

THE MAKER CONNECTION

NCAA Division II

NATIONAL CHAMPIONS

Women's Basketball Team

COACH DENNIS COX

Russell Athletic/
Women's Basketball Coaches' Association
DIVISION II NATIONAL
COACH OF THE YEAR

Whack Hyder State of Georgia
WOMEN'S COLLEGE
COACH OF THE YEAR



President's Message

As many of you know, Clayton State University is a proud member of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA)



Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes, Jr.

Division II. Intercollegiate athletics is an important component of University life. At the same time that it provides athletic experiences to many of our students, it also (citing the NCAA Division II Platform) "...provides growth opportunities through academic achievement, learning in high level athletic competition and development of positive social attitudes in service to community...." CBS News' Bob Schieffer makes a more general claim about sport, society, and learning: "The great value of sport is that it teaches us to recognize the differences between winning and striving for excellence, the better but much harder to achieve. More important, sports teaches us how to handle failure, to get up and try again...." This was a year at Clayton State in which through striving for excellence, our students won, for themselves, for our university, and for our community.

This issue of *The Laker Connection* brings you several stories of success. While the 2010/2011 Clayton State women's basketball team did indeed win the NCAA Division II national championship, and was victorious in 35 of their 36 games, the narratives describing the roads to this achievement of 13 young women, and their coaches, extends beyond the hardwood. It is a story of both success (35 times) and failure (the lone loss at USC Aiken in the Peach Belt tournament), and what the team members, and the coaches, learned from both. As is the case with every successful athletic team, it is also a story of practice, persistence, teamwork and cooperation, a season that brought national acclaim to the University and will, I predict, bring similar success in the long term future to the team members and coaches. Even before the season began, many of us on campus had opportunities to see these students as winners—preparing for the rigors of the season with multiple runs around Swan Lake, or preparing for citizenship through participation in community service projects.

Championship seasons are created with championship leaders—and here you can meet these leaders: coaches Dennis Cox and Kaleena Coleman, plus players Teshymia Tillman, Tanisha Woodard and Drameka Griggs, and ways in which their leading was influenced by their learning during the competition of the 2010/2011 season. As part of the Clayton State community, our athletic program always strives to be a point of university pride. In this championship season, it is a time to be particularly proud of these students and coaches who so successfully and publicly represent us.

Dr. Thomas Hynes
President

Clayton State's Athletics & Fitness Center, home of the women's basketball team



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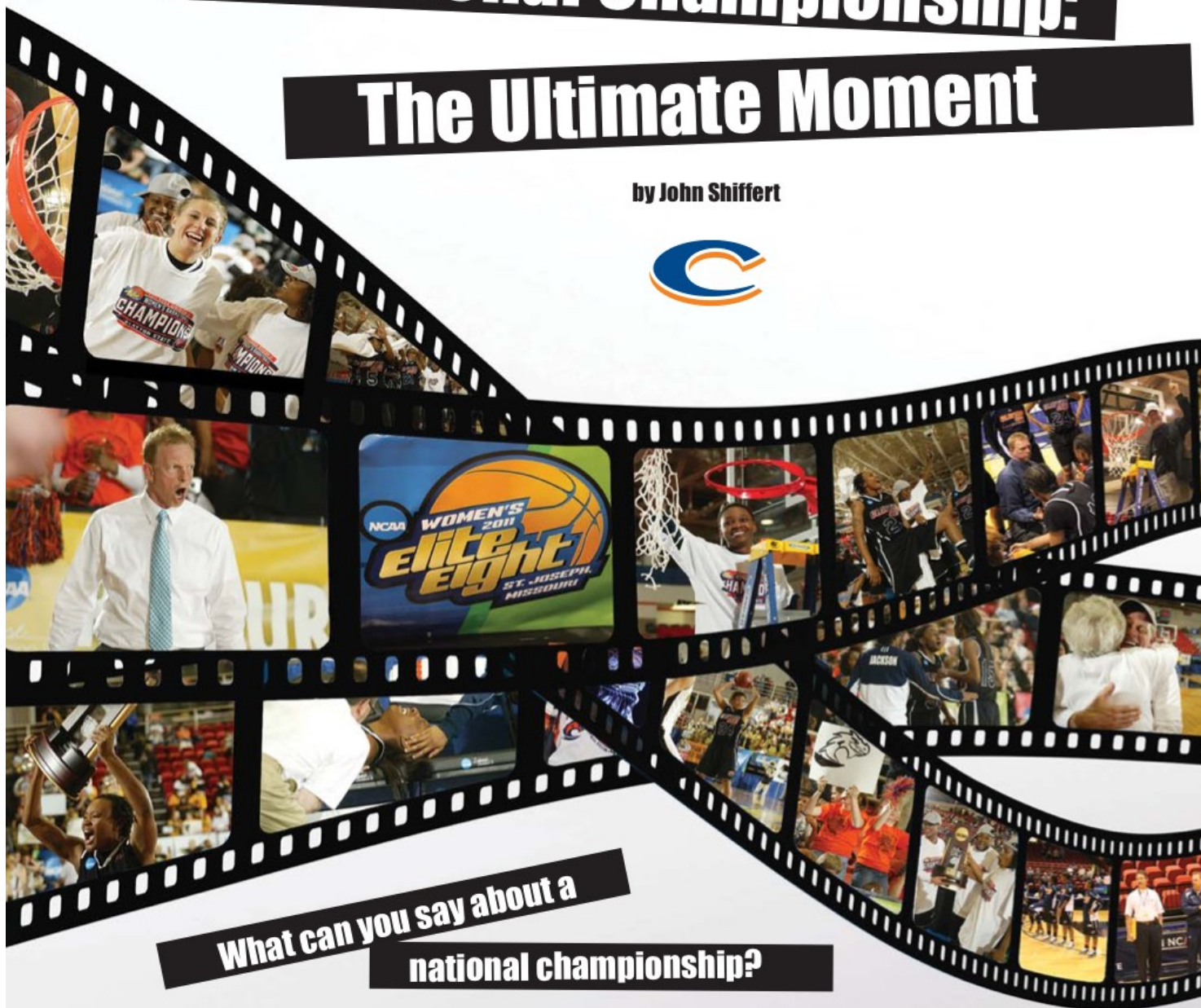


CLAYTON STATE
LAKERS

The National Championship:

The Ultimate Moment

by John Shiffert



What can you say about a national championship?

Do you start by saying that the 2010/2011 Clayton State women's basketball team went 35-1 and defeated Michigan Tech, 69-50 in the finals of the NCAA Division II tournament, thus winning Clayton State's first national title in any sport?

Do you talk about the individual stars, Teshymia Tillman, Tanisha Woodard, or Drameka "MeMe" Griggs? And if you do, what about the rest of the heroes, who provided the depth of talent that allowed Coach Dennis Cox the luxury of knowing he always had a half dozen superior players at ready to come into a game... Breanna Fort, La-

tonda Bruce, Shacamra Jackson, Brittany Hall, Kayla Mobley, et al?

Do you talk about the Lakers' style of play, the suffocating, full court pressure that not only brought down, but dominated, the best D II had to offer?

Do you recap the multiple and manifest highlights of the greatest season in the history of Clayton State athletics? A season that made history, and that made Clayton State famous? The three tournament victories prior to the NCAA tournament... the nationally-televised (on CBS Sports) mid-season win at USC Aiken... the classic, never-



Genesis Kelly #3



Renee Jackson #21



Latonda Bruce #5



Alexis Griffin #22



Tanisha Woodard #11



Brittany Hall #23



Drameka Griggs #12



Breanna Fort #24



Shacamra Jackson #15

to-be-forgotten "Number One vs. Number Two" win over Lander at Homecoming, when Woodard scored on an out-of-bounds play with under six seconds to go, giving the second-ranked, undefeated Lakers a cardiac-inducing, come-from-behind 83-81 win over the top-ranked, previously undefeated Bearcats... the shockingly-easy win in the rematch with Lander (possibly the second-best team in D II) in the Southeast Regional Finals... or the three blow-out victories in the Elite Eight in St. Joseph, Missouri?

Meet the Team

Genesis Kelly #3

A native of Ft. Pierce, Fla., and the Lakers' returning starter at point guard, Genesis Kelly suffered a torn ACL in the third game of the year and was red-shirted. Nonetheless, she was a key member of the team throughout the year. She'll be back for her senior season in 2011/2012. In 2009/10 she played in 29 games, starting 17, and averaging seven points a game with a high of 20 points against West Florida. Prior to coming to Clayton State, she lettered one season each at Florida Community College-Jacksonville and Hillsborough Community College. She also lettered in basketball at Jensen Beach High School in Jensen Beach, Fla., and was ranked seventh in the state among the Top 40 prep senior prospects.

Latonda Bruce #5

A returning letterwinner from the 2009/2010 season, Latonda Bruce is a senior left-handed shooting guard who can also play the point. Averaging seven points a game for the year, she was one of the Lakers' top three-point shooters, finishing second on the team in three point baskets and shooting percentage (38-105, 36.2%). She saw action in 30 games in 2009/2010, starting twice and averaging eight points a game with a career-high 19 points against Georgia College. A native of Montgomery, Ala., she started for two seasons at Daytona State College and lettered for four seasons in basketball at Jefferson Davis High School in Montgomery.

Tanisha Woodard #11

Arguably the most versatile player to ever wear the orange and blue, Tanisha Woodard has already written her name large in the Clayton State record book, and she still has a year to go. Speaking only of the record book; she has scored 998 points thus far in her three-year Laker career, 417 points short of Lisa Williams' school record, an obvious target for next year, since Woodard scored 411 points (second on the team) in 2010/11. Of course, she already has the single season assist (152) and steal (125) records, both set this past year, as well as the career steals mark (314). In addition to the career points record, she also stands a good chance of picking up the career assist and blocked shot marks before she's done. As the saying goes, she can do it all... score, pass, defend, rebound (third on the team in 2010/11)... and, rumor has it, she helps Athletic Trainer John Zubal tape ankles before practice. And that's just the statistical measure. Woodard was at her best when it counted,

specifically at the finish of the "Number One vs. Number Two" Lander game, a contest that saw her finish with a typical 14 points, eight assists, six steals and four rebounds, plus the award for "Best Dramatic Performance by a Laker." With the score tied at 81 and less than six seconds remaining, Woodard cut across the lane to take an in-bounds pass and hit a short jumper that gave the Lakers an 83-81 win. Her last second heroics weren't a fluke - she also opened the game by hitting a three-pointer and closed the first half with another trey that gave the Lakers a tie at 41. A two-time All-Peach Belt Conference selection and the Peach Belt 2010/11 Defensive Player of the Year, Woodard lettered for four seasons at Rome High School in Rome, Ga, and paced Rome to two straight Region 7AAAA championships and state tournament berths during her junior and senior seasons. She was also Region 7AAAA Player of the Year during her junior season.

Drameka Griggs #12

"Little MeMe," as she's known to most of her teammates, is anything but a small presence on the floor. The local star who returned home to help lead the Lakers to the national championship, Drameka Griggs spent the 2010/11 season driving opponents to distraction with her speed, mid-range jumper, and ability to lead the Lakers' devastating press. Coming off the bench for all but three of the Lakers' 36 games, she averaged 11 points per game on 52.5 percent shooting from the field, in addition to hitting three-quarters of her free throws. Still, as much of a spark as she was on offense, her lightning-fast floor game was the essence of how the Lakers blew out so many good teams... pressure, pressure and more pressure. In Griggs' case, it added up to 105 steals (second behind Woodard and fourth all-time for a season) and 85 assists. Speaking of pressure, Griggs had to feel some pressure herself in 2010/11. A star at Jonesboro High School, the Ellenwood native spent her first college campaign at Jacksonville University (where she averaged eight points per game), returning home for her sophomore season. All of her local fans certainly recalled the first team All-State player, Region Player of the Year, Clayton County Player of the Year, etc., etc., who helped paced Jonesboro to four straight region tournament appearances, the region championship and a berth in the Georgia State "Final Four" as a senior. How do you top that? You come home and win the national championship. And, she has two more seasons for additional encores.

