Holding Pattern

The phenomenon of helicopter parenting in higher ed

P.16
"Balancing classes with athletics can be hard, but I see it as more of an opportunity than a challenge, because they’re both things that I love. The true opportunity lies in learning how to be a leader both off the court and on."
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Twelve teams posted a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 206 student-athletes earned academic honors for the fall, including a record 44 on the President’s List.

TREMENDOUS UPSIDE

A BOWL GAME AND NCAA TOURNAMENT WINNERS GEORGIA STATE ATHLETICS INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

WHEN GEORGIA STATE began its football program in 2010, ESPN the Magazine featured a cherubic baby wearing Georgia State Eye black and declared “A Program is Born” on its cover. It’s been a little more than five years since we headlined the magazine’s college football kickoff issue. Georgia State is relatively new to the world of “big-time” intercollegiate athletics and we have much to do to continue developing the rich traditions and allegiances that can enhance our students’ experiences and continue to draw fans and supporters.

But we’ve entered a new phase altogether, and I am proud of the incredible momentum we have achieved. Under the leadership of Athletics Director Charlie Cobb, we have accelerated the upward trajectory of all of our programs. Our football team played in its first bowl game this fall. Although we lost to San Diego State, we turned a corner. I'm looking forward to the trajectory of all of our programs.

Our student-athletes succeed in the classroom as well as on the field. This fall, they earned a 3.7 cumulative grade-point average (GPA), the highest on record. Twelve teams posted a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and 206 student-athletes earned academic honors for the fall, including a record 44 on the President’s List.

We are continuing to move forward on our plans for Turner Field, a project that will be transformational for the surrounding neighborhoods, the city and our university. It promises to have a momentous and enduring impact on our university and our community.

I know our alumni and friends share my pride in seeing our vision for athletics mature and grow. We’ve come a long way in a short time, and Georgia State sports is now a nationally recognized brand and getting bigger and better each year.

Go Panthers!

Sincerely,

Mark P. Becker
President

ADD SENIORS TO THE MIX

I had to write and congratulate you on your wonderful coverage of the consolidation of Georgia State and Georgia Perimeter College. I graduated from Henry Grady High School in 1959. The next opportunity I had to go back to school was in 1983, to DeKalb College — which became Georgia Perimeter College. Since I was working at the time, it took me four years to do the two years' work. I graduated with honors in 1987.

After that I went to Georgia State, still working and doing night classes, and got my degree in anthropology. After that, I received my master's in heritage preservation on my 60th birthday in 1996. I loved every minute of it.

I retired last April from my job as our church’s counseling center office manager and thought, “Now what do I love to do the most?” The answer was go back to school. I have just finished two classes back where I started at Georgia Perimeter College, this time in Dunwoody. I am now 76 and in expecting two A’s in the two classes I finished. My new associate degree will be in English. Only four more classes to go.

Things have changed a bit. It’s a lot more multicultural. This is one reason why I think seniors should be included in the plans to consolidate. Although we seniors get to attend tuition-free, I feel our presence is very important to the younger students. Senior citizens can be encouragers and mentors. We are in school because we are very motivated, which is contagious.

It takes some bravery to start the whole process, but older students can help grow the school. Diversity in the student body to include more seniors will make a difference. Lynne Barfield Byrd (A.S. ’87, B.S. ’92, M.H.P. ’94)

DIVERSITY LACKING

First, I wish to share how much your magazine means to me. However, I was stunned that the diversity in photos was lacking. Except for the back page (with a basketball player) and the back of the front cover, there were no pictures representing people of color.

I am not a person of color. However I was taken aback by the lack of inclusion of all races. Vickie Scheer (M.A. ’72)

LETTERS

For sure there have been numerous accounts of Secret Service agents on protective details, but the story on Michael Pritchard (B.S. ’76) was an insightful and rare glimpse into the real-life world of an agent.

Susan Berry (L.D. ’94)
WINNING BID
Georgia State will redevelop Turner Field.

The City of Atlanta and Atlanta Fulton County Recreation Authority announced Georgia State and its two partners, Carter and Associates, and Oakwood Development as the winning bidders for the redevelopment of Turner Field and about 70 acres of adjacent property.

“Georgia State is extremely pleased that this important next step has been taken in the redevelopment of the Turner Field site,” said President Mark Becker. “The Turner Field project will be transformational for the surrounding neighborhoods, the city and our university, and we embrace our responsibility to work closely with community and civic leaders in getting it done.”

