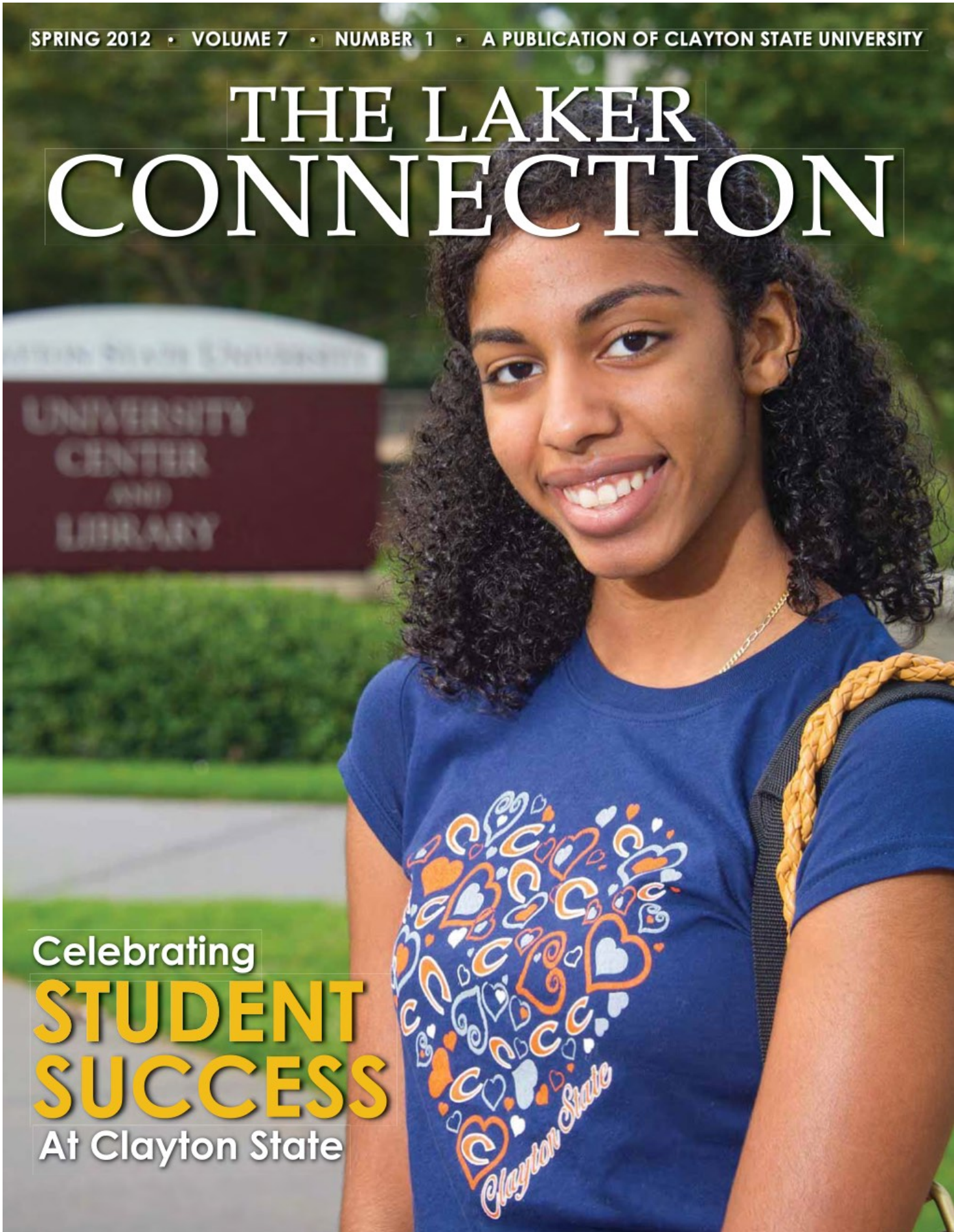


SPRING 2012 • VOLUME 7 • NUMBER 1 • A PUBLICATION OF CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY

THE LAKER CONNECTION

Celebrating
**STUDENT
SUCCESS**
At Clayton State



President's Message

Like this issue of *The Laker Connection*, Clayton State University's new strategic plan is all about learning and students.



Dr. Thomas J. Hynes, Jr.

The vision of the strategic plan is as follows: through a distinctive combination of proven and innovative methods of teaching and learning, Clayton State University will excel in preparing students from many walks of life to meet the challenges of living and working in a dynamic, global society.

Drawing from the strategic plan, the mission of the University is to cultivate an environment of engaged, experience-based learning, enriched by active community service, that prepares students of diverse ages and backgrounds to succeed in their lives and careers.

The key elements of the new mission statement are: engaged and experience based learning; active and enriching community service; a rich and complex view of diversity – inclusive of similarity and differences in ages, backgrounds, as well as race and ethnicity; and a focus on student success – in learning, in careers, in communities and in lives. These elements are drawn from what some have called the DNA of the institution – innovative instruction; student participation in their own learning; community based opportunities to apply lessons learned; a diversity of students framing the complexity of learning needed for a rapidly changing environment.

In keeping with the vision, mission, and goals of the strategic plan, this issue of *The Laker Connection* opens with a story on the new First-Year Advising & Retention Center, our latest initiative in support of success among first-year students. However, there are a lot of student success stories among the upper classes as well. For example: a mother, daughter, and son, who are all Clayton State students. The University's annual Chancellor's Award recipient and Clayton State's Presidential Scholars are certainly examples of success as well.

This issue hasn't neglected those who help contribute to student success: the Center for Academic Success' Kathy Garrison; Clayton State's retiring athletic director of 22 years, Mason Barfield; Professor Mario Norman; and The Loch Shop, the expanded and improved Clayton State bookstore, designed to become more student-centered.

Together, this issue of *The Laker Connection* helps present the success story that is Clayton State.

Dr. Thomas Hynes
President



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ERASING FIRST-YEAR FEAR

*THE FIRST-YEAR ADVISING & RETENTION CENTER'S
HOLISTIC APPROACH TO A
SUCCESSFUL FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE*

by LAUREN GRAVES

The freshman year can be the most intimidating year in a college career. But at Clayton State University, it doesn't have to be.

The First Year Advising & Retention Center (FYARC) stands ready to help Clayton State's first-time first-year students succeed in college. Since early intervention is key in preempting missteps that could lead to poor academic performance, FYARC begins equipping first-years for success - academically, socially, culturally and personally - before day one.

"I heard about FYARC through freshman orientation," says Jessica Nicole, a first-time freshman from Chicago, IL, who begins classes this semester. "I had questions for days! They helped answer everything. It made me feel excited for school instead of nervous. Thanks to FYARC, I feel more like I am going away to a school where it's like family, and that's the atmosphere I love."

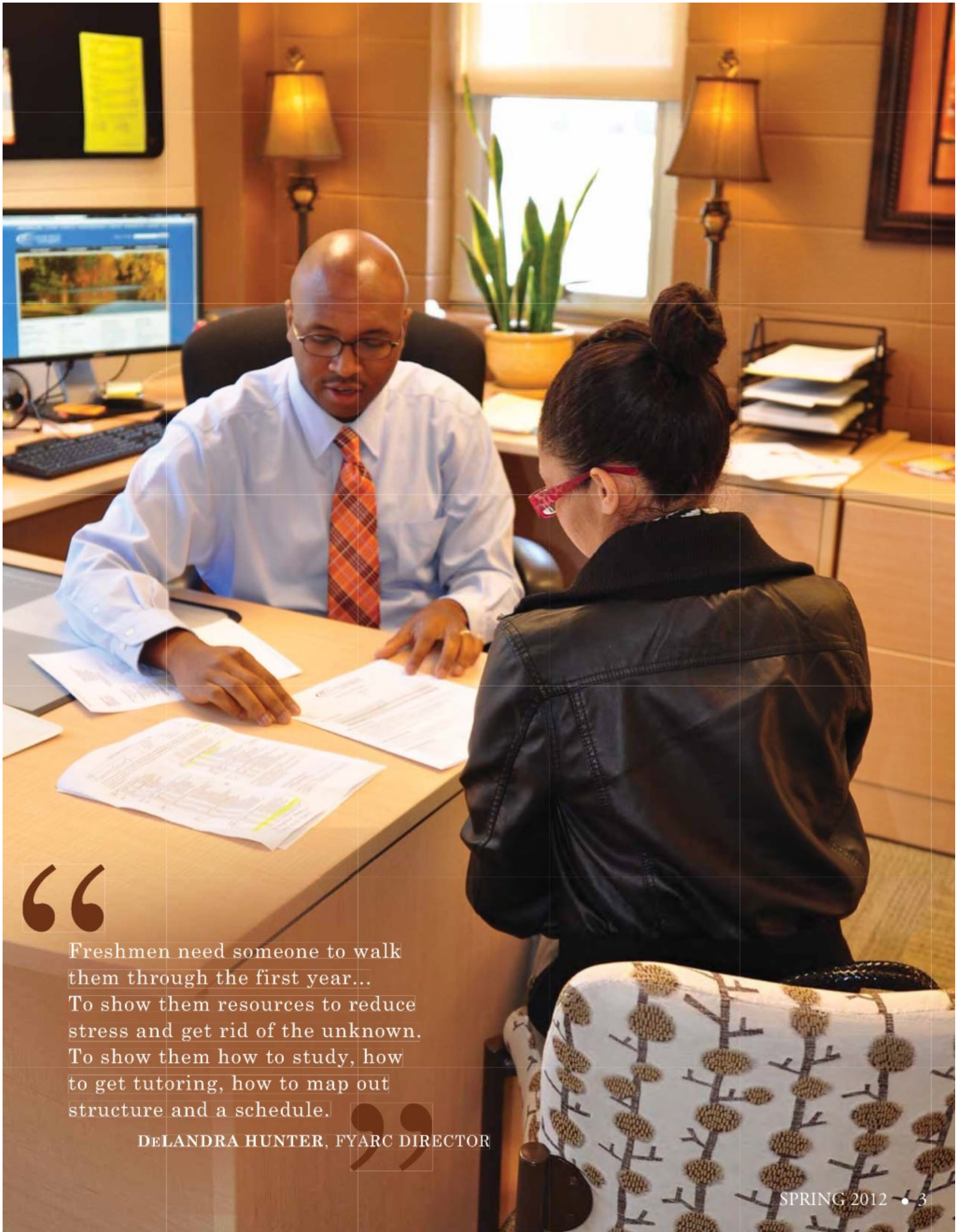
FYARC began in fall semester 2011 and provides personal academic advising and support to all first-time, full-time students. Advisors focus on academic components such as study skills, note taking and time management, and develop the whole person by addressing topics like life away

from home and stress management techniques.