Maybe you talk statistics, since basketball is a game of statistics. Tillman's back-to-back 500 point years, making her the only two players in Clayton State women's basketball history to score more than 500 points in a season... Woodard's 125 steals; a new single season record... Hall's 43.2% three point shooting that just missed setting a season record... Woodard's third straight "do-it-all" season, that positioned her to make a run at the career scoring record next year... the 1052 turnovers

created by the press, enough for Cox and Company to have opened their own bakery, had they so desired... the 22.4 points per game differential, a fancy way of saying the Lakers went through 36 games, winning by an average of 22.4 points per game.

Perhaps you let an "insider" say something about the team, in this case Clayton State's long-time athletic trainer, John Zubal.

"Truly, a great collection of people and friends. The national

Shacamra Jackson #15

The only "true" freshman on the team, Shacamra Jackson came to Clayton State after lettering for four seasons at Osborne High School in Marietta. The starting center and the only member of the team over six feet tall, she averaged 4.7 points and 4.2 rebounds per game and was second on the team in blocked shots with 38. She lettered for four seasons at Osborne High School and was a McDonald's All-American nominee as well as a three-time All-Region selection and a two-time All-Cobb County selection, scoring more than 1,000 points for her career.

Renee Jackson #21

A senior guard/forward who transferred from Clayton State Peach Belt Conference rival Columbus State, Renee Jackson is another versatile left-handed player who saw action in all 36 games, starting twice and averaging 4.7 points a game with 45 steals. The Lawrenceville, Ga., native played in 26 games last season with Columbus State, having previously played at Northwest Florida State College and Georgia Perimeter. She lettered for four seasons in basketball at Collins Hill High School in Lawrenceville and was a high school teammate of UConn All-American Maya Moore, helping lead Collins Hill to the Georgia Class AAAAA state championship during her senior season.

Alexiss Griffin #22

A freshman guard who puts the shooting in shooting guard, Alexiss Griffin transferred in from former Clayton State rival Kennesaw State and regained a season of eligibility due to an injury that limited her 2009/2010 season to a single game. After coming off another injury at the start of the year, she saw action in 23 games, scoring 59 points with a high of 10 against Augusta State. A native of Cape Coral, Fla., she lettered for four seasons at Cape Coral High School and was the Southwest Florida Player of the Year as a senior, finishing her prep career with more than 1,000 points.

Brittany Hall #23

The team's top three-point shooter, who hit 51 out of 118 shots beyond the arc for an excellent 43.2 percent. A true two-way player, Brittany Hall also had 103 assists, 98 steals and 95 rebounds. Scored 328 points to go with the 480 she scored in her first two years, given her a career total of 808 and making her a good bet to break the 1000 point mark as a senior, when she'll be one of the key returning members of the defending national champions. She

led the team in scoring four times, with a high of 22 against USC Aiken in the Lakers' only loss. Hall lettered for four seasons in basketball at Campbell High School in Smyrna, Ga., and was a two-time Cobb County Player of the Year as selected by both the Marietta Daily Journal and the Atlanta Tip-Off Club. She was also a two time All-State selection and four-time All-County selection who finished her career at Campbell with 1,219 points, 485 rebounds, 463 steals and 350 assists.

Breanna Fort #24

Breanna Fort has been a star since, not just high school, but middle school, since she started for five (!) years for Hawthorne High School in Hawthorne, Fla., leading her team to four straight Class 2A state tournaments. At Clayton State in 2010/11, she was the only individual to start all 36 games in the championship season, averaging 7.4 points per game and leading the team in rebounds with 198 (5.5 per game), very similar figures to her junior year, when she averaged 6.8 points and 5.5 rebounds per game. A quick, hard worker in the post, in between her five years with Hawthorne and her two years with the Lakers, Fort started for two seasons at Central Florida Community College in Ocala, Fla.

Keona Dixon #25

Keona Dixon is a junior college transfer from Indian River State College in Fort Pierce, Fla., who sat out the 2010/11 season as a red-shirt. Like Genesis Kelly, she was still a big part of the championship team. Another fine three-point shooter, she will have two years of eligibility at Clayton State; something to look forward to, since she is Indian River State's all-time leading scorer. She also lettered for two years at one of the best large high school programs in Florida, Clearwater High School.

Kayla Mobley #32

Kayla Mobley transferred to Clayton State from former Peach Belt member North Florida (now in Division I Atlantic Sun Conference) and made an immediate impact - in both in the low post in basketball and in track and field (where she set several shot put records.) A sophomore in the 2010/2011 season, she came up big when it mattered the most, leading the team in scoring in both the second Lander game (the NCAA regional final) and the NCAA semifinal game against Shaw. She also led the team in scoring on two other occasions during the season, while averaging seven points a game on 57.6 percent shooting. A native of Plantation, Fla., she lettered in her one season (2008/2009) at North Florida,

and for three years at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Plantation.

Timethia Bennett #33

Along with Drameka Griggs, Timethia Bennett is the Lakers' other hometown hero; she's a native of Riverdale, Ga., who graduated from Mundy's Mill High School, where she lettered for four seasons and was a two-time All-Region 4AAAAA selection and Region 4AAAAA Player of the Year as a senior, leading Mundy's Mill to the Region 4AAAAA championship. After a season at Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tenn., she returned home for the 2009/2010 season, and played in 24 games for the Lakers. As a 5-9, junior post player in 2010/2011, she used her speed and rebounding skills in 30 games, leading the team in rebounding twice; in the nationally-televised game against USC Aiken and in the first round of the Peach Belt tournament against Montevallo.

Teshymia Tillman #34

The Lakers' "All-Everything" player. Even outside of her scoring, Teshymia Tillman epitomized a great player for Clayton State during her two years in a Laker uniform. In the "Number One vs. Number Two" game against Lander University at Homecoming, the Lakers trailed for most of the contest, including facing a 10 point deficit with just 4:14 remaining. Tillman made nine points, three rebounds and an assist in the final six minutes of the Lakers heart-stopping 83-81 victory. Then, in the final game of her college career, Tillman led the Lakers in scoring (26 points) and was named MVP of the Elite Eight. The only two players to ever score 500 points in a season for the Clayton State women's basketball team, Tillman is an explosive slasher from both the guard and forward positions. One year after setting the single season scoring record with 525 points, she broke her own record in 2010/11 with 547 points on 51.7 percent shooting, earning NCAA Division II All-American status to go along with her Elite Eight MVP award. She also has the single season field goals made (226) and attempted (437) records, and is fourth in career points (1,072.) She was also second on the team in 2010/11 in rebounds (183) and third in assists (102).



Keona Dixon #25



Kayla Mobley #32



Timethia Bennett #33



Teshymia Tillman #34



Team Statistics – 36 Games

PLAYER	G	FG	3-PTS	FT	Reb	Ave	A	ST	Pts	Ave
Teshymia Tillman	36	226-437	29-106	66-104	183	5.1	102	77	547	15.2
Tanisha Woodard	36	161-414	38-138	51-81	168	4.7	152	125	411	11.4
Drameka Griggs	36	145-276	12-36	93-124	92	2.6	85	105	395	11.0
Brittany Hall	36	106-231	51-118	65-91	95	2.6	103	98	328	9.1
Breanna Fort	36	110-230	2-16	43-58	198	5.5	33	54	265	7.4
Kayla Mobley	32	87-151	4-6	47-70	121	3.8	11	30	225	7.0
Genesis Kelly	3	8-20	4-5	1-2	6	2.0	5	4	21	7.0
Latonda Bruce	36	95-227	38-105	20-39	98	2.7	61	48	248	6.9
Shacamra Jackson	36	64-147	1-1	40-67	152	4.2	25	26	169	4.7
Renee Jackson	36	66-166	4-23	32-56	99	2.8	33	45	168	4.7
Alexiss Griffin	23	20-56	17-49	2-4	17	.7	12	11	59	2.6
Timethia Bennett	30	13-41	0-1	10-18	51	1.7	13	21	36	1.2
TOTALS	36	1101-2396	200-604	470-714	1424	39.6	635	644	2872	79.8

championship was just another step for this group on their journey of success,” he says. “This program is accepting of people and their talents. The mix of personalities and talent produces a recipe

of greatness, not only on the basketball court, but in life as well. We should all be so proud to have such fine representation for our university. I know that I am.”

Do you then mention the recent history of Laker basketball, that is, the two previous Elite Eight teams that Cox led in the 2006/2007 and 2008/2009 seasons?

Or perhaps you approach the championships season by focusing on the turning point, because, even a 35-1 season has a turning point. According to Cox, it was the “1” loss, and not the “35” wins that provided the turning point.

Going into the Peach Belt Conference Tournament, the Lakers were the hottest team in the nation... 28 straight wins, almost all of them by double digits, and the number one ranking nationally.



AWARD WINNING TEAM

The Clayton State University women's basketball team, in honor of their winning the national championship, were recognized for that achievement at the Awards and Induction Ceremony for the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame, held on Saturday, June 25, at the Roswell Cultural Arts Center.



Coach Cox and Clayton State Athletic Director Mason Barfield

After blowing out Montevallo in the first round, they returned to USC Aiken for a rematch with the 12th-ranked Pacers... and lost by a point, 73-72 in overtime.

"The turning point of the season, and the reason I believe that we domi-

nated in the NCAA tournament and won the national title, was the loss that we suffered at the hands of conference rival USC-Aiken in the semifinal round of the Peach Belt Conference tournament," says Cox. "Up to that point, we were riding the crest of a wave that was getting bigger and bigger with each win. It was indeed a battle and with seconds to go in the game we missed two shots right at the basket that would have won it, but missed both, forcing overtime. We lost by a point in the first overtime period."

Although the loss was, in Cox' words, "devastating," the season was hardly over, since the Lakers were still ranked first in the southeast region and, as such, would host the first three rounds of the NCAA tournament, with the winner of the regional advancing to the Elite

Eight. However, this wasn't just a loss.

"I've never seen a team take a loss as hard as we did that one," he says. "It was the weirdest thing I had ever seen in all my years of coaching. I was very worried, and the crazy thing was, I was no better than them. Something was wrong with the team.

"I went in to see Mason Barfield, our athletic director and my boss, and I closed the door and told him what was going on and how concerned I was for us. In his wisdom, he suggested that what we had experienced in going undefeated throughout the entire regular season was an unbelievably special thing and what we were probably feeling was a sense of loss because that special thing had ended. And the way it ended only made it worse. That made sense to me, and I immediately felt better - I think because, if for no other reason, I at least understood what we were feeling."

Cox brought the team together, and explained Barfield's theory.

Supporting the Lakers: While pursuing the national title, the Lakers made some new fans at Missouri's Ellwood Middle School. The team mentored the students and, in return, the students came out to support the Lakers, cheering them on to victory during the championship game.



Six days after winning the NCAA Division II national championship, the women's basketball team picked up another set of honors - this time from the Georgia Senate and the Georgia House of Representatives. In dual ceremonies on the morning of Mar. 31, at the Georgia State capitol, the Lakers' accomplishments during their 35-1 season were recognized by two Senate resolutions and a House resolution, all introduced by members of the Clayton County delegation.