The $300 million plan calls for a redesign of Turner Field to serve as the home field for Panthers football, a new 1,500-seat baseball stadium on the footprint of the former Atlanta-Fulton County stadium, academic facilities, student housing, apartments, single-family residences and retail.

A final sales agreement has yet to be reached but Becker says no state funding nor a student fee increase will be necessary.

Keisha Lance Bottoms, executive director of the City Atlanta and Fulton County Recreation Authority, said the Georgia State team was selected because of its capability to renovate or replace Turner Field with a major facility and to provide housing, retail and employment opportunities for existing and future residents within five years.

“Our most important objective is that the future redevelopment of this area is one that we can all be proud of. We believe that we have the right match for Turner Field and the surrounding communities,” Bottoms said.

MAKING IT
After nine years in Hollywood, Kelly Jenrette (B.A. ’02) is ready for her close-up.

NEW HOME: This fall, the university will admit students to a new housing and dining hall complex at the intersection of Piedmont and John Wesley Dobbs avenues, called Piedmont Central. The new building will house about 1,100 students, making it the second-largest student housing facility on campus.

BUILDING PARTNERS: The facility is the first in the University System of Georgia to be built and operated under a new public-private partnership between the system and Corvias Campus Living.

SENSE OF PLACE: President Mark Becker said the project is the latest in a long-term institutional goal to have on-campus housing for more than 20 percent of the undergraduate population. The partnership with Corvias allows for a more efficient way to move forward with student housing projects, Becker added.
“There are stories of overnight success that people tend to latch onto and have no regrets. ‘These are things that I have been working at for nine years. It has been a long time to be out here pursuing things.’”

For Jenrette, that 2006 decision to head into the entertainment industry was driven by a love of acting. “For me, it’s really been about being able to pay my bills doing what I love to do,” she said. “Somebody once told me Harrison Ford was asked what the difference was between him and some of his friends as far being in the industry and not being in the industry. I said, ‘Well, I stayed and they didn’t.’” Jenrette said. “I have had friends who have come and gone, and nine years is a long time to be out here pursuing things.”

While it may have taken some time for her to land a big-time role, Jenrette says she has no regrets. “For me, it’s really been about being able to pay my bills doing what I love to do,” she said. “Somebody once told me Harrison Ford was asked what the difference was between him and some of his friends as far being in the industry and not being in the industry. I said, ‘Well, I stayed and they didn’t.’”

At Georgia State, she was part of a theatre group called The Thearadicals where she “had to do just about everything — direct, some behind the scenes stage managing, lighting and building sets. It was really a great program to be a part of.”

She remembers well that moment when she knew she wanted to pursue a full-time acting career. “I thought I wanted to be a forensic psychologist,” she said. “But after her second year of college, she realized that ‘I would much rather play a forensic psychologist on TV than be one in real life.’”

In “Grandfathered,” Jenrette plays Annalise Wilkinson, the no-nonsense assistant and right-hand woman to Jimmy Martin (played by Stamos), a successful restaurant owner and playboy who discovers he has an adult son with a young daughter from a previous relationship.

During her audition, Jenrette found Stamos would be reading with her. “It was crazy!” she said. “We did the scene three times, and about about three days later found out I had booked the role.”

In October, Fox announced the sitcom would be picked up for a full season. For Jenrette, that 2006 decision to head into Hollywood is finally paying off.

“There were moments where you feel like, ‘is this ever going to happen?’” she said. “After hearing hundreds and hundreds of ‘no’s’ and then you hear that one scene three times, and about three days later I found out I had booked the role.”

IT’S OFFICIAL
Georgia State consolidates with Georgia Perimeter College.

Georgia State became the largest university in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation with the approval of its consolidation with Georgia Perimeter College by the Board of Regents on Jan. 6.

The board’s approval was the final step in a year-long process to consolidate the two institutions, which have a long history with Georgia Perimeter College.

Students at Georgia State University after the January consolidation with Georgia Perimeter College.

ENSURING OPPORTUNITY
Grants bolster Georgia State’s Summer Success Academy.

Georgia State has been awarded two grants totaling $3.4 million to improve and expand its Summer Success Academy, a program supporting incoming freshmen who may need help in the transition to the college classroom.

The Kresge Foundation made a $100,000 grant and ECMC contributed $290,000 to support the academy.

The program has increased the retention rate for students enrolled in the academy from 50 percent in 2011 to 87 percent today.

“We are thrilled to receive this generous support from the Kresge and ECMC Foundations,” said Timothy M. Benick, vice provost and vice president for enrollment management and student success. “This Summer Success Academy has already changed the lives of hundreds of students, affording them the opportunity to succeed in college. These grants will help us expand the program and create a blueprint for other universities to follow nationally.”