"Class registration is only a small component of the work in the center, and advisors are expected to meet with each student once a month," shares Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management and Academic Success Mark Dadonna whose vision brought FYARC to Clayton State. "The center emphasizes a developmental, holistic approach to academic advising."

Leading the center is FYARC Director DeLandra Hunter who previously served as the associate director of the EXCEL Center for Academic Success at the University of West Georgia. In that capacity he oversaw the Tutoring and Learning Programs, Multicultural Achievement Program, iServe Mentoring Program and the Second Year Student Program.

"College is not like high school," says DeLandra, acknowledging one major first-year pitfall. "They sometimes hesitate to use tutors, and they often do not know how to study. It's a transitional time in their lives. We help walk them through that first year. We teach them how to be a college student in both the academic and social sense."



“

Freshmen need someone to walk them through the first year... To show them resources to reduce stress and get rid of the unknown. To show them how to study, how to get tutoring, how to map out structure and a schedule.

”

DELANDRA HUNTER, FYARC DIRECTOR



BACK ROW: Delandra Hunter, Jerryall Pettigrew
FRONT ROW: Maroda Bbuyea-Hamlet, Erica Jackson, Amy Poole

“

The center allows first-year students to experience what it means to make adult decisions about one's future without feeling lost or uncertain.

MARCIA BOUYEA-HAMLET, FYARC ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

”

FYARC advisor Jerryal Pettigrew, who previously held advisor positions in Clayton State's College of Arts & Sciences and Center for Academic Success, agrees. "We strive to meet the entire needs of our students, not just from the academic perspective. Students are challenged with transitioning from high school to college and the demand can be somewhat overwhelming. We not only help the students academically, but we also encourage them to maintain class attendance, hold study hours and to become active in campus life."

In addition to regular advising hours in their main office in the Natural and Behavioral Sciences building, and scheduled afternoon hours in Laker Hall, FYARC holds special programs and activities to encourage students to take full advantage of their support.

"A good example of this was the Breakfast-Brunch Registration Party held in Laker Hall last November," shares FYARC Assistant Director and advisor Marcia Bouyea-Hamlet, who began her ca-

reer working with students in 1993 at City College of New York. "First-year students could come downstairs in their pajamas, get advised and register for their spring 2012 classes."

Now in its second semester, FYARC continues to develop programs to connect students with campus and each other. Rolling out programs like the First-Year Reading Program, the Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Society, advising nights at Laker Hall, advising workshops and First-Year Service Projects, FYARC hopes to give every freshman a place to plug in to the Clayton State community, and to retain students in the process.

Existing programs, like Clayton State's Learning Communities, are already in place to help students make social connections in the classroom. Clayton State's CSU1022: University Foundations course, taught by FYARC advisors, allows students and their advisors to interact at the classroom level. The course reinforces the concepts of personal responsibility, prepares first-years for the challenges of higher education and familiarizes

“

FYARC is the nucleus to the freshmen student experience. Parents are relieved their student has a support system and students believe they have a home away from home.

JERRYAL PETTIGREW, FYARC ADVISOR

”

“

I feel my freshman year will be super successful and fun because of FYARC! Without them I think my freshman year of college would be kind of scary and nerve wracking, but they helped clear that away. I will definitely recommend them to other freshmen.

JESSICA NICOLE

”

“

I am elated that Clayton State has established FYARC for first-year students. Having a center that is dedicated to the central needs of a first-year student is monumental. I can see that Clayton State University is working to produce the leaders of tomorrow.

XAVIER SMITH

”

“

The people here are friendly and positive. It's a great place for students to begin a successful college career.

AMY POOLE, FYARC ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS COORDINATOR

”

students with the history and traditions of their soon-to-be alma mater.

“I believe those students who participate in FYARC are more successful because they are enrolled in Learning Communities that allow them to not only be familiar with study strategies, but to also meet other members of the faculty and staff, as well as student leaders,” says Pettigrew.

Encouraging the connection between student and professor is a benefit freshman Xavier Smith from North Charleston, SC discovered last semester.

“FYARC is a liaison between the students and the professors. Not only have I been able to see my current professor with the help of the center, but I have also been able to speak with a future professor about the coursework I will be attempting,” he says.

Smith says he visits FYARC at least once a week.

“My questions tend to be about majors, upper level courses and even graduate school preparation. I feel it is never too early to prepare for another chapter in your life even if the current chapter has not yet come to a close ... The advisors offer more than advising. If you are living away from home, they are like a standing par-

ent. Even though you are an adult, they can help you through the most challenging times of your freshman year.”

“Sometimes a student may just need motivation or help with something that may be difficult, may need an alternative solution, or just a simple word of encouragement that would impact their decision to continue on,” shares Smith's advisor Erica Jackson who joined FYARC from a full-time advising position in Clayton State's Center for Academic Success. “We reach out to students allowing them to know there is a place just for them to help guide them through academic and personal situations.”

The first hand to reach out to students when they enter FYARC is Administrative Operations Coordinator Amy Poole, who joins the center from serving 14 years in Clayton State's Office of Recruitment and Admissions.

“Students enjoy coming in here and sitting, getting the help they need and getting their questions answered,” says Poole. “This is a positive, safe place. Students can come anytime for any issue. They feel comfortable here. They pop in a lot, and they know we have their best interest at heart.”

FYARC demystifies the first-year experience, erasing unknowns and preparing students to succeed not only in those critical first 30 credit-hours, but also throughout their entire college experience. FYARC helps each student lay the foundation for that important walk across the commencement stage and that even more important walk through life.

“

I like connecting with students. I like that I understand and can identify with them... It makes me feel good when students come back and report their successes to me. I feel accomplished knowing I had some influence in their success.

ERICA JACKSON, FYARC ADVISOR

”



ALL IN THE FAMILY

by ERIN FENDER

No matter how short or long the journey is for a student to graduation, it is a journey of self-discovery, success and, at times, tribulation. Laura Fortner began her journey in 1993 when she knew there was no place she would rather be than at Clayton State.

"I wanted to be something for my kids, to just be something. I decided after two kids, who were in grade school, to get myself into college. I knew from the start I wanted to be at Clayton State and pursue nursing. I knew from very early on that was my path I needed to be on," says Laura.

While taking a full course load, Laura was a full-time mother and working two part-time jobs. She worked hard and was quite the successful student. However in 1996, with only six months to graduation, Laura was dealt an emotional blow.

"After eight years of marriage and two children, I was facing divorce. My life was flipped upside down and it just became a very emotional time for me. I had to step away from finishing my degree, but I stepped away with intent to finish one day," she expresses.

After stepping away from college, Laura settled into being mom and working for a local hospital, not a small feat. Eventually she met someone and together, they welcomed her youngest son. Not too long after his birth, Laura found herself back in class in January 2009.

"I was on my way to finishing what I started, then in May of 2009, I found out my husband of 13 years wanted a divorce. Here I am once again with my personal life flipped upside down and inside out. This time, however, I decided not to step away or quit. I was bent on finishing my education," she says.

Laura turned to Clayton State's Counseling & Psychological Services and met with the staff on a regular basis to keep herself uplifted and on a path of success.

"Clayton State's faculty and staff have been inspiring and supportive. Many areas have played roles in supporting me to be a successful student. We have tutors and professors who always have their doors open, who are ready and willing to help students succeed," she says.

Determined to obtain a degree, while she waited to hear from the School of Nursing regarding her acceptance in the program, she decided to pursue a different degree path. Feeling somewhat defeated, she wanted to prove she could be a successful student and begin the Criminal Justice program.

"One day I got the call from the School of Nursing; I was accepted! In the fall semester of 2010, I began my journey once again to finish my nursing degree. Therefore, here I am, a double major student with the intent to graduate with honors," she says.

Laura will walk across the stage at graduation and accept her B.S.N. this spring. However, she will not walk alone; she will be joined by her first-born, Chris Mills, as he receives a Bachelor of Information Technology degree. Laura will also earn her B.S. in Criminal Justice in the summer of 2012.

"My mom always has my back and is always supportive in my decision paths. She is my role model for sticking with school until the end," says Mills.

Laura and Chris are not the only college students in the family; her daughter Alyssa Mills is currently studying psychology at Clayton State with plans to graduate in the spring of 2016.

"My mom's road to graduation has definitely been a long one, and I know it hasn't always been easy for her. Her determination is what drives me to stay motivated. My mom is truly an amazing woman, and I couldn't be more proud of her. She encourages me to stay strong and reminds me that my hard work will pay off in the end," says Alyssa.