"I immediately saw some flicker of recognition and acceptance, and it was at that point that we committed to refocusing ourselves to start another streak of wins and not lose another game," Cox recalls. And that's exactly what happened. From that point on the Lakers played six games against some of the best teams in the country, and won by 25, 26, 16, 23, 17, and 19 points. An average margin of victory of 21 points in six games against the best Division II had to offer; the last four of which were

against teams that ended up ranked in the top 12 nationally (Lander #six, Bentley #eight, Shaw #12, Michigan Tech #two) in the final USA Today ESPN Poll.

Or maybe you tell about... "The Secret" of the national championship. Except, as is always the case in sports, there really is no secret to the Lakers' success, to the national championship. What there is, according to Cox, are four key factors, four aspects of a winning team that gave that team, also in Cox' words, "a chance to win it all."

"In no particular order, it takes talent, depth (especially in our system that requires constant and extreme defensive pressure), chemistry, and experience," he says. "This year we had it all. We did suffer a little in depth, especially after our starting point guard, Genesis Kelly, went down with an ACL tear in game three and was out for the season, and we were inexperienced in the post, starting a freshman at center, but we had amazing talent and team chemistry.

"I knew last summer we had the ingredients to do it, but the key was coming together and staying together. The year before we came together and finished strong, winning the conference tournament and then going into the regionals as the second-ranked team, but we lost in the first round. We all knew that for whatever reason, we didn't stay together to the end. That was our focus this year, and it started last summer. It takes a concerted effort and a lot of sacrifice on everyone's part. Teams don't



A Champions' Welcome: Rain didn't dampen spirits on Saturday, Mar. 26, when the women's basketball team returned to campus from their stellar win. A couple hundred students, faculty, staff, alumni (including several former Laker basketball stars), friends, supporters and the media gathered at the Athletics & Fitness Center to celebrate the team that earned the first national championship in Clayton State history.

The 2010/2011 Clayton State Women's Basketball Season (35-1)

Home games in CAPS...

come together and stay together by accident. It takes work. It's like a relationship between two people. Both sides have to work to keep it together. It's the same with a team, but there are even more dynamics because it's a group of people.

Cox also notes that the group dynamics of the championship team benefitted from past experience.

"I also think that having experienced two other Elite Eights made a difference as well," he says. "Even though we only had two players left from the 08-09 Elite Eight team, they were our captains, Brittany Hall and Tanisha Woodard, and I think it also helped that Coach Kaleena Coleman, our trainer John Zubal, Athletic Director Mason Barfield, and I, had been there and knew what our expectations were."

To paraphrase Dickens, there were Great Expectations in 2010/2011. Great, indeed, because there is nothing greater than a national championship, no matter what level you're playing on, the thrill is the ultimate. Here's what another pretty successful (556 wins in the NBA) basketball coach, former Houston Rockets, Milwaukee Bucks and Los Angeles Lakers coach Del Harris has to say about championships.

"One thing I have learned about winning championships of any kind is that the brain's response is nearly the same, regardless of the level of that tournament or the type of game being played," Harris explains. "As a series progresses, the brain computes that the goal is greater with each step and then understands when there is an ultimate moment to this process, the biggest game. The response for the winner and the loser will vary little relative to the type of event or the level of the competition, so long as it is one into which the individual has invested greatly, the real key. The brain computes that the body is playing to see who can be the best among the competitors in the race."

Playing to see who can be the best... the ultimate moment... Dennis Cox and the Clayton State women's basketball team did just that, and they faced that moment on March 25, 2011. As a result, they are indeed number one.

Chick-Fil-A Southeast Region Challenge

Nov. 12
Nov. 13

Nov. 19/20 North Georgia Tip-Off Classic

Nov. 19
Nov. 20
Nov. 21
Nov. 23

Nov. 26/27 Eckerd Thanksgiving Classic

Nov. 26
Nov. 27
Dec. 4
Dec. 18

Dec. 29/30 Heritage Bank Holiday Classic

Dec. 29
Dec. 30
Jan. 3
Jan. 8
Jan. 15
Jan. 19
Jan. 22
Jan. 24
Jan. 26
Jan. 29
Jan. 29
Feb. 2
Feb. 5
Feb. 10
Feb. 12
Feb. 16
Feb. 19
Feb. 23
Feb. 26

Peach Belt Conference Tournament

Mar. 2
Mar. 5

NCAA Division II Southeast Regional

Mar. 11
Mar. 12
Mar. 14

NCAA Division II Finals

Mar. 22
Mar. 23
Mar. 25

CATAWBA W, 80-69
BREVARD W, 80-66

vs. Lynn W, 106-46
vs. Chowan W, 89-48
TUSCULUM W, 72-65
at Albany State W, 99-62

vs. Florida Southern W, 82-73
at Eckerd W, 58-40
at UNC Pembroke W, 82-61
AUGUSTA STATE W, 112-43

LINCOLN MEMORIAL W, 64-55
LENOIR-RHYNEGA W, 71-40
PALM BEACH ATLANTIC W, 81-55
at Georgia College W, 53-42
at USC Aiken W, 66-60
at Montevallo W, 68-56
NORTH GEORGIA W, 87-63
COLUMBUS STATE W, 76-59
at Armstrong Atlantic W, 87-65
at Flagler W, 85-67
GA. SOUTHWESTERN W, 83-60
GEORGIA COLLEGE W, 87-61
LANDER W, 83-81
FRANCIS MARION W, 80-60
at Columbus State W, 64-54
MONTEVALLO W, 91-59
at North Georgia W, 79-44
at Ga. Southwestern W, 77-50

MONTEVALLO W, 90-48
at USC Aiken L, 73-72 (OT)

FRANCIS MARION W, 79-54
BARTON W, 97-71
LANDER W, 76-60

vs. Bentley W, 84-61
vs. Shaw W, 63-46
vs. Michigan Tech W, 69-50









#34

Teshymia Tillman



DOMINATE

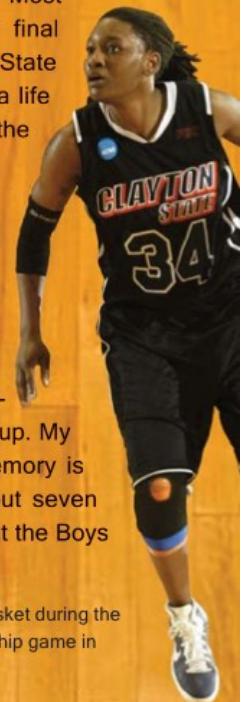
by Lauren Graves



“Play your role and stay coachable. Never believe you’re great - always want to get better. Stay focused, set goals and, most of all, dominate.”

That’s the advice graduating senior Teshymia Tillman leaves behind for the Clayton State women’s basketball team. Tillman ended her Lakers career as a NCAA Division II national champion and as the “Elite Eight” Most Valuable Player. Her final season at Clayton State marks a milestone in a life she’s devoted to the game.

Tillman started her journey to national champion when she was six years old in her hometown of High Point, NC. “The guys in the neighborhood encouraged me growing up. My earliest basketball memory is from when I was about seven when I met Mrs. Bee at the Boys



Left: Tillman goes for the basket during the NCAA Division II championship game in St. Joseph’s, MO.

& Girls Club in Spring Field. She realized I had great talent in basketball and referred me to my first coach, Chris Martin."

Tillman joined Martin's team, Piedmont Express AAU, that year. He quickly became her mentor and role model.

"Chris Martin was like a big brother to me," Tillman recalls. "He taught me the rules of the game, and then I just mixed it in with my skills that I learned from watching the guys outside playing in the neighborhood. Chris Martin started this journey..."

Tillman played on Martin's team for several years, and his influence in her life extended beyond the basketball court. A probation officer, Martin's career in law enforcement encouraged Tillman to choose to major in criminal justice. She will graduate from Clayton State University with her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice this fall.

Tillman also gives credit to her high school basketball coach Kenny Carter. Where Martin started the journey, Tillman says "Coach Carter finished me off by teaching me how to dominate on the court."

A four-year starter on the High Point Central High team, Tillman earned four conference championships. She made an incredible first impression in her freshman season by helping her team to a North Carolina state championship. As a senior, she saw the state finals and became a four-time All-Tri-County performer and Tri-County Player of the Year.

Following high school, Tillman pursued basketball at the college level, lettering one season each at Division I Western Carolina in Cullowhee, NC, and at Guilford Tech in Jamestown, NC. Little did Till-



Above: Tillman rejoices following the national championship win - a first ever for a Georgia NCAA women's basketball team.

man know, the next team she would play for would make history by winning the first NCAA basketball championship for any Georgia NCAA women's team. It would also be Clayton State's first national title in any sport.

"We watched film on her and were very impressed, so Coach Cox and I decided that I should go see her play in a game," says Lakers Assistant Coach Kaleena Coleman on recruiting Tillman.

"She had some other good schools offering her a scholarship as well. I think she was interested in attending Clayton State after our first conversation; then she attended one of our games and was ready to sign with us."

Coleman describes Tillman as a mature person and player. "I have enjoyed the opportunity to know her personally and to have her on the team.



Above: Tillman celebrates after the national win with one of her biggest fans, her father.

She has good leader qualities that can carry her far."

Tillman thanks Mrs. Bee, for seeing something special in her as a child; her mother; brothers; aunts; uncles; cousins and friends. "All of my family members support me, but one special person in my life has attended almost every game - my father, Wayne Brown. Thanks, Dad, for your support," she adds.

Just how far basketball will take Tillman is yet to be seen. She says her grandmother always said, "Stick to something you're great at and master in it." For Tillman, the journey will continue as she sets out to dominate a career in professional basketball.



Above: Tillman answers media questions on her home court after the Clayton State vs. Lander game that sealed the Laker's Elite Eight status. Right: Tillman responds to interview questions following the national championship win that earned her MVP honors.



Tanisha Woodard



AT THE TOP AND RISING

by Erin Fender

"Some days it still feels unreal. It's a blessing. To see all the hard work and dedication my teammates and I went through to pay off was a thing of beauty. It's been an experience that I've always dreamed of, and I just thank God that He brought together me and those 12 other girls to accomplish something so big and to make history," says Peach Belt

Conference Defensive Player of the Year Tanisha "Smooove" Woodard, about the Lakers' 2010/2011 national championship.

Woodard is the epitome of gratitude and teamwork. Never giving pause, she credits her family and team for support over the years, support that began very early on.

Beginning at the age of three, Tanisha grew up with a ball in hand.

"My cousin Derrick taught me the game of basketball. I always played with him and other boys, and he constantly made me a better player. I know he was my teacher and a strong influence because he is left-handed, and I am right handed; but, in basketball, my left hand



is my strongest," she says.

"My mom is my inspiration, and she's my best friend. She has always supported me 110 percent, she's just so hard working and she never gives up," she adds. "I can't name one time when she has let me down. She's my inspiration because I want to be able to give her the world because she deserves that and more."

Tanisha is the first of her family to graduate high school and continue on to college. She nods to her acceptance letter to college as her career highlight. She expressed, "the family is all depending on me to make it out and that gives me the motivation to strive for nothing but the best."

"As the mother of a wonderful young lady and national champion, I could not be prouder," says Tanisha's mother, Melissa Campbell. "I always preach to my children that education is the key to success. I know that Tanisha



Above: Woodard takes the media spotlight following the championship win.

loves basketball and everything about it. I was honored when she completed high school and started Clayton State University. I'm even prouder that she has maintained her education and her basketball over the past three years."

Tanisha finished the championship season with 411 points for a career total of 998 points.