Hundreds of students have benefited from the academy, and many participants were representative of groups that struggle, including first-generation and low-income students, as well as members of underrepresented minority groups.

Not many people realize the Georgia State library holds the Johnny Mercer Collection. How did we get it? Georgia Manners, the first dean of the business school, and his brother Nick were friends of Johnny’s wife Ginger and persuaded her to donate to Georgia State his private and professional papers as well as his memorabilia and unfinished biography. Manners also convinced the school to create a new Popular Music Archives in its Special Collection to attract the Mercer papers.

Continued...
“This is not only a historic day for Georgia State University and Georgia Perimeter College, it is also an important day for the students of Georgia,” said President Mark Becker. “We look forward to helping thousands more students graduate with the support of our nationally recognized programs aimed at ensuring student success.”

Georgia State has become a national model for student success by dramatically increasing graduation rates over the last decade. The university has closed the achievement gap, proving that students from all backgrounds can succeed at similar rates.

The board’s approval of the consolidation came a month after the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, a regional higher education accrediting body, approved a prospectus and plan for the proposed consolidation.

Peter Lyons, Georgia State’s associate provost for institutional effectiveness and a professor of social work in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, was named Perimeter College’s first vice provost and dean in November.

REMEMBER YOUR LUNCH
Researchers find that eating sweets causes the brain to remember meals.

According to researchers at Georgia State, Georgia Regents University and the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center, the part of the brain that is critical for episodic memory is activated by consuming sweets. Episodic memory is the memory of autobiographical events experienced at a particular time and place.

“We think that episodic memory can be used to control eating behavior,” said Marise Parent, professor in the Neuroscience Institute at Georgia State. “We make decisions like ‘I probably won’t eat now. I had a big breakfast.’ We make decisions based on our memory of what and when we ate.”

That possibility is supported by the researchers’ previous work, which showed that temporally inactivating...
PROTECTING THE GENOME
Professor gets major grant to study cancer and DNA replication.

Ivaylo Ivanov, associate professor of chemistry, has received a five-year, $1.65 million federal grant to study how problems with DNA replication and repair may lead to cancer susceptibility and inheritable genetic diseases.

DNA replication and repair are essential life processes that are critical for maintaining the genome, or an organism’s complete set of DNA, included in all of its genes. Ivanov will analyze certain core replication complexes that are crucial for repairing damaged DNA and intimately connected to cancer initiation and progression.

“The implications for human health because the maintenance of the genome is tightly linked to disease, specifically cancer or inherited genetic disorders,” Ivanov said.

Ivanov has advanced computational methods to analyze structural data that are supplied by collaborators from across the country. His goal is to model and structurally characterize the assembly of key proteins that are crucial in DNA replication and repair activities.

GEORGIA STATE RESEARCHERS HAVE DEVELOPED A NEW WAY TO MORE EFFECTIVELY DIAGNOSE AND TREAT CANCERS.

PROTEIN AND POLYPEPTIDE RECEPTOR SPECIFICITY FOR HUMAN CANCERS.

A new technique developed at Georgia State has shown to be an accurate and non-invasive method to trace changes in cancer tissues and treatment without using radiation.

By using polyclonal antibodies against a polypeptide receptor, the researchers have been able to trace cancerous tissue as early as one to two hours after treatment. Leading this research is Dr. George Reuter.

“I wanted to study problems in big cities and urban areas, specifically the metro Atlanta area, including the creation of more mixed-use livable urban centers,” Reuter said.

He now manages the Livable Centers Initiative of the Atlanta Regional Commission’s (ARC) Center for Livable Communities. This initiative was created in 1999—the same year Reuter joined the ARC— to help fund civic-improvement projects.

CITY BEAUTIFUL
Dan Reuter, a bad economy turned out to be a good thing. Reuter hoped to start a career as a land developer, but because of a poor market in the late 1980s, he found himself pursuing a graduate degree at Georgia State instead.

“Tired of studying problems in big cities and urban areas, specifically the metro Atlanta area, including the creation of more mixed-use livable urban centers,” Reuter said.

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The CEO of Hemophilia of Georgia has led an altruistic career spanning three decades. By Ben Austin (B.A. ’83, M.A. ’93) Photo by Andrew Thomas Lee

On paper, yes. Working her way from office assistant to vice president, Manahan’s resume with the other hopefuls to lead Hemophilia of Georgia. She wasn’t so sure. “Am I wired like a CEO?” she wondered. On paper, yes. Working her way from office assistant to vice president, Manahan’s life encompassed the experiences and training that led one to the final stop in the chain of command. Chief executive was the natural fit.