Laura is currently volunteering for her School of Nursing requirements, and the Honors Student Association, as well as serving secretary for the Clayton State Criminal Justice Society. Chris Mills worked in The Hub as a technical analyst for five years.

The family says they have echoed one fact; professors at Clayton State want you to succeed.



(L to R) Alyssa Mills, Laura Fortner and Chris Mills



(L to R) Jacob Caldwell, Chaston Matheny, Thao Duong, Jonathan Blake Anderson and Todd Burke. Not Pictured: Jon Skinner



Presidential Scholars

Student Success at its Best

by JOHN SHIFFERT

When the subject of student success at Clayton State is broached, it makes sense to mention a group of the University's most successful students... the Presidential Scholars.

Part of a program that originated in 2010, there have thus far been two groups of Presidential Scholars at Clayton State, five who matriculated in August 2010, and six more who received their scholarships starting in August 2011. The first group included Tawan Holmes from Westlake High School in Atlanta, Sotheavy Vann from Riverdale High School in College Park, Kathleen Barbosa from Chattahoochee High School in Alpharetta, James "Kirk" Muse from White-water High School in Fayetteville, and Khalea Crowe from Miller Grove High School in Lithonia. The current academic year's group features Jacob Caldwell from Woodland High School in Stockbridge, Jonathan Blake Anderson from Stockbridge High School, Riverdale's Thao Duong from Mount Zion High School, Griffin High School graduate Chaston Matheny, North Oconee High School graduate Jon Skinner, a resident of Statham, and Todd Burke from Shaw High School in Columbus.

As part of the application process for the Presidential Scholarships, each applicant submitted an original essay on the subject, "What I Wish to Accomplish with My College Education."

"These students represent the academic best of our incoming freshmen. They are very talented academically, they wrote competitive essays, and they chose Clayton State," said Clayton State President Dr. Thomas Hynes, Jr., at the time of the first

group's acceptance.

Even when talking about outstanding freshmen, the transition to college life is not necessarily an easy one, even for the University's academic best. In the spirit of Clayton State, and the spirit of student success, the first group of Presidential Scholars, with a year's worth of experience behind them, recently had some advice for the second group.

"The advice I would like to give to the incoming freshman of the program is to not bite off more than you can chew," says Barbosa, a Biology major. "It is great to be involved in activities and student organizations, but you have to always keep in mind that your studies come first and it is crucial to keep those grades up.

"Be reasonable when choosing classes and always leave enough time to study. If that isn't taken care of, the outcomes are not pretty."

"Your college career is what you make of it. It can be a piece of nice paper, or it can be the experience of a lifetime, a stepping stone to a better life and a better you," says Vann, also a Biology major who started at Clayton State as a Dual Enrollment student. "You can achieve the latter by learning from every class you take, every person you meet, every obstacle you face, and every mistake you make. Get to know your professors – they can be pretty cool – do things you enjoy, but don't take on more than you can handle. Never be deterred by a challenge – it will make you stronger – and explore new frontiers."

It's interesting to note that the two scientists both caution their peers to focus on

learning, but not to take on too much... possibly since Presidential Scholars may also be overachievers by nature.

Muse, another former Dual Enrollment student, is a Computer Science major. He also has some very practical advice, direct from the classroom.

"Although it seems tedious, take notes from the book as well as from the professor," he says. "It works as a double-check to make sure you have everything you need.

"Always take notes; you can't rely on memory alone. One of my high school teachers always said, 'If you're dumb, you think you're smart, so you won't write anything down. If you're smart, you know you're dumb, so you write everything down.'"

As Presidential Scholars each student in both groups has received 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.

With two groups of successful students already enrolled in Clayton State, it seems safe to say that the Presidential Scholarship program is already itself a success. And, although academic prowess is certainly a key role in student success, so too is attitude. As such, Barbosa has the final word.

"I also would like to congratulate the incoming freshman and hope they have a wonderful time at Clayton State University," she says. "It is a wonderful school, and it's one I hope they are proud to be attending as I am."

Chancellor's Choice

by CIJI FOX

Education has always been important to Clayton State University Psychology major Adrianna Gerena, the spring 2011 Chancellor's Academic Recognition Award recipient. Growing up in Stockton, Ca., Gerena attended Commodore Stockton Skills School for the majority of her middle school years. It was at Commodore that Gerena experienced teachers that pushed their students to learn the material by making learning fun, a process which kept students engaged. During the second half of Gerena's eighth grade year, she transferred to Bear Creek Middle School in Fairburn, Ga. Despite changing schools, Gerena maintained her passion for education.

"Education is very important to me," she says. "We not only learn to walk and talk because someone taught us, but we learn about math, science, and so many other things through education. It is in this way that I view education as the passing on of knowledge, whether that knowledge is how to drive a car or operate a forklift; each person must learn to do such a task. Education is everywhere as opportunities to learn are all around us. For me education goes beyond classrooms and textbooks, and I feel that without it there is no telling where the human race would be."

Gerena's family made sure to stress the importance of education as well as

being the best professional you could possibly be.

"Growing up, A's were the goal and if I came home with a B that meant I was not reaching the goal. Sure a B is better than a C, D or F, but it's still not an A and so straight A's were what I strived for," she says.

Transitioning into high school, Gerena realized that many students lost focus, yet she continued to strive for academic excellence.

"I maintained a good academic standing, keeping in mind that in order to attain my future goal of attending college, I would need to do well in my classes," she explains. "My senior year of high school brought with it the notable experience of participating in dual enrollment at Clayton State University. By doing dual enrollment, I was able to get an early start on earning my college credits."

Gerena's experience at Clayton State University was rewarding.

"My experience at Clayton State was nothing but positive. I loved all of the professors in my program. They were friendly, easily approachable, and they taught the material in a way that was easy to relate to and simple to remember," she says. "The campus has a great atmosphere, so if classes get to be too much, students can sit by the lake.

Looking at the water, the swans, and the geese is a great way to unwind or just wait for your next class to start."

In her three years at the University, she was on the Dean's List all six semesters; was a HOPE scholar; was a member of the Clayton State Honors Program, Psi Chi International honor society, and the Golden Key International Honor society; and was in the Math Club.

Gerena's future goals have kept her motivated.

"In the future, I want to start my own program that specializes in counseling and mentoring females with low self-esteem," she explains. "I plan to get my doctoral degree. I feel that in order to be successful in a doctoral program I must do the best that I can in my academic career to present myself as a positive applicant. In addition to this, doing well in academics as I work my way up to the doctoral level will prepare me for the rigorous training that lies ahead."

In describing what makes her successful, Gerena says, "I am a success because when I was in school I viewed each paper, each test, and each assignment as my chance to show the teacher that I can understand the material. I am a success because I set my sight on a goal and have kept striving for that goal regardless of what obstacle was put in my path."



HOPKINS NAMED ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

The Clayton State University Alumni Association Board of Directors has announced its new slate of officers for 2011-2013. For the upcoming term, the new officers will be: Ben Hopkins, president; Lanelle LaRue, vice-president; Sandra Hill, secretary; and Dina Swearngin, treasurer.



Hopkins

Hopkins is currently employed at Clayton State and serves as the operations coordinator for the Student Activities Center (SAC). He supervises the day-to-day operations of the SAC, supervising the game room, custodial, and student building manager operations, as well as acting as the liaison to the University's Office of Facilities Management and to external contractors.

Hopkins graduated in 2006 with a B.A. degree in Communication and Media Studies and is pursuing a M.Ed. in Higher Education Administration at Georgia Southern University.

HAROLD NAMED DEAN OF SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Dr. Gwendolyn Harold, Clayton State University professor of English, was recently named dean of the University's School of Graduate Studies. This will be her eighth year at Clayton State.



Harold

"I came to Clayton State University to develop a new English program and to serve as the first chair of the Language & Literature Department; now the English Department," Harold

says. "I have had the privilege to develop and teach undergraduate women's studies courses as well as undergraduate and graduate American literature courses, including several courses in the Masters in Liberal Studies, our first graduate program.

"This is an exciting time to be at Clayton State University, especially in the School of Graduate Studies, where we have the opportunity to make many positive changes for our students and our community. We have eight graduate programs and plan to create more in the future."

JAMES STILL LIKES CLAYTON STATE

In its July 2010 Second Annual Best Colleges & Universities in Georgia issue, *James* magazine stated that Clayton State is "proof that ethnic diversity and scholastic achievement can make for a happy marriage in the modern South."

The 2011 version of Best Colleges & Universities in Georgia is out, and *James* still likes Clayton State, calling the University a "treasure of a Georgia university" and giving Clayton State a "Cum Laude" rating and noting that Clayton State is underrated because, "The school may now be best known for its ethnic diversity. One day it'll be known for its comprehensive academic opportunities and its rural setting in the heart of metro Atlanta."

Clayton State's unique combination of a scenic campus located within minutes of downtown Atlanta also occasioned comment from *James*, which proclaims Clayton State a model urban university.

WOMEN'S FORUM ESTABLISHES ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

The Clayton State Women's Forum reached a milestone of establishing an

Endowed Women's Forum Scholarship which requires a minimum \$25,000. The primary goal for the Women's Forum organization is to build and sustain a Scholarship Fund in support of assisting students with general and emergency resources to continue and complete their academic studies.

"I am so proud of our group for raising the money to endow the scholarship," Lou Brackett, Women's Forum president, says of the organization's accomplishment. "Over the years, Women's Forum has been known for advocacy, mentoring, and inspirational speakers who provided leadership role models."