"If she has a similar season in her senior season, she has a chance to set the career scoring record for Clayton State women's basketball. She already holds the career record for steals with 314, and by the end of next season she also has a chance to also break the following career records: games played, field goals made, assists, and blocked shots," says head coach Dennis Cox.

Tanisha admitted she had no idea she was close to breaking those records; ultimately her goal for next year is to have a great season and graduate.

"This would be a huge honor for me individually; all the players I have played with here have made it possible. I could easily take all the credit, but every player I have played with here has made me into a more mature and hard working person," she says.

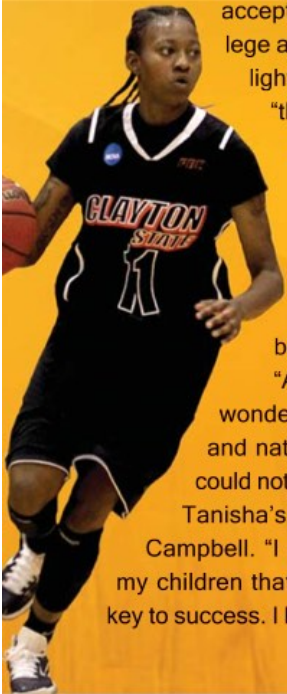
She is majoring in psychology and

hopes to one day counsel children, though she would love to continue her basketball career.

"I love playing basketball because it brings me peace. I'm so relaxed while playing and nothing else seems to matter. My heart is connected to basketball and I never want to fall out of love with it."

Looking forward to her next and final season, Tanisha is excited about welcoming back redshirts Genesis Kelly and Keona Dixon, whom she believes will make a big impact on the season.

Below: Woodard gets aggressive on her home court against Lander. Woodard was named Defensive Player of the Year for the Peach Belt Conference.



Far Left, Center: Woodard in action during the NCAA Division II National Championship game against Michigan Tech. Left: Woodard, sporting the championship t-shirt, claims pieces of the net following the win.



Drameka Griggs

THE HERO RETURNS TO HER “NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL”



by Ciji Fox

Drameka Griggs began her journey with Clayton State University as a freshman in high school, attending all the basketball team camps. It was during

this time that Coach Dennis Cox and Coach Kaleena Coleman first saw her play. Griggs is now a sophomore majoring in criminal justice at Clayton State, and a hometown star on the women's basketball team. Most of her teammates call her "Little MeMe" and the rest of the team calls her "Rondo" (after Rajon Rondo of the Boston Celtics.) Her mother, Waikeeta Flagg, and her younger sister, Triounis Griggs, both of Ellenwood, are her biggest fans. In fact, Griggs' mother taught her some of her basketball skills.

"For as far back as I can remember my mom has been changing my shot every chance she gets," Griggs says. "I'm not really a great shooter, which is why they call me 'Rondo,' but the mid-range jumper I do have came from my mother.

"I'm an energetic, fast pace type of player. I like to bring a lot of energy off the bench and get the game going up and down. Also, I like to pressure the ball and lead with defense."

Left: Griggs makes a shot during the NCAA Division II National Championship game. **Left (Inset):** Griggs celebrates the national win.





Above: Griggs gets height as she shoots during the Clayton State vs. Lander Homecoming game.
 Above Right: Griggs goes up against a Michigan Tech player during the national championship game.



Prior to attending Clayton State University, Griggs attended Jacksonville University (JU) in Jacksonville, Fla.

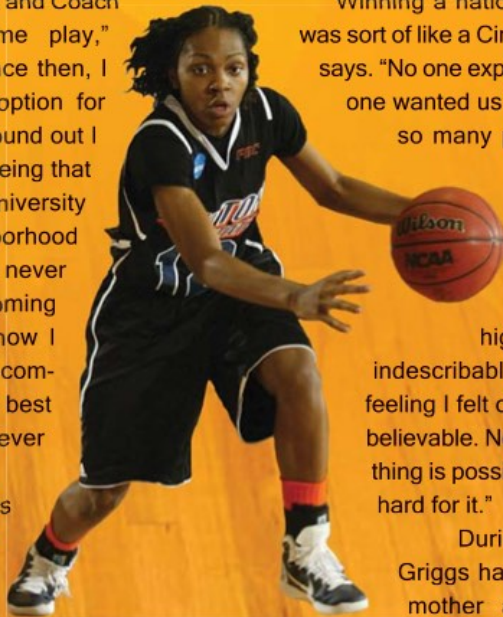
"I attended all the team camps since I was a freshman in high school, which is how Coach Cox and Coach Coleman saw me play," Griggs says. "Since then, I was always an option for them, until they found out I signed with JU. Being that Clayton State University was the 'neighborhood school' for me, I never saw myself coming here. However, now I have to say that coming here was the best decision I've ever made."

Griggs admits that coming to Clayton State University has been a challenge.

"Clayton State is definitely tougher academically compared to JU," she says. "The biggest challenge has definitely been adjusting to the new curriculum."

Balancing her schedule during basketball season is also a challenge.

"During basketball season I don't really participate in any other extracurricular activities, because I'm usually too tired after practice throughout the week.



The only other thing I do is school work, so my time is pretty much manages itself," Griggs says.

This basketball season was especially memorable for Griggs.

"Winning a national championship was sort of like a Cinderella Story," she says. "No one expected us to win. No one wanted us to win. We proved

so many people wrong and now everyone has to respect us. I thought going to the Final Four in high school was an indescribable feeling, but the feeling I felt on Mar. 25 was unbelievable. Now I know that anything is possible when you work hard for it."

During the Elite Eight, Griggs had no idea that her mother and sister would drive 16 hours through the snow to surprise her during the championship game. Along the way, Griggs' mother has given her plenty of advice and encouragement. However, Griggs says the words she lives by are "make me proud!"

Griggs admits winning the national championship was very rewarding.

"I go out in public and people will notice me from the news, or see me with a Clayton State t-shirt on and congratu-



Above: Griggs talks to the media following the national championship win.

late me," she says. "I also get free things or discounts because the community is so proud. It actually still works to this day."

Griggs looks forward to the upcoming basketball season and believes that the team's defensive pressure, team chemistry, trust and everyone playing their role influenced the big win.

"Even though we are losing four seniors, the team next year isn't really losing depth or talent," Griggs says. "Yes, we're losing our leading scorer, but the team next year will have players who can all score evenly. I honestly believe we have a very good chance of repeating."

Outside of school Griggs enjoys playing DJ Hero on the Wii, shopping, hanging out, and tweeting on Twitter. After college she would love to go overseas and play basketball. If not, she wants to become a member of the FBI or a profiler.

Clayton State sets enrollment record

Clayton State University's enrollment for the spring 2011 semester reached an all-time high for the University's 41-year history.

According to Interim Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management Dr. Mark Daddona, as of Saturday, Jan. 22, 2011, Clayton State's enrollment stood at 6,785, a 1.5 percent increase over the spring 2010 enrollment of 6,687 (the previous single semester record), and the highest enrollment ever at Clayton State. Enrollment for the fall 2010 semester was 6,603.

Nearly 500 receive diplomas in Clayton State spring Commencement ceremonies

Nearly 500 current students and one very special member of the Clayton State University Foundation took part in the Saturday, May 7 Commencement ceremonies in the Athletics and Fitness Center at Clayton State University.



Spring graduates

A total of 487 individuals received their graduate and undergraduate diplomas in front of two full houses at the 9 a.m. and noon ceremonies. However, the highlight of the day was when the lone remaining founding (from 1974) member of the Clayton State University Foundation's Board of Trustees, James M. Wood Jr., was presented with a Doctor of Humane Letters by Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes, in recognition of his long career in public service and journalism.

Ron Shipman, Georgia Power Company vice president, environmental affairs, and Ann Cramer, director for IBM Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs for the Americas, were the commencement speakers; Shipman speaking at the 9 a.m. ceremony to 248 graduates from the College of Health, the College of Information and Mathematical Sciences, and the School of Business and Cramer speaking to 239 graduates of the College of Arts & Sciences at the noon ceremony.

Clayton State – Fayette moves to new location off Peachtree Parkway

Clayton State's Fayette County instructional site, Clayton State - Fayette, moved to a new location in Peachtree City during the week of Aug. 8.



Clayton State - Fayette

The new address for Clayton State - Fayette is, Suite 100, 100 World Dr., Peachtree City, Ga., 30269.

This facility is located three miles north of the current site on Commerce Drive. The new facility has more parking and the opportunity for expansion in the future. Additional benefits of the move include, easy access on to Peachtree Parkway and a location less than 12 miles to all Fayette County high schools.

Clayton State - Fayette will continue to offer degree completion programs, dual enrollment, psychology and business degrees for part-time students, and the MBA.

Kordecki receives Georgia Society of CPAs 2010 Outstanding Accounting Educator Award

The Outstanding Accounting Educator Award of the Georgia Society of CPAs (GSCPA) is a prestigious annual award which recognizes individuals who have exhibited leadership in professional and civic organizations as well as writing, speaking and curriculum development and research. For the calendar year 2010, the winner was Dr. Gregory S. Kordecki, associate professor and coordinator of accounting, business law and taxation for the School of Business at Clayton State University.

The award was presented to Kordecki on behalf of the 3,000-member GSCPA by fellow Clayton State Associate Professor of Accounting Dr. Maria L. Bullen on Friday, Feb. 4, at the Georgia Association of Accounting Educators Annual Meeting Banquet in Dahlonega.

Oxford gives his guidelines on entrepreneurship at Clayton State Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series

The initial presentation in the Clayton State University School of Business Dean's Distinguished Lecture Series featured guidelines on and for entrepreneurship from W. Cliff Oxford, CEO of Entrepreneur Advisors.

Speaking to an almost full house in Spivey Hall on the evening of Thursday, Jan. 27, Oxford, the founder (in 1995) of STI Knowledge, Inc., and Entrepreneur Advisors ("We're trying to find the next Google" he said by way of explanation of his current firm, which creates, produces and delivers entrepreneurial education through monthly symposiums), noted some strategies for entrepreneurial success during his address, including social media.

Clayton State ranks high in undergraduate minority degrees awarded in the healthcare fields

The June 9, 2011 issue of *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* includes the publication's Top 100 Undergraduate Degrees Conferred rankings for the current year.

For several years now, *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* has produced the Top 100 Degree Producers rankings of the institutions that confer the most degrees to minority students. For 2011, Clayton State University's programs in the healthcare field ranked in the Top 10 for Georgia in the number of degrees conferred. Under "Health and Medical Administrative Services," Clayton State ranked third among African Americans and eighth among all minorities. In the "Health Professions and Related Programs" category, Clayton State was eighth in the number of degrees conferred upon African Americans. The source for the rankings is the *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education* analysis of U.S. Department of Education reports submitted by institutions involved.

Kalani Fraser and the Clayton State Theatre join together with Stately Oaks for "Swamp Gravy"

A Clayton County version of "Swamp Gravy" is coming to Clayton State University and Stately Oaks.

The Clayton State Theatre, recent Clayton State graduate and theatre major Kalani Fraser, and the Stately Oaks Plantation in Jonesboro are joining together to produce a theatrical production that will debut this fall in the Clayton State Theatre. Fraser, a 2010 graduate of Clayton State, has been commissioned by Stately Oaks in the person of Historical Jonesboro's Barbara Emert to create what Clayton State Theatre Director Phillip DePoy describes as a "Swamp Gravy-style theatrical production" that will serve as the theatre's fall 2011 production.

"Around 20 years ago, the town of Colquitt, Ga., commissioned a play about local stores, folklore, family histories and the show went very well. It's now become a kind of cottage industry for that area," explains DePoy. "Since then, many small towns have decided to create their own projects of this sort."



