the opportunity to engage new ideas and 21st century expectations. Most of our teacher graduates are in high-need schools where they remain for at least five years. At the same time, graduates in human service professions work with families, schools and agencies in these communities.

We will continue to support scholars through interdisciplinary centers. High levels of funding from government, foundation and corporate partners will continue to ensure that our researchers provide students and community partners with the latest research-based practices.

A continuing strength will be our partnerships with local schools and community and government agencies, which provide their perspectives on the research we conduct and the programs we offer as well as provide opportunities for residency training.

We will continue building a legacy of graduating professionals with knowledge, skills and inspiration they need to move lives forward.

Paul A. Alberto is a Regents’ Professor in Intellectual Disabilities. His research interests include functional literacy, behavioral instruction strategies and functional analysis.
A century ago, the founding vision for the J. Mack Robinson College of Business was to educate working professionals, the nontraditional students of that era, to produce business-savvy professionals ready to make an impact in the community and around the world. Robinson has maintained this tradition of educating students from all backgrounds to produce visionary business leaders.

The college’s current strategic plan — Advancing Vision 2020 — seeks to enhance this by aspiring to the vision that “No one gets closer to business than Robinson.”

One way we will get students closer to business is to connect them with mentors and to internship opportunities where they solve problems with real businesses.

We will expand our career readiness and professionalism programs and increase scholarships that allow our students to seek their potential.

We will invest in the people and systems that bridge academia and practice. Robinson will create new academic institutes of distinction.

J. Mack Robinson’s naming gift gave the college the identity and resources necessary to be one of the finest business schools in the world. With his legacy in mind and our sights on the future, we will achieve the vision that “No one gets closer to business than Robinson.”

The College of Law is consistently recognized for its integrative approach to legal education and interdisciplinary research that studies law in the context of societal problems.

We will be recognized as a top 50 law school and among the leading public law schools in the nation — a school that capitalizes on its urban setting and attracts a highly talented and diverse student body while ensuring access through a commitment to both full- and part-time legal education.

We envision expanding our role as a national leader in preparing students for success in rapidly changing professional environments by further integrating experiential education, professional development and global competency throughout the program.

Our world-class faculty will engage in and address key legal and policy issues facing our city, state, nation and world through rigorous and meaningful scholarship that improves our profession and society.

Embracing its central downtown location and aided by its new, accessible state-of-the-art law facility, Georgia State Law will help lead public debate by bringing the business leaders, policymakers, students, faculty, staff, alumni and members of the legal profession together to resolve disputes and find common ground.

Steven Kaminshine’s scholarship focuses on labor and employment issue. He is a frequent speaker on labor and employment law topics.

Richard D. Phillips’ areas of research include the financial risk management practices of insurers, financial pricing models of insurance and various regulatory issues as they pertain to the insurance industry.
NEW HEIGHTS  A century ago, Georgia State graduated its first class — of seven. One hundred years later, the university is poised to become the largest public university in the state and one of the largest in the nation. The same entrepreneurial spirit that fueled Atlanta’s growth has also been a driver for Georgia State’s growth. Now nationally recognized for innovation and student success, Georgia State is embarking on a major capital campaign. To learn more about Burning Bright, The Campaign for Georgia State, visit burningbright.gsu.edu.
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