Fifty-four years earlier the question would have registered purely as fantasy. When she was nine, her father relocated the family from Cuba to another island—Manhattan—for six months before settling finally in Atlanta. “You can imagine leaving Cuba in the middle of winter and arriving in New York City in January with no coats, nothing,” Manahan said.

In the summer of 1971 the family moved to Atlanta and learning became a constant in her life. She learned conversational English in a couple of months; she elevated to the top of her class by seventh grade and graduated a year early. She got a job and began helping her parents financially. “That’s all I wanted. A job,” she said. “And it got married.”

He was a Georgia boy named Russell. They met at church, and they married when Manahan was 19. Neither attended college, both worked very hard, and a few years later her daughter Natalie was born.

Manahan got a secretarial job at a church salary but enough to pay for her daughter’s daycare to keep Natalie close. She and her husband talked it over, and decided Maria would make only just enough. She and her husband talked it over, and decided Maria would enroll in college.

A few years after graduation she returned to the business side. That path, nonprofit first, business later, fit her.

“I could have gone into business,” she said. “But I don’t think I would have been as fulfilled as I am in the nonprofit sector.”

This past March came the news. Maria Perez Manahan, who came to the United States as a stranger in a strange land, would be adding a new title to her resume.
The phenomenon of helicopter parenting in higher ed

BY SONYA COLLINS
ILLUSTRATIONS BY R. KIKUO JOHNSON

17
When I was kid, my mom would send me out to play after breakfast and I wouldn’t come home until dinner.

Scores of older Americans describe their childhoods this way. Kids today know little of this freedom to wander during unstructured Saturdays. Between organized play dates and soccer games coached by mom or dad, today’s kids grow up with a lot more parental supervision than their parents did.

One particular brand of supervision — where mom or dad is always hovering just a few feet away even after their children have grown — has become something of a cultural phenomenon. Last year alone, helicopter parents and their adult children were the subject of stories in Forbes, Time, U.S. News & World Report, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, New York Times, New York Post and Psychology Today.

In these stories, parents called graduate school admissions offices on their children’s behalf and sat in on meetings with their grown son’s and daughter’s professional career coaches, among other jaw-dropping faux pas.

Studies show that the parenting style probably hasn’t reached the epidemic proportions the media suggest, but it is nevertheless a reality professors, administrators and students face at many universities.

What is helicopter parenting?

Helicopter parents, as they are portrayed in the media, are over-involved and oppressive, never letting their children make their own decisions and never letting them fail. But that’s not the whole story.

“Helicopter parenting has three elements: overinvolvement; not granting your child age-appropriate autonomy; and benevolent intentions. They don’t want to harm their kids. They want to help them,” says Kyong-Ah Kwon, an associate professor in the College of Education and Human Development.

We want children to have an internal locus of control, where they own their behavior, and they realize that what they did was their responsibility.

In Kwon and her colleague Gary Bingham, also an associate professor in the college, recently published research on college students’ perceptions of helicopter parents in the Journal of Child and Family Studies.

Does it happen at Georgia State?

For Angela Hall-Godsey, associate director of the lower division in the Department of English, helicopter parents are all in a day’s work.

“We hear from parents when their student is failing a class or has been charged with plagiarism or academic dishonesty,” says Hall-Godsey. “We have parents who demand that their student be removed from a class because it requires them to use Twitter or Facebook and they don’t want their child — even though the student is 18 years old — on social media. Parents call because an instructor used profanity in class. They call to provide false alibis for their children when they’ve missed class.”

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act prohibits college faculty from discussing student information with parents. But when parents go to bat for their college students, the students sign those privacy rights away.

Hall-Godsey has faced parents who march into her office flanked by lawyers or a big entourage.

“A mother whose son had plagiarized came in and she was irate,” Hall-Godsey says. “She showed up with six other people and said that we were going to be in trouble. She really didn’t need all those people. It was intimidating.”

Another parent, a local judge, threatened to sue the university on a technicality. His daughter had been charged with plagiarism, and the father didn’t refuse that. He wanted the charge dropped, however, because the university notified her via email rather than a pink carbon copy form.

“The old policy says that the student needs to be notified via triplicate — a pink piece of paper. We’ve since gotten rid of that because we have email. So he claimed he was going to sue because his daughter didn’t receive a pink piece of paper,” Hall-Godsey recalls.