Fraser in Clayton State Theatre's production of *Cabaret*

Office of Academic Affairs dedicates tree to president Hynes

Following up a promise made during this past fall's inauguration ceremonies, the Clayton State University Office of Academic Affairs planted and dedicated a tree in honor of Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes, Jr.,

on Monday, Feb. 7, between the Arts & Sciences Building and Clayton Hall. A proxy miniature tree was first presented to the president at the inaugural celebration reception on Sept. 30, 2010.



Campus Update

Clayton State announces second group of Presidential Scholars

Now in its second year, the Presidential Scholars program consists of six, four-year presidential scholarships that continue annually. With the program having started in the fall of 2010, by the start of the 2013 academic year Clayton State will have 24 honors students on presidential scholarships. The Presidential Scholars supplement the long-standing University Honors Program.

The six recipients of the 2011 Clayton State Presidential Scholarships are as follows:

Jonathan Blake Anderson, Stockbridge High, Stockbridge, Ga.
Todd Burke, Shaw High School, Midland, Ga.
Jacob Caldwell, Woodland High School, McDonough, Ga.
Thao Duong, Mount Zion High School, Riverdale, Ga.
Chaston Matheny, Griffin High School, Griffin, Ga.
Jon Skinner, North Oconee High School, Statham, Ga.

As Presidential Scholars for the 2011-2012 Academic Year (encompassing the fall and spring semesters), each student will receive: an annual university grant, a housing and meal plan grant, and a bookstore award, for a total annual value of approximately \$12,000. These scholarship awards are in addition to any HOPE Scholarship funds for which the students would be eligible.

Clayton State University Archives building Nursing Program Collection

The Clayton State University Archives is building a collection about the history of the nursing program at Clayton State. As part of this effort, Clayton State Archivist Rosemary Fischer is asking for help from faculty, staff, alumni, retirees and the public to help create a complete picture of the program.

Fischer and her staff have been busy searching academic catalogs, news clippings, campus publications, photographs, slides, and other collections to discover information about the nursing program.

Alumni Association holds 19th Annual Dinner; Hamilton named Outstanding Alumnus

The Clayton State Alumni Association welcomed more than 100 alumni and friends on Thursday, Apr. 28 for a "great" night in the Great Hall of the Fernbank Museum of Natural History.



Sherry Hamilton with then Alumni Association President Jamey Hicks

The event was Association's 19th Annual Dinner, wherein the alumni group annually recognizes the achievements of outstanding and distinguished alumni of the University. Along with the awards ceremony, the evening featured a dinner and an IMAX movie.

The highlight of the event is the naming of the award winners, where an alumnus is honored from all four of the University's undergraduate Colleges and Schools, including an overall Alumnus of the Year. This year's overall Alumnus of the Year was Sherry Hamilton, a 1977 graduate with a degree in education.

Along with Hamilton, other honorees were: Jackie Dorst, Alumnus of the Year from the College of Health; Kyle Pinion, Alumnus of the Year from the College of Arts & Sciences; Joseph Echols, Alumnus of the Year from the School of Business; Ahsan Huda, Alumnus of the Year from College of Information & Mathematical Sciences; and Hiba Elhag, recipient of the Outstanding Future Alumnus Award.



Fernbank's Great Hall

Clayton State economic impact grows almost 15 percent from FY2009 to FY2010

Even during tough economic conditions, Georgia's public university system remains a powerful economic engine for the state as chronicled in a newly released report. The Selig Center for Economic Growth in the University of Georgia's Terry College of Business found that the University System of Georgia (USG) had a \$12.6 billion economic impact on the state's economy during Fiscal Year 2010.

For Clayton State University, the economic impact (Output Impact in current dollars) rose from \$205.6 million in FY09 to \$236.2 million in FY10, an increase of 14.9 percent. In addition, Clayton State's Employment Impact (i.e., the number of on-campus and off-campus jobs that exist due to institution-related spending) rose from 1,697 jobs in FY09 to 2,169 jobs in FY10, an increase of 27.8 percent.

Dr. Donna McCarty named Chair Elect for Psychology Association

Clayton State department head and Professor of Psychology Dr. Donna Wood McCarty has been named the chair elect for the Association of Heads of Departments of Psychology. She will serve as co-chair for one term and will then assume her role as chair.



McCarty

The Association of Heads of Departments of Psychology represents academic psychology programs of all types and is a professional development organization for heads and chairs of academic departments of psychology in the Southeastern United States, and is affiliated with the Southeastern Psychological Association. The association began in 1968 and since has held a prestigious standing amongst reputable academic associations. The association's purpose is to support professional, effective and ethical leadership for psychology department heads and chairs.

Clayton State names McNamara, Grizzell as Alice Smith Award winners

The 2011 winners of Clayton State University's highest faculty and staff awards are Associate Professor of English Dr. Gregory V. McNamara and Associate Director of Auxiliary Services Norman Grizzell.



McNamara

The Alice J. Smith Awards for both faculty and staff were presented at Clayton State's Faculty/Staff Awards Ceremony on May 3. An annual event since 1995, the Smith Awards are presented to the faculty member and staff member ranked most outstanding as determined by committees of their peers. The two, \$1000 awards were established by local philanthropist Joseph Smith in honor of his wife, Alice.



Grizzell

Since 2005, McNamara has taught in the University's College of Arts & Sciences, receiving tenure in 2008. Originally from Cambridge, Md., he now resides in McDonough, Ga. He has also recently accepted an appointment as site director for the University System of Georgia's European Council at London's University College for the summer of 2012.

Grizzell is a native of Clayton County who currently resides in Jonesboro. He has worked at Clayton State for 12 years, starting as a clerk in the Laker Card Center.

McNamara named director of Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program

Clayton State University Associate Professor of English Dr. Gregory McNamara was named the director of the University's first master's program, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) and assumed leadership on July 1, 2011.

McNamara becomes the third individual to head up the MALS program in its five years, following founding director Dr. Thomas Barnett and Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies Dr. Wendy Burns-Ardolino, who accepted a position as department chair of Liberal Studies at Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Clayton Station apartment complex acquired by Clayton State University

On June 29, 2011, the CSU Foundation Real Estate II LLC closed on the purchase of the Clayton Station Apartment complex, located on North Lake Street in Morrow and Lake City. The acquisition adds 854 beds to Clayton State's student housing and almost 17 acres to the existing 175-acre campus.

Clayton Station officially opened in August 2011, housing upper class students, while Laker Hall will continue to serve as the University's freshman residence. This acquisition brings the University's total student housing to 1305 beds.

CSU Foundation Real Estate II LLC, chaired by Randy Hayes, purchased Clayton Station, which first opened in August 1999 as Clayton Place, for \$20.5 million from Education Realty Trust of Memphis. The financing for the purchase will come through tax exempt bonds in a public/private venture with the Development Authority of Clayton County. The acquisition of 854 beds at a cost of \$20.5 million equates to \$24,000 per bed, or about one-half the cost of new construction.

The apartments will be operated as student housing through a lease agreement with Clayton State University.



Clayton Station

Students, computer science professor awarded \$17,000 grant by CRA-W

Mary Hudachek-Buswell, a computer science and mathematics professor in the College of Information and Mathematical Sciences, and two undergraduate rising juniors, Esmeralda Duenas and Christina Gardner, have been awarded a \$17,000 Collaborative Research Experience for Undergraduates grant by the Committee on the Status of Women in Computing Research (CRA-W). The grant includes academic year and summer stipends for both students, conference travel expenses, and additional funds for the students to attend the fall 2012 Grace Hopper Celebration of Women in Computing.



Hudachek-Buswell

Hynes signs preliminary agreement of understanding with Gediz University of Izmir, Turkey

Clayton State University President Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes has signed a preliminary agreement of understanding with the vice chancellor of Gediz University in Izmir, Turkey.

"Gediz is a new university... and has a new and engaging faculty with a growing program in the social sciences, in addition to science and technology," he blogs. "Vice Chancellor Akdis and I signed a preliminary agreement of understanding that will allow us to explore later opportunities for exchanges of Clayton State and Gediz faculty and students alike, as well as an interest in exploring the possibility for selected shared online opportunities."



Hynes signs agreement with Gediz University

Clayton State provost returns from tour of European universities

Clayton State University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Micheal Crafton recently returned from a tour of universities in England, Italy and France.

Starting in London in the first week of June, Crafton visited the University of London, the University of Caen, and travelled throughout Italy in conjunction with Clayton State's study abroad program to that nation. All three nations have long been a part of Clayton State's successful student study abroad programs and, in fact, Crafton's tour could be characterized as a chance for Clayton State's chief academic officer to visit in-person locations where the University has established successful study abroad programs.



A photo from Crafton's trip, St Paul's Cathedral in London

They speak fluent tennis... Women's tennis team sees Final Four

Clayton State's women's tennis team returned to campus on May 14 after competing in the NCAA Division II Final Four in Altamonte Springs, Fla. While it could certainly be said that the seven team members were returning "home," in reality Morrow, Ga., is a long way from home for these seven scholar-athletes, all of whom are from Europe.

While this diverse team's six native tongues may run the gamut from English to Swedish to French, they conclusively proved during the past season that they all speak fluent tennis. Ranked 12th nationally for much of the season, Clayton State's tennis players became the third Laker team this academic year to advance to at least the NCAA Division II Elite Eight in their respective sport, finishing with an 18-8 record and reaching the Final Four before losing to third-ranked Lynn.



Women's Tennis Team

Coach Le Trone Mason's 2011 tennis team included: Jessica Budd, Bristol, England; Marie Cercelletti, Domvallier, France; Martina Dedaj, Pula, Croatia; Charlotte Fabricius, Stockholm, Sweden; Ivana Krommelova, Nove Zamky, Slovakia; Viktoriya Semyrodenko, Donetsk, Ukraine; and Katie White, Wolverhampton, England.

Clayton State has its first U.S. Open participant

Will Wilcox, 25, who played for the Clayton State Lakers from 2006 through 2009, teed it up as part of the 156-man field for the 2011 U.S. Open. Wilcox shot a 79-75 for a two-round total of 154, 12 over par. Although he missed the cut, Wilcox, who turned pro in 2009, had already had a successful 2011 season, starting on the Hooters Tour and earning Nationwide Tour status after finishing third in the Stadion Athens Classic. He was also 11th in the recent Rex Hospital Open. In 2010 Wilcox won on both the Hooters and Canadian tours, and won on the Hooters Tour in 2011.



Wilcox

Kordecki, Bullen, Howell and Poudevigne named Wood Faculty Development Scholarship winners



Kordecki

Bullen

Howell

Poudevigne

The recipients of the 2011 Martha M. Wood Faculty Development Scholarships at Clayton State University are: Dr. Greg Kordecki, School of Business; Dr. Maria Bullen, School of Business; Dr. Christina Howell, College of Arts and Sciences; and Dr. Melanie Poudevigne, College of Arts and Sciences.

The purpose of the Martha Wood Faculty Development Endowment Fund is to support professional development for Clayton State University faculty seeking to improve their teaching expertise, while broadening their knowledge of teaching theory.

Two \$1,000 scholarships and one \$500 scholarship are awarded annually to any full or part-time faculty with at least one year of teaching at Clayton State who meet the qualifying criteria. With four recipients this year, Kordecki and Bullen will evenly split a \$1000 scholarship. Recipients are required to submit a written report upon completion of their professional development activities.



The Wood family



Dennis Cox

HE BROUGHT HOME THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



by John Shiffert

Clayton State University has had many fine athletic coaches over the years, starting in 1990 when then-Clayton State College fielded its first intercollegiate athletic team, men's basketball, under the direction of Mason Barfield. Maybe it's a cliché, but you can't have a successful collegiate athletic program without good coaches and athletes.