CLAYTON STATE SETS ENROLLMENT RECORD

Following the final fee payment purge for the fall 2011 semester, Clayton State University Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management & Academic Success Dr. Mark F. Dadona announced that the University has set a new enrollment record of 6,863. Clayton State's previous single semester enrollment high was 6,785, for the spring 2011 semester.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS RENAMED COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

Clayton State's AACSB-accredited School of Business has been renamed the College of Business.

Following a July 2011 action by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, the School of Business became the College of Business, effective in January 2012.

In preparation for becoming the College of Business, Dean Dr. Alphonso Ogbuehi recently appointed three professors as department chairs. Associate Professor of Accounting

Gregory Kordecki was named department chair for the accounting, finance, legal and economic professors. His department will be known as LEAF (Law, Economic, Accounting, and Finance). Professor of Management Dr. Louis Jordan was named department chair for the marketing, management and supply chain management professors. His organization is MMS (for Management, Marketing and Supply Chain). Professor of Health Care Management Dr. Peter Fitzpatrick is now department head for Health Care Management.



College of Business



Natural And Behavioral Sciences Ribbon Cutting

**NEWLY-RENOVATED
NATURAL AND
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
BUILDING RIBBON CUTTING**

Clayton State had a ribbon-cutting on Sept. 26 for one of the oldest buildings on the 42-year old campus.

The Clayton State College of Arts & Sciences was celebrating the newly-renovated Natural and Behavioral Sciences (NBS) Building with a ceremony that included representatives of the architects (2WR) and contractor (Hogan Construction Group) for the renovation, the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes.

One of the campus' original facilities, previously named the Business and Health Sciences (BHS) Building, the 42,000 square-foot NBS has just undergone an extensive, \$600,000 interior facelift, and has been given a new name in conjunction with its new tenants. As of the start of classes in August, BHS was renamed the Natural and Behavioral Sciences Building, home to both the University's natural science programs (e.g., biology, chemistry) and the psychology program. NBS also houses Clayton State's new First-Year Advising & Retention Center.

**SCHOOL OF NURSING
RECEIVES \$750K GRANT FOR
GRADUATE EDUCATION**

Clayton State University's School of Nursing (SoN) recently received a \$750,409 advanced nursing education grant from the Division of Nursing within Health Resources Services Administration. The grant runs through 2014.

"This grant will support a significant increase in enrollment in the RN-MSN program and includes strategies, such as faculty-student mentoring to support student retention. Faculty and students will be paired based upon common practice and scholarship interests," says Associate Professor and Project Director Dr. Jennell Charles.

The grant will create an accelerated program, allowing students to move through the RN-MSN program in just six semesters. There will also be strategies to increase service learning opportunities with emphasis on reducing health disparities. Each year, the grant will support students with a nurse and a non-nurse faculty scholar providing students with face to face and web meetings. There will be an intentional effort to provide a focus on nursing education as well as leadership and management.

This is the first Advanced Nursing Education grant (awarded by Health Resources and Services Administration, DHHS) for the SoN at Clayton State that supports graduate education. Clayton State's SoN has received many federal grants in support of undergraduate nursing education over the years.

**CLAYTON STATE RETIREES
ESTABLISH ENDOWED
SCHOLARSHIP**

The Clayton State Retirees Association (CSRA) recently completed establishing a fully-endowed graduate student scholarship for the University, reaching its initial goal of raising the minimum \$25,000 required for an endowed scholarship.

The idea for establishing an endowed scholarship originated with retirees Robert Koermer and Don Phillips in 2005, prior to Clayton State rolling out its first graduate program, the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies.

The goal behind the scholarship was for the retirees to build a bridge connecting their past with the future of the University; and, by so doing, make a difference to future generations of students. In addition, the scholarship gives retirees an opportunity to demonstrate their continued

support of the University and to be actively engaged in continuing a legacy of excellence established through many years of service to Clayton State.

CLAYTON STATE RAISES \$30K IN ANNUAL TOWN AND GOWN GOLF TOURNAMENT

The Annual Clayton State University Foundation Town and Gown Golf Tournament, held during September 2011 at Eagle's Landing Golf & Country Club in Stockbridge, Ga., raised a total of \$30,263.

"As usual, my special thanks go to Reda Rowell, Terri Taylor-Hamrick, Dana Brown, and Tiffany Whidby of the Clayton State University Development staff, for the long hours they put in to assure success for this event," says Vice President of External Relations Robert L. Stephens. "Without their unswerving support we could never have pulled this off.

"I would also like to thank the Clayton State Honors Program students who volunteered to help at the golf course during the tournament."

In a mild upset, Dr. Kuo Lee's Med Cross Imaging team took the tournament team title from defending champion Tim Crawford and the Heritage Cadillac team. Both Med Cross and Heritage shot 19 under par 53, but Med Cross won on a scorecard tiebreaker. Bruce Gant's State Farm

team was just one stroke back in third place, with a 54.

ACCLAIMED JUPITER STRING QUARTET RETURNS TO SPIVEY HALL FOR SEASON TWO

Project Jupiter, a multi-year artistic and community-service initiative uniting the acclaimed Jupiter String Quartet, Clayton State's Spivey Hall, and three Southern Crescent partner schools, enhances the understanding, appreciation, and awareness of classical music, especially the wealth of great music written for string quartet. In an intense week of outreach performances, the Jupiters, as advocates for their art and ambassadors of Spivey Hall, continue to win friends for string chamber music through their superb playing and friendly, informative encounters with people of all ages, regardless of their musical knowledge.

Beginning Monday, Oct. 31, the Boston-based Jupiters - violinists Nelson Lee and Meg Freivogel, violist Liz Freivogel, and cellist Daniel McDonough - resumed their visits to the chamber orchestras of Lovejoy High School in Hampton (Carmen del Valle, orchestra director), Union Grove High School in McDonough (Bill Scruggs, orchestra director), and Whitewater High School in Fayetteville (Darilyn Esterline, orchestra director), interacting with approximately 200 students. Be-

yond performances, instruction, and support of the directors' work with these ensembles, the Jupiters continue to coach the next generation of student string quartets formed under the auspices of Project Jupiter, which will display their achievements in a public Master Class in March.

MATH STUDENTS ATTEND REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Five Clayton State students recently attended the Seventh Annual Regional Mathematics and Statistics Conference held at The University of North Carolina-Greensboro (UNCG).

Marcus Bartlett, Maria Morales-Beale, Daryl Boatwright, Christine Lengel and Tony Yaacoub were escorted to the conference by Drs. Elliot Krop and Christopher Raridan of the Clayton State Mathematics Department. The conference is funded by the National Science Foundation and boasts presentations from students from Clemson, Duke, North Carolina State, UNCG, UNC-Chapel Hill, and Auburn University.

Yaacoub and Bartlett gave 15-minute talks concerning their Senior Capstone Research.

BENEFIT WEEK HELPS CLAYTON STATE BASKETBALL PLAYER

A full week of events were held at Clayton State at the end of November as part of Zac Bradley Benefit Week. Events included a blood drive, a gospel concert and a Clayton State basketball doubleheader. Each event raised awareness for the transfusion needs of critically injured people and raised money for Help Hope Live in honor of Zac Bradley.

Bradley, a native of Riverdale, Ga., and a former prep standout at North



2011 Town And Gown Golf Tournament



Project Jupiter

Cont'd.. p. 18

CLAYTON STATE LEAPS FORWARD WITH A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN... IT'S ALL ABOUT STUDENT SUCCESS

It is all about learning and student success. That's the thrust of Clayton State University's new strategic plan, a plan that will guide the University to where it wants to go as it leaps forward.

The values of the strategic plan, and its mission statement, were the subject of a presentation by Clayton State President Dr. Thomas "Tim" Hynes on the occasion of the official launch of the strategic plan in October 2011. Hynes listed the key elements of the new mission statement as being: engaged and experience based learning; active and enriching community service; a rich and complex view of diversity – inclusive of similarity and differences in ages, backgrounds, as well as race and ethnicity; and a focus on student success – in learning, in careers, in communities and in lives.

While not exactly presenting a "Five Year Plan," Hynes did have some very specific goals for the University for the next five years in conjunction with the strategic plan. These included:

- Graduates of every academic program will complete one or more active learning experiences before graduation
- Every undergraduate student will sign a social contract of responsibility, and all will have an opportunity to sign a contract committing to community service
- Programs in every institutional college will be cited nationally for leadership in innovations and success in student learning
- Students will demonstrate at



least a 10 percent increase in first to second year retention and six year graduation rates relative to 2010 levels

- The university will be cited nationally for applications of technology in various forms to student and faculty learning

Hynes also noted goals to be achieved within the next five years:

- Within five years, each college and school will develop and implement innovative study abroad opportunities and exchange programs for students and faculty that will increase participation by at least 10 percent
- Within five years, the university will design programs for all university faculty and staff to enhance cultural competencies
- Within the next five years, create programs for linking every undergraduate student on one or more occasion with a Clayton State alumnus
- Within five years, create an extensive inventory of successful and sustained partnerships with multiple partners – K-12 sys-

tems in Clayton, Henry, Fayette, Fulton Counties that supports more students to seek and achieve baccalaureate degrees

- Within five years, Clayton State will be a recognized leader in adult learning and degree completion
- Within five years, Clayton State will develop model internship programs to improve the civic life of Clayton, Fayette, Fulton, and Henry Counties
- Within five years, Clayton State will be cited for extensive strategic partnerships with local and global institutions/corporations for enhanced learning
- Within five years, Clayton State will document and increase meaningful research and social learning projects to benefit Clayton, Fayette, Fulton and Henry Counties – issues will include educational reform, civic engagement and leadership, immigration, law enforcement, transportation, health and health management, economic development, and the environment.