After the English Department retained legal counsel and spent a month preparing for the appeal, the young woman and her father didn’t show up.

“The threat to sue was just a bullying tactic,” Hall-Godsey says. “That’s the lesson he was attempting to teach his daughter: Don’t worry, if you plagiarize you can bully your way out of that.”

A changed worldview

When these students get out into the world, Hall-Godsey suspects they are ill-equipped for adult responsibilities.

“I have to believe that students who understand that their education is their responsibility, and that they will suffer the consequences of their own bad choices, will learn how to make better choices,” she says. “That has to affect them as adults when they get out into the working world.”

Research shows that helicopter parents, by swooping in to solve their children’s problems, create in their kids a sense that the things that happen to them are not their fault.

“It creates what we call an external locus of control,” says Bingham. “We want children to have an internal locus of control, where they own their behavior, and they realize that what they did was their responsibility. And we want parents to realize that if they over-control their child, they’re often helping their child develop a very wrong way of looking at the world and how it works.”

Why now?

“Helicopter parent” is not a new term. By some accounts it first appeared in Haim Ginott’s 1969 book “Between Parent and Teenager.” But mounting academic research suggests that the rise of this parenting style is a more recent phenomenon.
Who are these parents?

Any parent can find a professor’s email address, but not all of them would consider making contact. When Kwon asked her colleagues in the College of Education and Human Development whether they had ever encountered a helicopter parent, those who had met them cited experiences at other schools that typically have a more affluent student body.

“In the 10 years I have taught here, I have had no helicopter-parent experiences compared to three incidents while teaching one course at Emory,” says Rhina Fernandes Williams, a clinical assistant professor.

What’s the difference? For one thing, parents of Emory students are more likely to have gone to college themselves. Forty percent of Georgia State students are the first in their family to go to college. A college degree may equip parents to offer their children specific advice on how to succeed in college and to intervene on their child’s behalf. They know how to navigate academia and it doesn’t intimidate them.

“Most of the parents I hear from went to college, or at least they claim they did,” says Hall-Godsey. “They’ll call and say that they received degrees from prestigious universities and that their child’s paper was well-written and should have received an A.”

Parents of younger students may also be more likely to try to argue grades and policies with their children’s professors than those of students further along in their studies. Hall-Godsey frequently hears from parents of students in 1000- and 2000-level classes, but never from parents of students in the 3000-level classes she teaches.

Here in Georgia, the HOPE Scholarship might also prompt parents to fight their kids’ grades.

“Students on the HOPE Scholarship have to maintain a certain grade point average. So families feel they really have to argue the grades in order to try to keep that tuition assistance,” says Hall-Godsey.

The helicopter parents are constantly telling their children, ‘This is how you play school. This is how you win at this college thing, and this is how you win at life.’ At Georgia State, I feel like we need to be those mentors.

The majority of college students are probably not under helicopter control. Based on our research, the prevalence of helicopter parenting is probably a bit overestimated in the mass media,” Kwon says. “That’s partly because of the informant they interview with. If they interview school counselors or administrators, they will hear about all sorts of problems because they are interviewing the people who deal with those issues.”

But the opposite extreme is not ideal either. Williams doesn’t miss the uncomfortable interactions she had with a handful of parents at Emory, but the lack of these parental interventions at Georgia State points to a different issue. While children of helicopter parents may need to learn to be independent, first-generation college students may need extra initiation into college life that other students don’t.

The university addresses some of these specific needs through the voluntary Gen1: First Generation Success Programs. Its mission is to foster a smooth transition into college for first-generation students. But Williams sees a place for professors to help these students individually as well.

“I think the helicopter parents are constantly telling their children, ‘This is how you play school. This is how you win at this college thing, and this is how you win at life.’ At Georgia State, I feel we need to be those mentors,” says Williams. “That we don’t have as many helicopter parents means we need to be even more intentional and mindful of how we help our students become successful.”

What’s to be done?

The airspace over Ivy League campuses may be more constricted with hovering parents than the skies over downtown Atlanta. Still, faculty at colleges everywhere are meeting more meddlesome moms and dads than they did in decades past. At Georgia State, parent orientation seminars aim to clarify what is and isn’t an appropriate level of involvement.

“I’ve attended a couple of the seminars, and they’re very clear that parents can’t be involved because their children are adults now,” says Hall-Godsey. “They say that you can’t argue for a grade, but you can encourage your student to attend class and turn in their homework.”

But she doesn’t know if all the parents are getting the message. Few students try to resolve the problem directly with their professor before their parents contact Hall-Godsey.