However, as of the start of the 2011/2012 academic year, only one Clayton State coach had ever brought home a national championship.

His name is Dennis Cox.

In the seven seasons since taking over the Laker women's basketball program (he started with the 2004/05 sea-

son) Cox has built one of the elite women's programs in Division II. How elite? How about four Peach Belt Conference regular season championships... three Peach Belt Conference Tournament championships... and seven straight trips to the NCAA Division II National Tournament, a run that includes going to the "Elite Eight" three of the last five seasons, and the "Sweet 16" in four of the last five seasons... in addition

to that national championship.

It adds up to a record of 184-45 and a winning percentage of .803, making Cox the winningest head coach of Clayton State in women's basketball, and the

second-winningest active head coach at the Division II level.

Another way to gauge Cox' impact on the Clayton State program is the Lakers' success in what can be argued is the toughest women's basketball conference in DII. Maybe that's an unprovable judgment, but there's no denying that the Peach Belt Conference is tough. For some level of proof, just look at the final DII rankings for 2010/2011 - Clayton State #1, Lander (which in reality may have been the second best team in the country) #6, and USC Aiken (the only team to beat the Lakers) #13.

Prior to Cox' arrival on the Clayton State scene, the Lakers had gone 36-82 in the Peach Belt since joining the conference in 1997. Under Cox, the Lakers are 100-26 in the Peach Belt - the best record among Peach Belt programs in the last seven seasons. In addition, 14 of his players have garnered All-Peach Belt honors in the process.

For his success in 2010/2011, Cox was honored by the Atlanta Tip-Off Club



Cox holds the Russell Athletic/Women's Basketball Coaches' Association Division II Coach of the Year Award.



Cox cuts the net following the National Championship win.

for the second consecutive year as the John "Whack" Hyder Women's College Coach of the Year for the state of Georgia. And that was just the start of his honors.

With his team in the midst of a strong run at the national championship, Cox received the highest possible honor that a coach can at any level when he was selected on Wednesday, Mar. 23, 2011 as the Russell Athletic/WBCA (Women's Basketball Coaches' Association) Division II National Coach of the Year, becoming the first Clayton State head coach ever in any sport to earn a National Coach of the Year honor.

The WBCA award was actually Cox'

third postseason honor of the season, as he was also selected Peach Belt Conference Coach of the Year for the second time during his tenure at Clayton State. And, there was a fourth honor coming as well. With the national championship in hand, it was announced on Tuesday, Mar. 29 that Cox had been selected as the 2011 Schelde North America/Women's Division II Bulletin Coach of the Year.

"The talent level in Division II basketball has never been higher, so coming out on top with a national title is a major coaching accomplishment. Dennis did a great job with his team this season as is most deserving of this honor," said Women's Division II Bulletin editor and publisher Gary Rubin.

"The award dates back to 1993 and he joins a long list of distinguished winners. Along with Schelde North America, we are pleased to recognize him for his achievement and hard work."

Cox and his championship team were also honored on Saturday, June

25, in the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame's annual Awards and Induction Ceremony, held at the Cultural Arts Center in Roswell. Clayton State received one of two "Stars of the Year" awards for its national championship,

along with the girls' tennis team from Walton High School in Marietta.

Prior to joining Clayton State, Cox served for six years as the head coach at Daytona Beach Community College, and as the head coach at Valencia Community College in Orlando, Fla., for eight years.

His overall record at the junior college level is an impressive 291-138 for a winning percentage of .678.

Cox earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Fla., and was captain of the basketball team his senior year. He later earned a master's degree in exercise physiology and wellness from the University of Central Florida.

And he's earned a national championship at Clayton State.



Cox addresses the media following the biggest win in Clayton State history.

Below: Cox coaching during the Clayton State vs. Michigan Tech game. **Below Right:** Cox is interviewed by an ESPN reporter. The Clayton State vs. Michigan Tech game was broadcast on ESPN2.





trustee profile

Paddy Sharma: Supporting education and community

By Erin Fender

Education is a fundamental building block to Dr. Paddy Sharma's life. Growing up in a household of educators in South India, education was taken seriously.

Sharma obtained three degrees while in India; a Bachelor of Education; a Master of Arts; and a Master of Education. She worked as a teacher in India for several years before moving to the United States to pursue a doctorate.

"As an avid supporter of quality education, Clayton State means a lot to me in several ways. As a local educational institution, Clayton State not only improves the community's education levels, but bolsters the younger generation's creative thoughts, ideas and talents in education, sports, arts, etc.," she says.

Sharma and her husband, Chandler, live in Jonesboro, where she enjoys spending time with her family. She has four wonderful children and three grandchildren. She also is extremely active within the community. She holds several significant positions, including serving as a trustee on the board for the Clayton State University Foundation where she has been a member for four years.

Beyond serving on the Foundation, she also serves the board of directors of IACA (India America Cultural Association) as chairman; a trustee of

Sanatan Mandir; chairman of the Fundraising Committee of The Hindu Temple of Atlanta; a member of the SA4U (South Asians for Unity); and has previously served on the Emory University Board of Visitors.

She has also served as the chairman of the Psychology Department at Tennessee Temple University and vice president of Operations for Global Software Technology. She also held the position of president and CEO at Data Point Systems, Inc.

In 2009, Data Point Systems, a full service IT staffing firm that specializes in staff augmentation, software development and software training, was chosen as the recipient of the Georgia Minority Business Technology Industry Award. That same year Sharma also received the "Outstanding Georgia Citizen Award" presented by then Secretary of State Karen Handel.

Currently she is CEO of Global Teachers Research & Resources, Inc., a firm dedicated to providing highly qualified teachers in critical need areas across North America. Her care for education extends to the students as well. She is founder of the FIHI (Finish High School) Hope Foundation, a recent project that provided to ninth grade students in Clayton County. All participants are offered mentoring, tutoring, and a support system that encourages them to stay in high school and achieve

life potential goals.

"I am a firm believer that supporting a local community will not only improve the community, it in turn helps in the improvement of the state and the country itself. A powerful local community will increase the standard of life and also enhances the economy," she says.

As an avid supporter at Clayton State, she was obviously very enthused about the women's basketball team's recent national championship.

"I can never forget the evening when the Lakers won the championship. I was in a sports bar with other trustees, staff members and students rooting for the Lakers and the final few moments of the game are something I cherish for life. As a community member, it was a great feeling to have won the national championship," expresses Sharma.

Sharma strives to give back to the community and hopes she continues to inspire others to make education the foundation of their existence.

"The fact that I can contribute my eclectic ideas to the Foundation Board and implement them for the future generation is one of the most significant factors that drives me to serve on the foundation," she says.



staff profile

Kaleena Coleman: Helping keep the team together

By Gid Rowell

Whether it was a practice, a meeting, or a game, the 2010-11 Clayton State women's basketball team broke each huddle with its motto and rallying cry for the season, "together."

And one person that played an integral role in keeping the squad "together," and helping the Lakers achieve the ultimate goal of capturing a NCAA Division II national championship, was assistant coach and Clayton State alumnae Kaleena Coleman.

"She is the heart and soul of the Clayton State women's basketball program," says head coach Dennis Cox.

For the last six years, Coleman has been assisting Cox on the Laker sideline, and along with her coaching duties for arguably the best NCAA Division II women's basketball program in the country, she provides support in recruiting and in a wide array of basketball operations. Although much of her work is done behind the scenes, making sure all the administrative and logistical processes run as smooth as the hardwood floors at the Athletics & Fitness Center, it does not go unnoticed.

"Kaleena is what Laker women's basketball is all about," says Cox. "As a player for us my first year in 2004-05, she was the hardest worker on the team, and that work ethic has continued in her role as an assistant coach."

Coleman has helped the Lakers win four Peach Belt Conference regular

season championships and three PBC tournament titles. In addition, she has been a part of seven straight trips to the NCAA Division II national tournament, advancing to Division II "Final Four" in 2007, the Division II "Sweet 16" in 2008, the Division II "Elite Eight" during the 2008-09 season, and last season's NCAA Division II national championship.

"I have known Kaleena for eight years, and I have never met a single person that did not love her," continues Cox. "In my opinion she is our most valuable asset - a constant source of inspiration for all of us."

What she enjoys most about her job is the opportunity to build relationships with the players, mostly through the many team-building activities. A few of her favorite examples include: the team's annual bowling night, going to the movies and team dinners.

"I meet them and talk with them a lot during the recruiting process and then become better connected when they sign, says Coleman. "The off-the-court interactions and relationships are important in a student-athlete's learning and development in college."

In a national championship season filled with special highlights, Coleman says a moment she will never forget was the team's thrilling win over Lander during Homecoming Week, when both teams were undefeated and ranked

No. 1 and No. 2 in the nation.

"The game was so close," she says. "Our players showed an incredible amount of maturity and fight to battle back in the end. I was so proud of how we handled the adversity and kept it together throughout the game. It was a special win, and one I will always remember."

Interestingly, another moment she will always remember is the squad's only loss of the season, when the Lakers fell in a heartbreaker, 73-72 in overtime in the Peach Belt Conference Tournament semifinals to host USC-Aiken.

She remembers this contest not because of the loss, but how the squad stayed together and responded after it.

"We didn't want to go home that night and be by ourselves," says Coleman. "We all wanted to stay together and pick each other up after such a close and emotional game. We responded well and used it as motivation for the remainder of the season."

A native of Edison, Ga., Kaleena graduated with her bachelor's degree in 2006 from Clayton State. She began her college career at the University in 2003, and as a player, helped lead Clayton State to a 25-7 record and both the Peach Belt Conference regular season and tournament championships.



alumni profile

April Taylor: Clayton State is the place for you

By Gid Rowell

For April Taylor, Clayton State University was not her first college choice coming out of high school, but after a brief detour at another local institution, her decision to attend Clayton State ended up being one of the best decisions of her life.

A talented high school athlete from Memphis, Taylor began her basketball career at NCAA Division I Georgia State University. However, after her freshman season, she decided to transfer, although she still wanted to stay in Georgia, and to have the opportunity to play more and become more involved in campus activities.

She accomplished all three, and much more when she transferred to Clayton State in 2002.

"Clayton State is special to me because it is the place where I felt loved and appreciated as a student-athlete and as a person," says Taylor. "When I came on my visit, I met with Athletic Director Mason (Barfield), our faculty representative Dr. Tom Eddins and the President (Tom) Harden, and from that moment I knew I was coming to Clayton State."

Entering the University, Taylor immediately immersed herself in a number of extracurricular activities, along with starring on the women's basketball squad. She joined the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, was named president of the Peach Belt Conference Student Athlete Advisory Committee and was

selected Homecoming Queen in 2005.

"Clayton State is a place where you can live, love, and laugh," she says. "If you are looking for a school where you know your teachers, classmates, and administrators, and can receive a great degree and enjoy campus life; then Clayton State is the place for you."

Taylor played three seasons at Clayton State, capped in her senior season, which was also Coach Dennis Cox's first season at the school, by the Lakers' run to their first Peach Belt Conference Championship in 2004/05 and a 25-7 record. She started on that championship team, and led the squad in field goal percentage and rebounding.

"People always ask me what changed when Coach Cox arrived," says Taylor. "I always say that during the championship season I did things I have never done before. I was forced to be accountable for my performance on and off the court. I relied on my teammates when I was having a bad day. We were a true team and picked each other up."