The campus community gathers at the October 2011 Strategic Plan Launch Party.

Clayton High School, played last season at Clayton State as a freshman, helping pace the Lakers to a 19-10 mark. He was leaving campus on May 25, 2011, when, during a storm, a tree fell on his car. Bradley was transported to Grady Memorial Hospital, where he underwent multiple surgeries on his brain, neck and spinal cord. He spent the summer in rehabilitation at the Shepherd Center in Atlanta, before coming home in the fall.

NSSE RESULTS SHOW CLAYTON STATE STRONG IN STUDENT SUPPORT

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) recently released its newest report, *Fostering Student Engagement Campuswide - Annual Results 2011*. The report is the result of a national-scope survey designed to provide data to colleges and universities to assess and improve undergraduate education, inform accountability and accreditation efforts, and facilitate national and sector benchmarking efforts.

With one of the foci of Clayton State's new strategic plan being student success and support for students, it is worth noting that many of the survey's findings about Clayton State, taken from Clayton State students, tracked directly to student success.

Highlighting the data on Clayton State was the finding from an NSSE survey of 603 randomly-selected Clayton State students that 92 percent of the University's freshmen reported that Clayton State provides substantial support for academic success, in comparison to 79 percent of freshmen elsewhere in Georgia. In addition, 90 percent of Clayton State seniors reported that the University emphasizes studying and academic work, compared to 82 percent of seniors reporting elsewhere in Georgia.

Clayton State's level of student sup-

port was also benchmarked in efforts like feedback from faculty to students, relationships between students and administrative personnel and offices, and the overall concept of providing support for academic success. Two-thirds of Clayton State first-year students said they received prompt written or oral feedback from faculty (compared to 57 percent statewide). Two-thirds of Clayton State seniors said they had positive relationships with administrative personnel and offices (compared to 56 percent statewide). On the subject of academic success, a high percentage of Clayton State seniors, the most knowledgeable group among the student body, said that the institution "provides substantial support for academic success." The total here, 80 percent, surpassed the statewide average, 72 percent.

COMMENCEMENT; HONORS AND EXHORTATIONS

Commencement ceremonies are typically about honoring students who have just completed their degrees, along with a few exhortations to those students.

That's what happened at Clayton State University on Saturday, Dec. 10. However, the day also brought special recognition to one of the Southern Crescent's outstanding public servants. In addition to awarding some 475 undergraduate and graduate degrees, Clayton State also presented the seventh honorary doctorate in the University's 42-year history.

M. Allan Vigil, president and owner of Allan Vigil Ford Lincoln Mercury in Morrow and Allan Vigil Ford in Fayetteville, received an Honorary Doctor-



Vigil

ate in Public Service from Clayton State President Dr. Thomas J. Hynes at the second of the two ceremonies held in the Athletics & Fitness Center on Dec. 10.

The exhortation part of graduation came from the keynote speakers, Georgia Supreme Court Justice Robert Benham in the first ceremony, and former Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin in the second ceremony.

CLAYTON STATE THEATRE FOUNDING DIRECTOR PASSES

Dr. Larry Bailey Corse, the founder of the Clayton State Theatre, and its director for 31 years, passed away on Thursday, Dec. 8, 2011, at the age



Corse

of 71. Clayton State's second-most senior faculty member at the time of his June 2003 retirement, Corse was also a professor of English.

In September 1972, Corse joined the faculty of Clayton State (then Clayton Junior College). Though Corse will be remembered for his teaching, his contributions to Clayton State Theatre will be his lasting legacy. Corse was committed to both student actors/actresses and aspiring playwrights. Corse opened the stage to premiere new works of theatre, including the musical *The Day it Rained Forever*, by science fiction author Ray Bradbury and composer William Whitefield, and the play *Your Name in Bold*, by former Clayton State biology professor Dr. Greg Hampikian. The Clayton State Theatre premiered 34 new works under his direction.

DIRK MORRELL RETIRES

Every long-term institution has employees that, over the years, define the institution.

At Clayton State University, one of

those individuals for the past 25 years has been Dirk Morrell, who joined the staff at Clayton State on Oct. 1, 1986, as a delivery clerk. On Friday, Dec. 23, 2011, Morrell retired as the head of Mail Services and Inventory Control, and it is safe to say that Clayton State will never be the same again.



Morrell

You see, Morrell is one of a kind, a true original with an original sense of humor who is arguably one of the most mnemonic individuals to favor the University with his presence. A quick Q & A with Morrell, on the occasion of this retirement, speaks for itself. For instance, when asked about his spending 25 years at Clayton State, he says, "I was just going to be here until I found a 'real job.'"

Q. What are your plans for after you retire?

A. Watch TV and stay out of trouble. Staying out of trouble will almost be a full time job.

Q. What was your most memorable moment during your time at Clayton State?

A. When Dr. (Susan) Hornbuckle got her hair cut short.

Q. Who was the most memorable person you have known at Clayton State?

A. Dr. Donna McCarty. She showed me that a person could be a liberal and still have some common sense.

Q. Who is your all-time favorite Clayton State person?

A. I cannot put one person in that category, but the staff of Clayton State are some of the best people I have ever met... they always keep things going.

Q. What's been the biggest change in

Clayton State since you started working here?

A. I would have to say the expansion of the campus. I remember when Budget & Finance, Accounting Services, HR, Payroll, VPAA (2 people), President, Development, Financial Aid, Admissions, Registrar, Computer Center, Mail room and Continuing Education where all housed in the A Building, which I think is now called Faculty Hall. Oh yeah, and Public Safety had a big closet in the Student Center.

Q. What advice do you have for whoever takes your job?

A. Keep a smile on your face.

Q. What advice do you have for the rest of the Clayton State staff?

A. Keep on looking out for each other.

Q. What is one interesting thing about Dirk Morrell that no one at Clayton State knows?

A. I comb my hair to hide my bald spot. I know that no one has ever noticed it.

Q. Who or what will you miss the most about Clayton State?

A. The people.

It's safe to say that the people of Clayton State will miss him as well.

MIKE MEAD NAMED INTERIM ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

Long-time Clayton State University athletic administrator and coach Mike Mead has been appointed by President Dr. Thomas J. "Tim" Hynes as the University's interim athletic director.



Mead

Mead succeeds H. Mason Barfield, Clayton State's first athletic director,

who announced on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2011, that he was retiring as of Friday, Oct. 21, 2011. Mead will serve as interim athletic director until the conclusion of a national search for an athletic director for the Clayton State Lakers. It is anticipated that the position will be filled as of June 1, 2012.

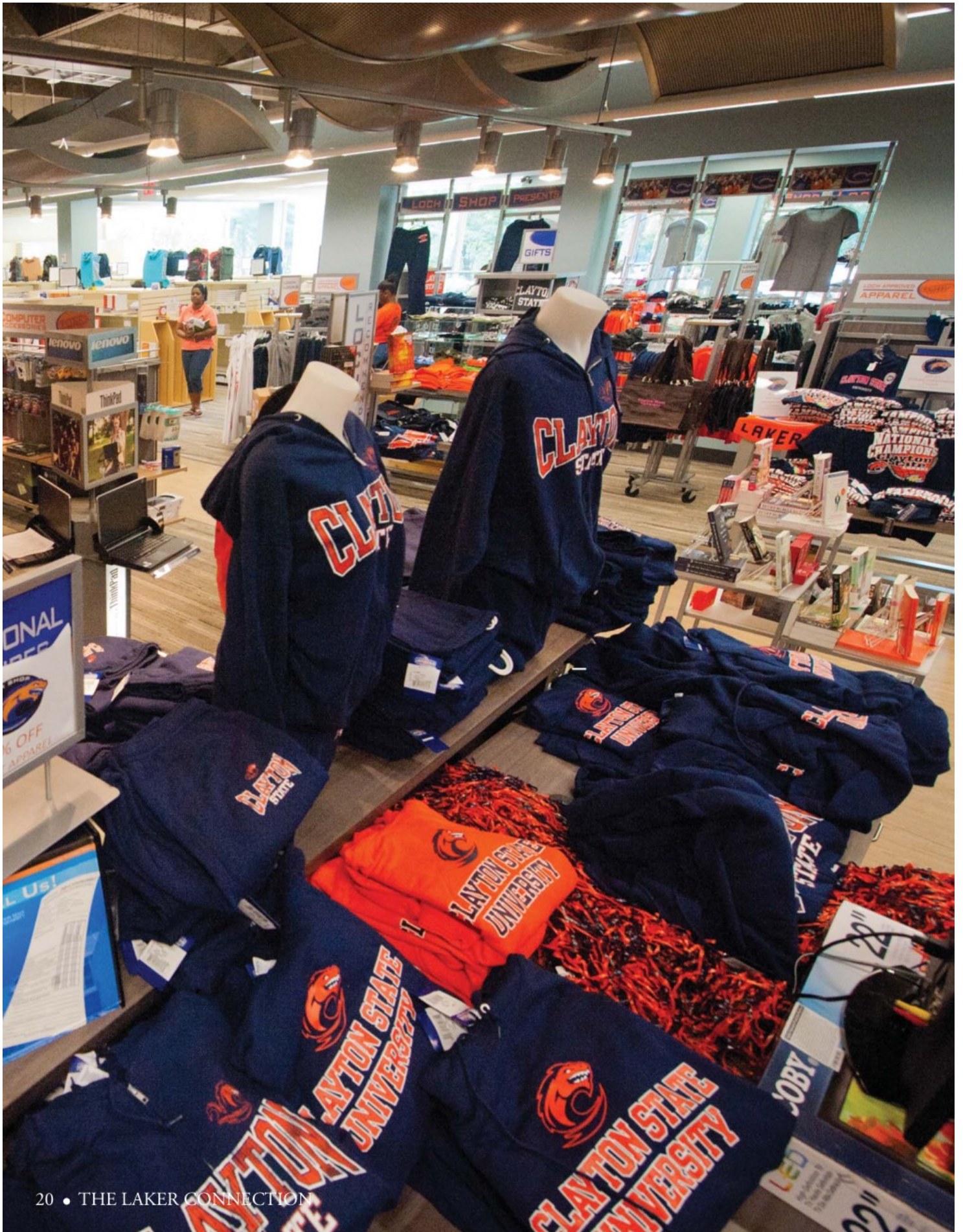
AMERO, GRIZZELL WIN CHANCELLOR'S CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARDS

Clayton State University's Carolina Amero and Norman Grizzell have been named winners of the 2011 Chancellor's Customer Service Awards.