“When the problem arises,” Hall-Godsey says, “it’s often that we hear from the parents right away. The students very rarely contact us. It’s just all of a sudden we start getting emails from a parent.”

Parents ought to encourage their children to solve these problems, says Bingham, rather than taking the situation into their own hands.

“Research shows parents need to provide a secure base,” Bingham says. “You can be warm and supportive, but your child still needs to find the way to solve the problem him- or herself. Rather than ‘How can I help?’ there needs to be a switch to ‘What do you think? ‘What are you going to do?’”

Different students, different needs

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North Georgia wine is on the rebound and a handful of Georgia State alumni are helping to uncork the industry.
Beneath a craggy outcropping of Yonah Mountain here in the foothills of the Appalachians, rows and rows of **Vitis vinifera** belonging to the Miller family grow on about 20 acres of hillsides. The **vinifera**, or old world wine grapes, include well known varietals such as sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, merlot and malbec.

“That chardonnay, people swear, stacks up against some of the finest from Napa Valley,” says Eric Miller (B.Mu. ’01), general manager for Yonah Mountain Vineyards, remembering a recent head to head against a celebrated Sonoma County chardonnay during one of the vineyard’s wine cave tours and tastings.

“People are starting to take notice of us up here,” Miller says.

He’s right, there’s something in these hills. (Legend has it the gold nugget that set off Georgia’s gold rush of the 1890s was found in nearby Duke’s Creek). Yonah Mountain Vineyards is one of a dozen or so wineries that have sprung up in the area in the last 10 years, and a 2009 study by the University of Georgia’s Carl Vinson Institute estimates that wineries in North Georgia have an economic impact of nearly $17 million.

The Georgia mountain “terroir,” or all of a region’s influences that give the grapes their unique character and flavor, is taking off again.

Two years ago, the Chamber of Commerce for White County, where Yonah Mountain Vineyards is located, brought in **Christina Ernst** (B.A. ’98) to meet with the owners of the county’s seven wineries to see how to better grow the industry. Ernst and her husband **Charles** (B.A. ’98) run a full-service travel agency, and she’s made dozens of trips to the world’s finest wine-producing regions.

“It was pretty clear what we needed to connect the vineyards was a winery tour,” Ernst says.

And thus, **VIP Southern Wine Tours** was born, the first of its kind in North Georgia. It began humbly with just one 12-seat van and 60 tours. Today, Ernst has three vans in her fleet and in 2015 led more than 130 tours that took about 1,600 wine enthusiasts to the vineyards surrounding Sautee Nacoochee.

That it’s taken this long for the region’s wines to get back in the game is a story in itself, because the chances are good that those same hillsides the Miller family farms were used for growing fine wine grapes more than a century ago.

**VITICULTURE IN THE PEACH STATE**

Around the turn of the 20th century, Georgia was one of the nation’s leading producers of **vinifera**. In fact, Georgia’s founder, James Oglethorpe, introduced European viticulture to the state as a part of his economic plan.

But as the third wave of the temperance movement swept through the South, Georgia enacted a statewide prohibition in 1908, a period that began before and lasted longer than national prohibition, which ran from 1920-1933. As a re-
struggle, the more it puts that energy into the grapes. It’s an ideal soil. The red clay is a good thing, too. It imparts flavors and repels water. And the hills provide natural irrigation.”

PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

Miller’s father, Bob, purchased the 200 acres where Yonah Mountain Vineyards operates in 2005 without the intention of building a winery. “I was told he should plant something on the property to get an agricultural write-off,” Eric Miller says, laughing. “So he planted some grapes.”

Miller, who leads the Atlanta Falcons Drum Line and was percussion director for the Georgia Tech Marching Band, says that, with a little help from his father’s friends — mainly Yonah’s current winemaker Joe Smith — the land began to yield some outstanding wine. “One day I got a call from my dad, and he said, ‘This is getting big,’” he remembers. “I had to convince him to move up there.Yonah Mountain and the surrounding hills provide the perfect climate. “I got a call from my dad, and he said, ‘This is getting big,’” he remembers. “I had to convince him to move up there.”

Miller’s next big plan is to offset some of the energy costs of running the business with solar power. “We’re looking to install about 100 solar panels on the hills between the vines,” he said. “It’ll be like a solar farm.”

Last year, the winery produced about 3,000 cases, which makes it small by industry standards. Miller says the business is just getting its legs, and he’s working to increase its distribution. “Yonah Mountain wine can be found in several Atlanta area restaurants and fine wine shops,” he says. “Our marketing has been basically just word of mouth.”