Now April uses many of the leadership skills and positive lessons learned at Clayton State; mentoring and serving student-athletes in her current position. Taylor serves as the assistant athletic director for compliance at Southern Methodist University (SMU) in Dallas.

"Intercollegiate athletics and extracurricular activities had such a posi-

tive and rewarding impact on my personal and professional development," she says. "It has given me a greater appreciation of the concepts of teamwork and accountability. Overall, I believe I have succeeded in the professional world because I was provided the opportunity to participate in both athletics and extracurricular activities."

Taylor is currently on the fast-track in her intercollegiate athletics career. After graduating with her Clayton State bachelor's degree in 2006, she served two years as an assistant coach at Newberry College. She then was named the assistant director of compliance at Alabama State University in Montgomery in 2008, before being named the sole director of the department in 2009. She has been serving as the assistant athletic director for compliance at SMU since 2010, and recently earned a master's degree from South University.

She credits a number of mentors from Clayton State and the Laker community for having a positive impact in her development, including Coach Cox, Barfield, Dr. Eddins, former Clayton State compliance director and current supervisor Monique Holland, local pastor Jim Anderson and Clayton State "super fans" Jimmy and Betty Cobb, to name a few. Along with her Clayton State family, Taylor also credits her parents, Gerald and Maxine Taylor, for all their support, noting they are very proud of her choice to attend Clayton State.

Clayton State alumni, brag a little...

Clayton State Class Notes is the perfect place to share personal and professional news with friends and classmates. Please send us information about special milestones in your life including births, marriages, careers, family events, etc. Send your news or updates along with a photo to:

Clayton State Alumni Relations
2000 Clayton State Boulevard
Morrow, GA 30260

Or email Clayton State's Director of Alumni Relations Gid Rowell at gidrowell@clayton.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!

1975

STEVE CHRISTOPHER
(A.A. Art '75)

Christopher, of Hampton, GA, was named the 2010 Member of the Year for the Atlanta Chapter of the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA). Christopher is the region manager for Royal Cup Coffee and a former member of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors.



1979

JACKIE DORST
(A.S.D.H. Dental Hygiene '79)

Dorst, of Fernandina Beach, FL, was named the 2011 Clayton State College of Health Alumnus of the Year at the Clayton State Alumni Association Annual Dinner earlier this year. Dorst is an international speaker, author and consultant on infection prevention, OSHA safety and instrument sterilization. She has more than 20 years of experience in the dental profession, business, public speaking and research.



SHERRY HAMILTON
(A.A. Education '79)

Hamilton, of Jonesboro, GA, was named the 2011 Clayton State Alumnus of the Year at the Clayton State Alumni Association



Annual Dinner earlier this year. Hamilton and her husband, Joe, own Lake Spivey Golf Club and are long-time supporters of the University and the Southern Crescent community. She is a former trustee of the Clayton State Foundation.

1981

JUDGE STEVE TESKE
(A.A. Political Science '81)

Judge Teske was nominated earlier this year for the statewide University System of Georgia Regents Award for Excellence in Education. He has been a juvenile judge in Clayton County for more than 20 years and has been recognized with numerous honors and awards for his work in the Southern Crescent.



1984

CHRIS CORLEY
(A.A. Political Science '84)

Corley is CEO of Chris Corley & Associates, where he specializes as a sales and performance coach to the homebuilding, residential development and real estate industries. He and his wife, Cynthia, live in McDonough, GA

1985

LANELLE LARUE
(A.A. Business Administration '85)

LaRue, of Lake City, GA, will serve as vice president of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors for 2011-2013. She is a charter member of the Board of Directors and is retired from the Atlanta Airport Marriott.



JACK MILLER
(A.A. Math '85)

Miller was honored as "Teacher of the Year" at Shorter College, the first time a math professor has received this award at the school. Miller is an adjunct professor and is the director of Analytics for IHG. Miller and his wife, Maria, who graduated in 1994 from Clayton State with an A.A.S. degree, have two beautiful daughters and live in McDonough.

JONATHAN WALLER
(A.A.S. Mechanical Drafting '85)

Waller was named the plant manager of the Timken Company's New Philadelphia, OH, plant. He joined Timken in 1999 as an engineer and most recently served as manager of Continuous Improvement at the Honea Path, S.C., plant.

Class Notes

1987

NORMAN GRIZZELL
(A.A. Art '87)

Grizzell, of Jonesboro, received the 2011 Alice J. Smith Award at the Clayton State Faculty/Staff Awards Ceremony earlier this year. The Smith Awards are presented to the faculty member and staff member ranked most outstanding as determined by committees of their peers. Grizzell has worked at Clayton State for 12 years and is currently the associate director of Auxiliary Services.



1993

TONY KIMBRELL
(B.M. Music Composition '93)

Kimbrell was recently named the vice president of Development for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Georgia and Alabama. He has held senior positions at Atlanta Ballet, The National Faculty, and the Woodruff Arts Center. Kimbrell is a former member of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors.



1994

DAVE MARLER
(B.B.A. Management '94)

Marler, of LaGrange, GA, was recently named the executive director of the LaGrange Symphony Orchestra (LSO). An Atlanta native, Marler has served six years on the LSO board, including the last year as board president. Before accepting this position, he served as the chief transformation agent for Marlermedia, a marketing communications firm in LaGrange. He and his wife, Marie, have two adult daughters and one granddaughter. Marler is a former member of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors.



TAMI L. PETTY
(B.A. Music Performance '94)

Earlier this year, Petty, of New York, was a featured performer in the inaugural Lotte Lehman Foundation Recitals. Petty, a soprano, was also the inaugural recipient of the 2010 Sorel Organization Emerging Artist Award.



Class Notes



Congratulations to Clayton State's spring 2011 graduates!

1995

MIKE WHATLEY
(A.A.S. Management '95)

Whatley, of Covington, GA, will seek a fourth term as a representative on the Covington City Council. He served as deputy director of the Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority for 13 years and currently serves as the city's liaison to the Newton County Water and Sewerage Board of Directors. He was appointed by Governor Nathan Deal to a third term on the Georgia State Board of Examiners for the Certification of Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operators and Laboratory Analysts.



1996

KRISTEN EGERDAHL
(A.S.D.H. Dental Hygiene '96)

Egerdahl, of Newnan, GA, recently returned from Kathmandu, Nepal after participating in a humanitarian dental clinic organized by Global Dental Relief, a charitable organization that has brought dental care to children in Nepal since 2000. Egerdahl, who has worked in the office of Dr. Tommy Turkiewicz in Peachtree City since 2003, was one of 20 volunteers.



2000

CORY E. BALDWIN
(B.S. Health Care Management '00)

After leading the Waycross Swamp Fox basketball team to a school best 27-9 record, Baldwin was named the Georgia Basketball

Coaches Association Co-Coach of the Year for the NAIA/Junior College category. In only the second season of the program, Baldwin led the team to the NJCAA National Tournament in Hutchinson, KS, the GCAA and Region 17 Tournament Championship, and a final ranking of 12th in the NJCAA. A former student-athlete in the basketball program, Baldwin was also an assistant on the Clayton State Laker basketball staff for six years.



ANDREA CALDWELL
(B.M. Music Performance '00)

Caldwell, of Fayetteville, GA, performed in Spivey Hall earlier this year with the Southern Crescent Chorale. Caldwell, a mezzo soprano, was one of four soloists in the performance. After graduating from Claymont State, Caldwell earned a master's degree in vocal performance from Austin Peay State University. She also studied and performed in Salzburg, Austria and had the opportunity to work with opera singers Grace Bumbry and Sylvia Pilyer. In 2003, she moved to Cincinnati to serve as a private instructor of voice.

2001

BRIAN MAGILL
(B.I.T. Information Technology '01)

Magill has been volunteering in the mission field for the past five years, serving in Kenya, Tanzania, Ukraine, China and Thailand. He is creating his own Christian, nonprofit global collaborative media group, based in Atlanta. Its mission is to produce a vast, diverse array of media designed to equip those seeking to meet the physical & spiritual needs of people



Join the Alumni Association! Email GidRowell@clayton.edu to learn more.

living in restricted nations or hard to reach places. He is enjoying being home in Atlanta and reestablishing connections with his friends and family.

2002

JEFF M. WILSON
(B.S. Nursing '02)

Wilson, of Jonesboro, was awarded the prestigious Georgia Hospital Heroes Award at the Georgia Hospital Association's (GHA) annual Hospital Heroes Awards. One of only 10 individuals statewide to receive the award, he was recognized for his role in medically treating Haitian earthquake victims, as well as soldiers in Iraq. Along with working as the Education Program Manager at Piedmont-Fayette Hospital, he also serves as a captain in the Air Force and is a member of the 94th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Dobbins Air Force Base. Wilson was named one of Clayton State's Outstanding Alumni Award recipients in 2008.



2003

ULYSSES THOMAS
(B.M. Voice Performance '03)

Thomas is nearing completion of a Doctor of Musical Arts degree at Boston University, where he earned a Master of Music degree.

2004

LAUREN (BAKER) GRAVES
(B.A. Communication and Media Studies '04)

Sr. Communications Specialist in the Clayton State Office of University Relations, Lauren Graves, along with her husband Levi and their three-year-old son Logan, welcomed Leah to the family on Jan. 31, 2011.



2005

ELIJAH AJAYI
(B.A.S. Technology Management '05) &
APRIL TAYLOR
(B.A. Integrative Studies '06)

Ajayi and Taylor recently completed the NCAA Leadership Institute program held in Boston. Ajayi works at Emory University as the Events and Marketing Director for Athletics, while Taylor is an Assistant Athletic Director for Compliance at Southern Methodist University.



SANDRA HILL
(B.A. Communications & Media Studies '05)



Hill, of Sandy Springs, GA, was recently named the Secretary for the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors. Sandra works for IBM as a security analyst and her job entails researching and writing security vulnerabilities

STACEY RIVERS
(B.A.S. Technology Management '05)

Rivers, of McDonough, GA, was recently promoted to director of technical project management for Turner Studios. In this role, Rivers is responsible for internal and external projects for Turner's System Technology & Digital Media Department. Rivers is a former winner of an Outstanding Alumni Award in 2007 and is a former member of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors.

VIRGINIA SLATON
(B.S. Psychology '05)

Slaton received her master's degree in social work and is employed as a social worker at Altus Hospice.

2006

RUBÉN ACOSTA
(B.A. History '06)

Acosta completed his master's of architectural history at Savannah College of Arts & Design (SCAD) in the spring of 2010. Before beginning his doctoral studies, he has been teaching as a part-time faculty member in the Department of Humanities at Clayton State.

REBECCA DYES
(B.S. Biology '06)



Dyes, of Senoia, GA, received a 2011 Knowles Science Teaching Foundation (KSTF) Fellowship in the field of biology. The KSTF Fellowships, the Foundation's signature program, supports, sustains and inspires exceptional young men and women committed to making a difference as teachers. The \$150,000 award provides tuition, a monthly stipend, grants for professional development and teaching materials. She is pursuing a M.A.T. Science degree at Georgia State University.

JOSEPH ECHOLS
(B.B.A. Management '06)



Echols, of Conyers, GA, was named the 2011 Clayton State School of Business Alumnus of the Year at the Alumni Association Annual Dinner earlier this year. He is an Admission Counselor at Clayton State.

STEPHEN FORTH
(B.S. Mathematics '06)

Originally from Atlanta, Forth is pursuing a graduate degree at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, VA. He recently completed his first year in the University's master's of architecture program.

CANDACE HENRY
(B.A. Music '06)

Henry, of Decatur, GA, recently joined the Clayton State University Office of Orientation & New Student Programs as the Assistant Director. Henry earned a master's degree in Counselor Education with a concentration in Student Services in Higher Education from Georgia Southern University in 2010.