Amero, Clayton State's assistant vice president of Auxiliary & Administrative Services, was named winner of the Joseph Greene Award as the USG's Customer Service Champion of the Year. Grizzell, director of Auxiliary Services and a direct report of Amero, was the silver medal winner in the Excellence Award of the Year for Individuals. Their awards were announced on Wednesday, Nov. 16 at a ceremony at the offices of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG). All 35 institutions in the University System submit nominations for the yearly Chancellor's Customer Service Award program.



(L TO R): Norman Grizzell, Corlis Cummings, Chancellor Hank Huckaby, Carolina Amero, and President Tim Hynes



IT'S THE PLACE TO GO: THE LOCH SHOP

by JOHN SHIFFERT

If Clayton State University is no longer Clayton Junior College, then The Loch Shop is no longer the Bookstore. Although maybe not a deep, philosophical thought that should come under the scrutiny of Dr. Ron Jackson, Dr. Alexander Hall or Dr. Todd Janke, there nonetheless is a direct cause and effect relationship between the two name changes. In simple terms, the University's retail outlet has changed as much as the University in the past 40+ years, and the two changes are indeed related.

Let's start at the beginning, and bring in the expert on things Clayton State, Emeritus Director of Student Life Rob Taylor. Having started at Clayton Junior College in 1971, Taylor recalls the "roots" of the current and very modern retail operation now known as The Loch Shop.

"The bookstore opened with the College in September 1969, otherwise the students would not have had a way to get their books!" he explains. "Al Gore had not invented the internet and Amazon was a river or a tall woman. I arrived not quite two years later and the bookstore was located downstairs in the Student Center across from the cafeteria."

That location, which was just across the hall from The Loch Shop's newly-expanded digs, sold, not surprisingly, textbooks... and very little else. As far as soft goods were concerned, Taylor recalls gym uniforms (yes, Clayton State had P.E. classes in those days), specifically white with blue lettering Clayton Junior College t-shirts and blue with white lettering Clayton Junior College gym shorts that were obviously practical, but not exactly fashion statements. (On the other hand, if you happen to have one of these gym uniforms, and would like to donate same to Clayton State, Archivist Rosemary Fischer would be thrilled.)

Taylor's near-eidetic Clayton State knowledge also includes previous Bookstore managers – predecessors to current boss

Todd Smith – Sergeant Weber (Taylor says he looked like a Marine D.I.), Gail Nicholson and Alan Bates. He also claims that the most notable figure to ever work in the Bookstore was Philadelphia native Thomasina "Tommie" DeWeese.

"Tommie was as Yankee as anyone who ever served on the staff of the CJC, CSC, CCSU and CSU bookstore," he claims. "A thoroughly refreshing person who said what was on her mind and loved the students."

While DeWeese was an important part of The Loch Shop's history, her boss was the one who started the outlet on the road to the status of a destination of choice for Clayton State students, faculty and staff. That would be Robert "Bob" Holmes, himself as much a Clayton State institution as Taylor or the Bookstore. Holmes took over as Bookstore manager in May 1978, and put in 29 years in the position until his retirement in June 2007 (although he can still be seen on campus, helping out the Office of Auxiliary Services.)

"For all practical purposes, the store was just a textbook and school supply store until we became a four-year institution in 1986," he remembers. "At that time we started stocking insignia merchandise. Although we did attempt to sell trade and mass market books prior to 1995, it was never a successful venture."

Serving an institution of less than 5,000 students, exactly zero of whom lived on campus, it's not surprising that non-Clayton State-related materials were a tough sell. Well, as noted earlier, times have changed. The University now has close to 7,000 students (with several hundred living on campus), and a "college store" that is both a purveyor of a wide variety of college books, gear and supplies, and the best bookstore this side of Southlake Mall. As the University has changed, so, too, has The Loch Shop changed and adapted, all in the name of better service, primarily for students. Those changes even included a couple of re-locations, first to the

Baker Center, then back to the Student Center, then back to the Baker Center again for the summer of 2011, so that the new, improved Loch Shop could not only be built, but re-named as well.

In an official ribbon-cutting ceremony on the morning of Tuesday, Aug. 9, 2011, Assistant VP Carolina Amero, Smith, and the entire bookstore crew announced the new name at the old/new location on the first floor of the Student Center. The winning Loch Shop entry was submitted by former Clayton State Student Government Association President Darius Thomas.

Thomas renamed a far bigger and better store, with a lounge area, far more retail space, and far more stock; everything from frozen microwave lunches, to copies of "The Hunger Games" trilogy, to books authored by Clayton State faculty and staff (you can pick up a paperback copy of "The King James Conspiracy"), to a vast array of Clayton State gear, to backpacks, to textbooks, school supplies, and much-needed candy for those late-in-the-day low blood sugar blues.

"Our goal with the remodel was to provide a larger and more welcoming retail environment in which we could display a broader selection of the merchandise which students need to be academically successful and which they want to fit their collegiate lifestyle," explains Smith. "The shop's new look allows our operation to offer a more varied product selection, which we hope will make the Loch Shop a place students want to visit throughout the semester instead of the place they have to visit to buy books once at the beginning of the semester."

With recent events like a Phillip DePoy book signing, a visit from Santa, regular book sales, and an autograph session for the 2011 National Champion women's basketball team, Smith and The Loch Shop have indeed become the place to go on campus.

MASON BARFIELD

HIS COMMITMENT PAID OFF FOR CLAYTON STATE AND ITS STUDENTS

by JOHN SHIFFERT *and* LEE WRIGHT

He started the athletic program at Clayton State University from scratch in 1989, with little more than a commitment to success. Twenty-two years later, Mason Barfield retired as athletic director with Laker athletics at an historic high.

The only athletic director in the history of athletics at Clayton State, Barfield's last official day was Friday, Oct. 21, 2011. He left behind a program that he started with one sport at the NAIA level in 1990, and developed it into a highly-competitive program at the NCAA Division II level, and a program that won its first national championship, in women's basketball, this past March.

"Mason Barfield was first and foremost a university leader. While his more than two-decade focus was on athletics and student athletes and athletic programs, that focus was guided by his commitment to this University and its commitment to learning," says Clayton State President Dr. Tim Hynes. "He followed the rules; he put student learning and student success first; he believed and proved, together with his coaches and staff, that a program could do those things, and succeed competitively."

Barfield's biggest challenge at Clayton State came in the winter of 1995, when to raise the athletic program to NCAA Division II status, he oversaw the unprecedented move of starting up five new sports in six months.

Dr. Richard A. Skinner, Clayton State's president at that time, recalls the most important aspects to this dramatic ex-

pansion of Clayton State athletics.

"When I told Mason the time was right for us to move into NCAA Division II, I told him I would help him recruit student-athletes but only if I could say the following to them: you are a STUDENT-athlete, so graduate; we owe you and your teammates the chance to be competitive; you represent Clayton State University every time you put on a uniform, grab a golf club, or run any distance – make us proud of you as a person," he says.

Skinner also recalls Barfield's response.

"Mason paused and took a deep breath and said, 'we can do better than that.'" remembers Skinner. "He was right and the student-athletes did do better, much better than any of us could have imagined. Mason created an environment in which much was expected and more was delivered. Mason Barfield IS athletics at Clayton State and we shall not see his like again."

And Barfield was right, he did better than that, for both the University and its students. In looking back on his 22 years at Clayton State, it's not surprising to realize that Barfield's sense of accomplishment still fits within the parameters of his 1994 conversation with Skinner.

"I fulfilled my obligation to the University, and have done so with a great sense of pride in that we did it the right way," he says. "We respected our responsibility to the academic integrity of our programs and student-athletes, and our

athletes' responsibility to represent Clayton State as good citizens has brought a great deal of positive recognition to this institution. My philosophy of success has always put a higher value on people of substance who represent your program over the style of uniform or shoes that you wear."

"Mason Barfield is not only a superb athletics director, he is one of the finest people I have known," says University of Wisconsin – Green Bay Chancellor Dr. Thomas K. Harden, president of Clayton State University from 2000 to 2009. "As president, I was always confident that in all his decisions and actions, Mason kept the interest of students foremost in his mind. Always honest and forthcoming, I knew I could trust him to make excellent decisions and lead the Lakers in ways that made me proud to be associated with the program."

As for his time at Clayton State, the University's only administrator to serve under all four presidents says that all four men, beginning with Dr. Harry S. Downs, have been in the right place at the right time, and not just for the athletic program, but for the institution.