For her part, Ernst is happy to help spread the word. “The daughter of an Atlanta photographer, Charles Ernst, who runs a photography studio in Atlanta, has taken pictures of the vineyard, the buildings, and the winery.”

Miller agrees, noting that the area is finally bearing back a reputation that Georgia wine is just sweet stuff made from muscadines and scuppernongs. “Now, the region is like Napa was in the ‘60s. It’s getting new respect,” Miller says.

Moreover, as Christina Ernst points out, the experience of a wine tasting or tour here is distinctly different from those in California and elsewhere. “We’re all Southern, and it’s in our DNA to make sure everyone has a good time,” she says.

Miller, who cross-registered at Georgia Tech so he could play in the marching band, takes that to heart. He still sits on a drum kit on the weekends, his father at the piano, performing for the mingling tipplers in his family’s wine-tasting room.

1. Engelheim Vineyards, Ellijay
2. Chateau Meichtry Vineyards, Talking Rock
3. Sharp Mountain Vineyards, Jasper
4. Cartecay Vineyards, Ellijay
5. Serenberry Vineyards, Morganton
6. Montaluce Winery & Estates, Dahlonega
7. Odom Springs Vineyard, Blairsville
8. Paradise Hills Winery Resort & Spa, Blairsville
9. Cavender Creek Vineyards and Winery, Dahlonega
10. Crane Creek Vineyards, Young Harris
11. The Cottage Vineyard & Winery, Cleveland
12. CeNita Vineyards, Winery and Tasting Room, Cleveland
13. Yonah Mountain Vineyards, Cleveland
14. Serenity Cellars, Cleveland
15. Habersham Winery, Helen
16. Hightower Creek Vineyards, LLC, Hiawassee
17. Stonewall Creek Vineyards, Tiger
18. Tiger Mountain Vineyards, Tiger
19. 12 Spies Vineyards, Rabun Gap
20. CeNita Vineyards' CeNita Red
A Georgia State professor goes back to the future to preserve the look and lore of Atlanta’s iconic Manuel’s Tavern. By CHARLES McNAIR
case can be made that the best-known Atlantan of all time isn’t a King or Harrfield, Scarlett or Rhett, Hammerin’ Hank or Ted Turner. It might be Manuel. As in Manuel Maloof, founder of Manuel’s Tavern.

Manuel’s means pleasant memories to a couple of million Atlanta patrons who have entered the legendary watering hole at the corner of North and Highland avenues since Maloof drew his first pint in 1956. Many exited less steady but brimful of heady conversation, comfort food and...effervescence.

Maloof’s father arrived in Atlanta from Lebanon to open a store in Grant Park and then, downtown, Tip Top Billiard Parlor. Manuel grew up to become a politician, commission chairman and CEO of DeKalb County. From a familiar booth in his own bar, he later held forth as éminence grise, an influential adviser to citizens and a man of vision who advocated for the creation of Lake Lanier and the preservation of Grady Hospital, where he’d been born. Manuel’s Tavern became the de facto back room of the all-powerful (at the time) Democratic Party.

“Once, the neural node of politics in just about every Southern capital save Atlanta was a Greek restaurant. Only in Atlanta was that function served by a bar owned by a gravel-voiced Lebanese,” says Tom Baxter, retired chief political correspondent for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and columnist for the Saporta Report.

“Over time, Manuel’s became the connection point for a great many types of groups and organizations, and has grown into an institution, some even say a church. The foundation was Manuel himself. If ever a man literally became the joint he owned, he did.”

Sportswriter Jack Wilkinson dubbed Manuel’s Tavern “The Vatican.” (Any white smoke rising over the rooftop today will likely be feathers shed from chickens in the rooftop coop—Manuel’s son, Brian, added after his dad died in 2004.)

The chaiselater of history, 65 years of Atlanta memorabilia, clogs the walls of Manuel’s Tavern, an archive as important in its way as that of any museum of Atlanta history.

“For decades, Manuel’s Tavern has been a place of constancy and a harbor of memories in an ever-changing city,” says Ruth Dusseault, an artist and documentarian who teaches film production in the Communication Department at Georgia State. “The evidence is on the walls. Manuel’s is a 60-year installation curated by its owners. It’s a record of a generation of cops, soldiers and politicians gathered to eat pork chops in a neighborhood occupied by hippies, emigrants and punks.”