BEN HOPKINS
(B.A. Communications & Media Studies '06)

Hopkins was recently named the president of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors for 2011-13. He is currently employed at Clayton State and serves as the operations coordinator for the Student Activities Center. Hopkins is pursuing his M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration at Georgia Southern University.



REDD HORROCKS
(B.A. Communication and Media Studies '06)

Horrocks joined Cirque du Soleil in Las Vegas as assistant stage manager of its Beatles show. Horrocks was active in the theatre program while at Clayton State and was also a former editor of the *The Bent Tree* newspaper.

AHSAN HUDA
(B.I.T. Software Development '06)

Huda, of Durham, NC, was named the 2011 Clayton State College of Information and Mathematical Sciences Alumnus of the Year at the Clayton State Alumni Association Annual Dinner earlier this year. He currently works for the National Institute of Health in Raleigh-Durham, NC, as a bioinformatics scientist with a diverse background in biology, mathematics and computer science. His field of expertise lies in genetics, and he is a Ph.D. candidate at Georgia Tech in bioinformatics.



KYLE PINION
(B.S. Political Science '06)

Pinion, of Atlanta, was named the 2011 Clayton State College of Arts & Sciences Alumnus of the Year at the Clayton State Alumni Association Annual Dinner earlier this year. Pinion is the Director of Public Policy and Advocacy



*2011 Homecoming King and Queen
Rico Lee and Kearia Smith*

with the National MS Society - Georgia Chapter.

VOLCANO SHELTON
(B.S. Psychology '06)

Shelton, of Philadelphia, is a Program Coordinator with the Devereux Foundation, a non-profit behavioral health organization that supports underserved and vulnerable members of the community. He is also executive director of Eruptable Entertainment International, a small entertainment company. He hosts a live internet radio show on New Liberia FM entitled "Music by Africans" and his radio pseudonym is "Dr. Eruptable."

2008

JERMERIAH CARR
(B.B.A. Management '08)

Carr, and her finance, Ahmad Rolle, who also is a Clayton State graduate, had a son named Christopher Malik Rolle. He was born Jan. 14 and weighed 6 lbs. and 4 oz.



ANNA COX
(M.A. Liberal Studies '08)

Cox, of Jonesboro, GA, earned the nation's highest achievement in teaching this academic year, the National Board Certification, becoming the only teacher in the district this year to receive the coveted honor. Cox was the first graduate from Clayton State's Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Program in December of 2008. She teaches at Jonesboro High School.



Class Notes

JASON HART

(B.B.A. General Business '08)

Hart, of Covington, GA, has been promoted from credit analyst to business banker for Bank of North Georgia at the East Covington branch. Hart has more than 10 years of banking experience and joined Bank of North Georgia in 2001.

LUCY JONES

(B.S. Psychology '08)

Jones received her master's degree in education in October 2010 and plans to pursue a doctorate in the near future.

BRITTANY LOFFERT

(B.A. Theatre '08)

Loffert is the House Manager of the 14th Street Playhouse in midtown Atlanta.

2009

DOLORES COX

(M.A. Liberal Studies '09)

Cox, of Locust Grove, GA, was one of five nominees for the 2011 Alice J. Smith Award at the Clayton State Faculty/Staff Awards Ceremony earlier this year. The Smith Awards are presented to the faculty member and staff member ranked most outstanding as determined by committees of their peers. Cox is the Communications Coordinator in the Office of University Image and Communications at Clayton State.

ANGEL KALINOV

(B.B.A. Marketing '09)

Kalinov has been promoted to assistant general manager for the Warsaw, Poland CH Robinson Operation. After graduation, Kalinov worked with CH Robinson in Huntsville, AL, before being recently promoted in the supply



Heritage Cadillac Saab was a sponsor for the 2011 Alumni Dinner. (L to R) Tim ('84) and Sabrina Crawford and Dina Swearngin ('97, '09)

chain management company. Kalinov was a former standout on the Clayton State men's soccer team.

BRIAN KELLY

(B.A. Middle Grades Education '09)

Kelly was selected by the Professional Association of Georgia Educators (PAGE) for the two-year Teacher Academy for the 2009-2011 school year. Kelly is a former standout on the Clayton State men's basketball team.

SHAWN MECHELKE

(M.B.A. '09)

Mechelke, of Flower Mound, TX, joined Telvent Environment in Minneapolis, MN, as their Senior Vice President, Operations and Strategy. Mechelke is responsible for the Telvent Environment Weather Services overall business operations, strategic planning, mergers and acquisitions, and leads daily operations of product management, software development, and meteorology services. He and his wife Jill celebrated 20 years of marriage in June.



RASHONBAH ROGERS

(B.S. Nursing '09)

Rogers, of Decatur, GA, was recently honored as a nominee in the 7th Annual Celebrating Nurses, "Nursing Excellence Awards" by the AJC. Rogers was described as "Super Nurse," as she juggles marriage, six children, two jobs and studying for a master's degree. She currently works as a float nurse at Kaiser Permanente and in the Emergency Department at Piedmont Hospital. Rogers was the first vice president of Clayton State's Student Nurses Association and was the District Director for the Georgia Student Nurses Association.



REDA ROWELL

(M.A. Liberal Studies '09, B.B.A. Management '98)

Rowell was a finalist for the Clayton County Chamber of Commerce's Clayton County 2011 Business Woman of the Year Award. The Business Woman of the Year Award heralds the past and present achievements of an outstanding business woman in Clayton County. Rowell is the Director of Development at Clayton State.



DINA SWEARNGIN

(M.S. Nursing '09, B.S. Nursing '97)

Swearngin was recently named the Treasurer of the Clayton State Alumni Association Board of Directors for 2011-13. She works as a nursing professor at Clayton State in the University's College of Health.



2010

DONNELL COX

(B.A. Middle Grades Education '10)

Cox, of Pine Lake, GA, received the Georgia Power New Teacher Assistance Award in September of 2010.

JORDAN DAVIS

(B.S. Political Science '10)

Davis, of McDonough, GA, is an insurance agent with State Farm Insurance.

AYABA D'ALMEIDA

(B.S. Biology '10)

D'almeida, of Stockbridge, GA, recently graduated and will be attending Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN, entering the School of Dentistry in 2011.

JENNIFER (SAWYER) DEMOND

(B.A. Communication & Media Studies '10)

Demond, of Hampton, GA, was recently named the Student Media Advisor at Clayton State University. She will oversee the student media publications: *The Bent Tree*, CSIR, and CSTV. Demond is a former editor of *The Bent Tree* and is an author. She and her husband, Jason, were married in November of 2010.

KALANI FRASER

(B.A. Theatre '10)

Fraser, of Decatur, GA, was commissioned earlier this year as the playwright for a theatre production based on Clayton County's history and culture, "Moonshine and Magnolias." The production resulted from collaboration between Historical Jonesboro/ Clayton County,



Spring 2011 graduates celebrate following the ceremony.

Inc, and Clayton State University. The first production will take place at the Clayton State Theatre this fall.

LAKISHA FRAZIER

(B.A.S. Administrative Management '10)

Frazier, of Riverdale, recently graduated and plans to pursue a master's degree in health services administration.

EVON GUYTON

(B.S. Biology '10)

Guyton, of Stockbridge, GA, recently graduated and will be attending the Morehouse School of Medicine M.D. program.

SAMUEL HEARN

(B.B.A. Management '10)

Hearn, of Brooks, GA, is the owner of Hearn Landscape Management and was recently married to Emily Walker in May.



PRINCESS HERRON

(B.I.T. Information Technology '10)

Herron, of Stockbridge, GA, works for AT&T as a network planning engineer in Atlanta. She is also a member of the Women of AT&T chapter.

LUIS MONGE

(B.A. Integrative Studies '10)

Monge and his wife, Rebecca, recently had their first child. His name is Noah Daniel Monge and was born on June 1 (National Running Day). He weighed 8lbs. 9oz. and measured 20.5 inches long. Monge, a former runner on the Clayton State cross country team, is also organizing the first Atlanta Southside Runners (ASR) McDonough 5K Classic at Hooters on Sept. 17, 2011. The race starts at 9 a.m. from Hooters in McDonough. You can go to the website www.atlantasouthsiderunners.com for race registration.

YOLANDA PHILLIPS

(B.A. Middle Grades '10)

Phillips, of Rex, GA received the Georgia Power New Teacher Assistance Award in September of 2010.

THERESA POTTS

(M.B.A. '10)

Potts graduated in May of 2010 and credits the M.B.A. program for giving her confidence that she can accomplish anything she sets her mind to. After graduation, she received a promotion at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

RENNETTA WATSON

(B.A. Liberal Studies '10)

Watson, of Jonesboro, GA, was honored by the Georgia Council of Teachers of English (GCTE) at its 2011 Annual Conference. She was presented the GCTE's Future English Teachers of Color Award recipient. The honor

is designed to recognize students who show excellent potential as pre-service teachers of English.

2011

TIMOTHY BARNES

(M.B.A. '11)

Barnes, of Conley, GA, enjoys reading, exercising and spending time with family. He has been married for seven years and has an energetic two-year-old son. He is employed at Aon Corporation as a human resource outsourcing system analyst, where he utilizes his learned MBA skills as a mentor, analyst, and quality assurance test planner and tester.



DEBRA ANN BROWN

(B.S. English '11)

Brown says, "No persons are ever too old to start new beginnings," as she recently accomplished a life ambition of obtaining a bachelor's degree after being absent from the education community for almost 35 years. Brown was named to the dean's list three of her final three semesters at Clayton State and will continue for a master's in education degree at Clayton State.

JASON CRAIN

(B.A. English '11)

Crain recently took a full time job with TwentySix2, an online marketing firm in Atlanta. He is responsible for content development and marketing initiatives. He also works in the marketing and communications department of C5 Georgia, a nonprofit organization that changes lives, families and communities through intensive five-year leadership and college readiness programs targeted to high-potential teens from challenging situations.



The 2011 Annual Alumni Dinner was held at Fernbank and featured an IMAX movie.

CHERYL DUNSON

(M.A. Liberal Studies '11)

Dunson presented her thesis research at the UNC-Asheville Graduate Liberal Studies Conference in April 2011. She will teach school in Baltimore City Schools through the Baltimore City Teaching Residency, part of The New Teacher Project.

OTEGA EDUKUYE

(B.S. Biology '11)

After winning the O.C. Lam III Award for Excellence in the Biological Sciences and the Excellence in Chemistry Award at Clayton State, Edukuye was accepted into the M.D. Program at Morehouse School of Medicine and will start this fall.

PAULA HARRIS

(B.S. Criminal Justice '11)

After her recent graduation, Harris received a job working for Pendergast and Associates Law Firm in Atlanta.

ANTHONY MURPHY

(B.S. Sociology '11)

Murphy has been accepted into the master's program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at North Georgia College & State University and will begin his graduate work in fall 2011.

ASHLEY SHY

(B.A. Middle Grades Education '11)

Shy will begin teaching at Renaissance Middle School in South Fulton this fall. She credits her new career to the Clayton State education program. She says, "I have heard from so many people that we produce some of the best teachers and schools look to hire Clayton State graduates! In an economy that has been shaky to say the least, it is a blessing to be offered three different teaching positions right after graduating. It is because the professors in our education program prepare us to be the best at what we do."



CORRECTION

In the spring 2011 edition of The Laker Connection, a photo in the Class Notes section misidentified Judge Michael P. Baird '89. The photo that appeared was of alumnus Michael J. McCullough '86. We apologize for the mistake.