The same might be said for the athletic director. When he was hired by Downs in 1989, as a one-year college coach with no experience as an athletic director, Downs told him, "Mason, you've never done this before, but neither have we. So we're going to learn how to do this together."

And learn they did.





faculty profile

DR. MARIO NORMAN

A Heart of Gold

By Maggie Shiffert

Dr. Mario Norman is a psychology professor who has helped student success at Clayton State University. He is committed to helping his students achieve their goals and obtain essential critical thinking skills for today's world. According to the student body, he has a "Heart of Gold."

After receiving his B.S. in Psychology at the University of Mississippi, Norman went on to Tennessee State University to earn his M.S. in General Psychology and eventually his Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology. Norman continued his career as a tenure-track assistant professor at Tennessee State University, teaching both undergraduate and graduate classes in the Department of Psychology.

In 2005, Norman was offered a job as a tenure-track assistant professor at Clayton State, where he has taught undergraduate classes in the Department of Psychology. Since 2008, he has continued to teach undergraduate courses as an associate professor of Psychology.

"I have a great passion for teaching and mentoring. I enjoy the moments that I spend with students inside and outside of the classroom," he says. "I find an enormous amount of joy when students are able to connect the subject material to real life events."

As a demonstration of his passion for the students, he has organized numerous workshops and currently serves

as the advisor to Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and Colligate 100.

Norman attempts to create an open atmosphere in his classes because it is conducive to learning. This environment leads to discussions that his students take home with them, enabling critical thinking and learning to grow outside of the classroom.

"I also believe that active learning is a valuable component to teaching," Norman explains.

To engage students in active learning, Norman tells stories that his students can relate to in real life. This helps students retain the information better when it comes time to take an exam, he says. He also adds humor to his discussions, which makes the class more interesting and entertaining. Norman does this in hopes of opening the doors to good communication with his students, since he wants to come across to the students as approachable and not intimidating. He encourages his students to become "askers of questions" as a part of active learning.

"I believe it is difficult to learn if one is not involved," he says.

Recent awards received and nominations for Norman include the "Heart of Gold Award" from the student body (from the First Student Choice Awards) and being a finalist for the Clayton State Faculty Smith Award. However, Norman believes there are greater rewards re-

ceived.

"One of my most rewarding aspects of teaching is when students begin to think critically for themselves and begin to learn for the sake of learning, not learning for an exam. This is when I find that life-long learning begins," he explains.

Another reward Norman receives from teaching is being able to participate in graduation. He understands many students persevere through many hardships and obstacles to achieve their goal of becoming a Clayton State University graduate. However, he is pleased to see them at graduation receiving their diplomas, knowing all of their hard work paid off.

As an educator, Norman describes his career as, "interesting, sometimes frustrating, but so very intrinsically rewarding." He believes his contributions to the institution and local community, through his teaching and service, have been positive, but he also believes there are many more positive opportunities in the future.

"I am thrilled to be part of a great institution where teaching really matters!" he exclaims.



staff profile

KATHY GARRISON

Helping ALL Students Reach Their Academic Potential

By Lauren Graves

Clayton State University's Center for Academic Success (CAS) is a critical piece in the puzzle of student success and retention. Leading that center is director Kathy Garrison, who has made a 23-year career of supporting students at the University.

Prior to working in CAS, Garrison spent many years on the Clayton State faculty teaching courses such as University Foundations, Essentials of Peer Tutoring, Arithmetic & Beginning Algebra, Elementary Algebra, Intermediate Algebra, Mathematical Modeling, College Algebra, Pre-calculus, Calculus I, FORTRAN, BASIC, Pascal I and II, Introduction to Webmaster, Intermediate Webmaster, and Advanced Webmaster.

She also instructed remedial math courses.

"I enjoy teaching those classes," shares Garrison. "A lot of the students are non-traditional, and I find that, for the most part, they want an education so badly. Math is an obstacle for many of them. Some of them have never had the mathematical foundation to be successful in Algebra. I try to help them develop that foundation and build on it... In some cases it is more getting over the fear of math than the actual math. It is so rewarding to see students who have little or no math background, grow into strong math students who begin helping other students with their struggles with math."

As director of CAS, Garrison oversees the daily operations of the center, serves on the Readmission Appeals and the Operation Study committees, trains CAS tutors, oversees the Learning Support program and offers academic advising. Her position allows her to continue to demonstrate her heart for Clayton State students who may need additional support to succeed in college.

"The motto of the CAS is 'Helping ALL Clayton State Students Reach Their Academic Potential.' Our goal is to find ways to help students be more successful and hence remain at Clayton State earning their degree," Garrison explains. "Among the services we offer are peer tutoring in more than 70 courses, drop-in math and writing tutoring, Academic Skills Workshops, Supplemental Instruction in historically difficult courses, instructional software programs, study behavior assessments, and group study rooms."

In an effort to further support the students who utilize Clayton State's CAS, Garrison wants to expand the Supplemental Instruction offerings and explore online tutoring. She also wants to continue to increase the number of students CAS serves.

"Working with students and watching them grow educationally and socially is the best part of my job," says Garrison. "Watching them mature academically is very rewarding."

Garrison holds a B.S. in Mathematics from North Georgia College & State University and an M.S. in Mathematical Sciences from Clemson University. She served one year as a temporary instructor at the University of West Georgia before finding her calling at Clayton State.

"In life, it is rare to have the opportunity to work in a profession that you truly love," she shares. "I feel fortunate to have worked these last 23 years at an institution that has truly meant the world to me. Perhaps the greatest joys have been my relationships with so many wonderful students, staff and faculty – so many of which I consider my friends."

In her spare time, Garrison enjoys roller coasters and camping. She and her husband Mike celebrated 22 years of marriage in December 2011. They have two children, daughter Danielle, 17 and son Jordan, 14. Garrison and her family are active in their church, Mt. Pleasant UMC.

A native of Washington, Ga., where her parents still reside, Garrison currently lives in Social Circle.



student profile

JAMIE TAYLOR

Everyone Was More Than Willing to Help

By Ciji Fox

Senior Jamie Taylor wasn't sure about attending Clayton State University. Her challenging experiences with a previous institution coupled with hearsay about Clayton State made her question if this was the college for her. Meeting with Recruitment Counselor Joseph Echols proved to be one of the best decisions Taylor made.

"I sat down with Joseph Echols in the admissions office in July of 2008 and he helped change my feelings about attending Clayton State," Taylor says. "Joseph talked me through everything and gave me a sense of comfort. He made me see that if I didn't take a risk there would be no opportunity for change. If I had not stepped out of my comfort zone, the doors that have opened for me at Clayton State University would still be closed. I want to provide the same security and comfort for other college students that Joseph provided for me four years ago. Without him I probably would have been at another institution."

Taylor was further impressed with the University after attending orientation.

"When I walked into orientation in August of 2008 I immediately noticed that Clayton State had a small community and family feel," she explains. "Everyone that I encountered was more than willing to help."

"Clayton State University also provided an environment where I felt com-

fortable being myself. I am outgoing, energetic and a well-rounded student, at Clayton State I feel confident that it's okay to let other people see that."

Education has always been important to Taylor, and her family also placed a high value on attending college.

"Education is one of the most important building blocks of success; I believe that if you want to go as far as life will let you, education is the way to get there," she says. "Everything that we do is a learning experience. It is up to you what you do with the experience that you gain."

"Growing up I was always told that college was not an option. Both of my parents provide inspiration and motivation on a daily basis. They have been very supportive since day one."

And, when Taylor's mother, Sonya Taylor, graduated from Clayton State during Taylor's sophomore year, she became even more determined to graduate.

Although majoring in Liberal Studies with a minor in Psychology is a serious commitment, there is still time to participate in several organizations.

"I participate in many different activities on campus," Taylor says. "I am currently a member of Theta Phi Alpha Fraternity, a resident assistant, and very active in numerous committees on campus. I have been involved in AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps Leadership Council, Loch-In Leadership Institute, Orienta-

tion, Upward Bound Cheerleading Program and several student organizations on campus. I love being involved and have a passion for helping others."

Taylor admits that being so heavily involved has been challenging in the past.

"I tend to dive head first into everything," she says. "Sometimes I get involved in too many things at once. I have overcome this obstacle by learning the meaning of balance, time management and the wonders a planner can work for you."

Despite a busy schedule Taylor makes sure she gives back to the community.

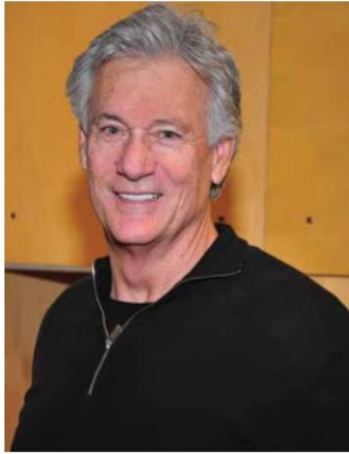
"Giving back to the community is important because it makes you appreciate the little things in life," she says. "If we each do a little, together we can accomplish a lot."

As part of her giving back, Taylor is currently working with a group of students from middle schools in the Henry County area.

"I also coach two cheerleading squads for McDonough Youth Association and I coach private tumbling classes," she adds.

Taylor plans to go straight into graduate school. Her dream is to further other students' success with a career in Student Affairs.

"Clayton State has showed me importance of strong and understanding professionals working at the collegiate level," Taylor says.



trustee profile

RANDY HAYES

Serving Clayton State and Fayette County

By Erin Fender

Randy Hayes has been a member of the Clayton State University Foundation since 2003 when he was approached by former Clayton State University President Dr. Thomas Harden and former Vice President of External Relations Bryan Edwards. He joined the board as a way to reach out to a source of higher education for his fellow residents of Fayette County.