Dusseault had an artist’s appraising eye for Manuel’s historical arcana — the plaques and political items, the paintings and photographs of Atlanta’s known and anonymous, the books and bottles, even the urns bearing the ashes of Manuel himself and another gone-but-not-forgotten patron. That sense of place propelled Dusseault and Georgia State, in collaboration with a number of other venerable Atlanta institutions, into a worthy, if unlikely, digital humanities project.

It’s called Unpacking Manuel’s Tavern. And thereby hangs a tale.
A user is literally unpacking the memories associated with every little object, just like when a person moves into a new house and opens up the boxes.

From atop a step-stool, Michael Page (B.S. '09, M.S. '09) a lecturer in Geo-spatial Sciences and Technology at Emory uses a GigaPan robotic camera head to scan the walls of the tavern.

CLICKS TO THE CORTEX

The day will come, late spring of 2016, when Manuel’s Tavern will reopen with lights that work and plumbing that flushes. The smiling faces of familiar waiters and bar attendants will ring old friends over suds and McCloskey burgers.

How did the burger get its name? Click the Unpacking Manuel’s online archive, and it may be possible to find out.

If the research is extensive and it’s a lot of people, you’ll also learn how writer Jamie Iredell, who earned his Ph.D. at Georgia State, finds inspiration at Manuel’s Tavern.

“You might journey into Manuels,” Iredell says, “and not run into a fellow writer, with whom I might talk over a beer about the work we’ve been clacking away at.”

Click another spot on the website wall. Learn how former Georgia Governor Roy Barnes late at night sat untroubled at the bar.

“He was just a guy hanging out at Manuels,” says Brian Maloof.

“IT was pretty neat to see the governor doing that.”

Check. Here’s a testimonial from Atlanta attorney Mark Baker, at Manuel’s with this author when Pulitzer winner later and Poet Laureate of the United States Natasha Trethewey entered.

“When she joined us at the table, she asked me what I did to keep the bills paid. I am an attorney, I murmured, hoping to avoid the inevitable follow-up question: What kind of law do you practice?”

“Well, I hemmed, I represent beasts. She stared for a moment, and with a sly smile hit me where it hurts. Oh my. How do you sleep?”

A user on an oil painting of former Governor and U.S. Senator Zell Miller or an audio of the esteemed late author (and Manuel’s patron) Paul Hemphill reading from one of his signed first editions on the tavern’s shelves or a vido of a peanut farmer named Jimmy Carter announcing at Manuel’s his candidacy for governor of Georgia, with a presidency and a Nobel Peace Prize ahead of him. Dusseault says it will be the task of students at Georgia State and other institutions to fill in the blanks.

“This is basically designed for educators to use as a tool to give students something to research,” she says. “Whether the major is urban design or archaeology, you want your students to think like journalists or detectives.

“I’ve always been interested in bringing students out of the classroom and exposing them to other perspectives in other disciplines and engaging them in the production of public knowledge and public scholarship. Students need to learn what the world is like.”

The project also models a spirited collaboration among universities that sometimes compete for talent, students, funds and prestige.

Brennan Collins, associate director at Georgia State’s Center for Instructional Effectiveness, helped connect the project to the manpower and brainpower of the Atlanta Studies Network.

From Monroe, Ga., the items on the tavern walls,” she says, “He was very enthusiastic.”

“I’ve always seen this place as an amazing strange Disney World,” Maloof explains. “What’s exciting to me is that other people are going to see it now through the lens that I do.”

Think of Dusseault’s online childbrain as Google Earth meets Ancestors.com. Using special cameras and technology, she and a multidisciplinary team from Georgia State, Emory and Savannah College of Art and Design, plus a collective of volunteer students and lovers of the tavern, painstakingly photographed every inch of the walls inside the tavern. They worked after-hours setting up the equivalent of a Hollywood movie shoot (tracks, lighting, special cameras, etc.) without a budget.

The GigaPan technology (high-resolution, digital, interactive, panoramic, the equivalent of a Hollywood movie shoot) will allow two things to happen. First, the technology provides an archival record of volunteer students and lovers of the tavern, painstakingly photographed every inch of the walls inside the tavern.

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Head Coach Trent Miles (center) leads his Panthers onto the field of the inaugural AutoNation Cure Bowl. It was the first bowl game for the program and unfortunately ended as a 27-16 loss to San Jose State. It took a dramatic mid-season turnaround to become bowl eligible, however. Georgia State's record stood at 2-6 Nov. 7, but the team stormed back to win its next four games — including a 34-7 demolition of Georgia Southern in Statesboro, Ga. — to get to Orlando, Fla. “That showed a team that would never quit, never give up on each other, believed in what we were doing,” Miles said after the game.