"Community service is very important to me and my family; we truly want to be part of the community and part of serving and improving our community," explains Hayes. "One of my main driving forces is to help my fellow Fayette County residents to improve our community, our home. My involvement with Clayton State is an outreach to help my fellow citizens with access to programs at Clayton State and encourage and drive the citizens to pursue higher education."

"I am very proud to have served on the LLC2 committee and to be able to present an avenue to increase student housing for Clayton State," said Hayes of the recent purchase of what is now known as Clayton Station student housing.

"Clayton State is an opportunity - not only in this economic environment, but also in a normal environment of growth - to obtain quality higher education in relevant fields like nursing, logistics, and many of the offerings from the College of Business," he says.

Clayton State University made its presence felt in Fayette County with an instructional site at the Fayette County Higher Education Center in 2003, offering academic courses for the first time. After opening a "permanent" location in 2007, Clayton State University - Fayette outgrew this facility and moved to the new location at 100 World Dr., Peachtree City, in August of 2011. This center offers baccalaureate courses and dual enrollment opportunities for high school students. The College of Business also offers an MBA program at the Dolce-Atlanta Conference Center in Peachtree City.

At the 2007 opening of Clayton State University - Fayette, Hayes noted, "It's been a dream and a desire of the Development Authority since I've been on the board."

He has served as the chairman of the Fayette County Development Authority since 1995. Governor "Sonny" Perdue also appointed Hayes to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Warm Springs Memorial Advising committee in 2010, and he is co-chair of the Atlanta Region Workforce Development Board and a Board member of the Georgia Homebuilders Association. Hayes was named the "Business Person of the Year" in 1997 by the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce. He also served as president of the Flint River Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

In 1985, he founded Hayes Develop-

ment Corp., a real estate development firm. His firm's involvement includes many types of development; multi-family housing, single-family dwellings, and land and building development.

Randy and Anne, his wife of 43 years, have two sons and four grandchildren. Their eldest son John is married with four children and part of the building industry. Their youngest son Preston is a junior at the University of Georgia and speaks four languages fluently. Preston Hayes is pursuing international studies. The Hayes family moved to the metro Atlanta area after he served two years with the Army, and they have lived in Fayette County since 1975. He enjoys spending time with his family and especially his grandchildren, and he's a motorcycle enthusiast.



alumni profile

MICHAEL RATTI

Living the Dream in Dubai

By Gid Rowell

For recent Clayton State University graduate Michael Ratti, the last several months have been like, “living the dream of a lifetime.”

The 24-year-old Ratti, a national champion water skier and instructor, is living in Dubai and training a team of United Arab Emirates (UAE) skiers in the sport of free-style standup jet skiing, his love and specialty. An accomplished jet-ski performer, Ratti captured the U.S. National Title for Amateur Freestyle in 2007, and the U.S. National Title for Pro Freestyle in 2008.

The training program is in preparation for what will be the world’s first and largest national jet-ski display team for the Critical National Infrastructure Authority (CNIA) in Abu Dhabi. Ratti describes the CNIA as comparable to our Coast Guard. His job is to train the group of students to become a team of acrobatic performers and put on shows similar to those of the Blue Angels of the U.S. Navy.

“Growing up, I would fantasize about riding at a professional level with all sorts of achievements, in foreign countries, with a fleet of skis varying in style and performance, a support team, and more,” says Ratti. “Now I have all of that, and I’m being paid for it! I can’t even begin to describe what a surreal feeling it is. It’s just a testament to the fact that you can achieve any goal in your life no matter how crazy or unattainable it may seem to you or others.”

Along with having the opportunity of doing what he loves, his experience is enhanced even further since it’s taking place in an amazing city with an unbelievable backdrop and setting on the Arabian Peninsula. Ratti is provided a high-rise apartment in the heart of downtown Dubai, home of renowned architecture and some of the world’s tallest buildings. Between his jet-ski training sessions, he has the opportunity to race across the Arabian Desert on motocross for fun.

“The cultural experience of living and working in another country has been indescribable,” says Ratti. “We pass herds of wild camels, massive sand dunes and a palm tree lined oasis on our way to work and while riding motocross in the desert. It is an experience that I will remember for the rest of my life.”

Since graduating from Clayton State in 2010 with a degree in liberal studies, Ratti has been busy. While attending the University, he became interested in communications and worked at the *Bent Tree* newspaper and interned at *H Magazine* in Henry County. From there, he parlayed his publishing experience with his passion of jet skiing to create his own publication, *Pro Rider Watercraft* magazine. So far, he has published three editions with a distribution of 4,000 copies that circulate as far as Great Britain and Australia.

“My goal is to produce one of the best personal watercraft magazines in

the country and the world,” he says. “I would like for the magazine to become so successful that I may invest heavily in the sport through event productions and promotions that will lead to international television exposure, success, and revitalization of the sport of jet-ski racing and freestyle.”

Ratti, who developed his interest of jet skiing from his father Peter who grew up on beaches of New Jersey, says that he hopes to be a part of a team that is responsible for making jet skiing reach the popularity level of sports like super cross.

Along with the support of his family, Ratti credits Clayton State for his early success.

“I was inspired and driven by the enthusiasm and nurturing of my professors; they truly cared about their students and their success. Mr. (Alan) Xie helped me to explore my artistic abilities, and even helped to arrange for my art to be displayed in the Clayton State *Cygnets* at the university and in art displays in other universities. Dr. (Ronald) Jackson and Dr. (Todd) Janke enlightened my mind, logic, and perspective on life in a way beyond description,” he says.

As for his future plans, Ratti hopes to one day return to Clayton State for a second bachelor’s degree in Philosophy and then a master’s degree. For now, he plans to continue to develop his career in jet skiing from a training, performing and publishing perspective.

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 print quality 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!

1979

Zack Hendon (A.A. Business Administration '79) of Marietta, GA, is the owner of The Hendon Law Firm, LLC, (HendonLaw.com). He has received an AVVO.com attorney rating of 10.0 out of 10.0 for his work in workers' compensation and personal injury law. After receiving his associate degree from Clayton State in 1979, he received his law degree from the University of Georgia in 1984. He represents clients in serious injury and wrongful death cases.

1990

James E. Hicks (A.A. '90), of Douglasville, GA, was recently named the Logistics and Sales Support



Hendon (A.A. '79)



Hicks (A.A. '90)



Christopher (A.A. '98)

Manager at TeleCycle, located in College Park, GA. TeleCycle provides innovative, customizable, and fully integrated IT Asset Management and Recycling Services to corporate and originating equipment manufacturing clientele. Hicks is past president of the Clayton State Alumni Association.

1998

Minolar T. Christopher (A.A. Teacher Education '98), of Hampton, GA, teaches eighth grade math at Riverdale Middle School in Clayton County. A finalist for the County's Teacher of the Award in 2010, she received her Ph.D. from Capella University in 2010 after receiving her master's from Central Michigan. She graduated magna cum laude from Mercer with a bachelor's in Middle Grades Education in 2001.

1999

Chrissy Agricola (A.A. Teacher Education '98) of Mableton, GA, recently accepted a position to become a Member of Technical Staff (MTS) - Network Regulatory (HQ) for Verizon Wireless located in Alpharetta, GA. She will help to oversee the network deployment of wireless telecommunication facilities nationwide. A former standout on the Clayton State Women's Tennis team, she is a member of Georgia Wireless Association & Alabama Wireless Association.

Nicole Stuffs (B.S. Nursing '99), of Atlanta, is a clinical nurse supervisor at Northside Hospital in the Labor and Delivery Unit.

2002

Charles (B.A.S. Technology Management '02) & Melissa Crowover (B.B.A. General Business '02) welcomed a new addition to their family in August in Suzanna Brooke Crowover and are now a family of four. They now live in San Diego, where Charles is an USMC Cobra Helicopter Instructor at Camp Pendleton. Melissa does government IT consulting work with ICF International. Charles is a former Clayton State Outstanding Alumni Award winner from 2008.



Suzanna Brooke Crowover

2003

Kareen Harris (B.A. Communication & Media Studies '03), of Atlanta, is the co-founder of the ABC Elite Youth Foundation, Inc. In his role as vice president, he focuses on day-to-day operations, logistics and



Harris (B.A. '03)



Woodley (B.A.S. '03)



Sogunro (B.I.T. '04)

event management. Harris is currently pursuing his Masters of Business Administration in International Relations from Strayer University. Harris was an All-Conference basketball player at Clayton State, leading the squad to its first Peach Belt championship title in 2001. After graduation, he played professionally overseas before choosing a career in the corporate arena. He is proud of his community service endeavors, which includes an eight-year volunteer history with many metro Atlanta non-profit organizations. Currently, he actively supports the efforts of The Luke Project and The Carver Family YMCA in addition to his responsibilities at ABC Elite Youth Foundation Inc.

Dr. Lateshia S. Woodley (B.A.S. Administrative Management '03), of

Ellenwood, GA, is the founder of Dynamic Achievement Solutions, LLC (Counseling and Consulting Services). Woodley provides mental health counseling services and does workshops and seminars. She also is the director of the Second Annual Choose Life Scholarship Gala, which supports teen parents pursuing higher education. The event will be held at the Clayton State Student Activities Center on Mar. 17.

2004

Aneetra Isis Sherrell (B.B.A. Management '04), of Stockbridge, GA, recently opened the doors to her own real estate brokerage, named JorJa Peach Realty & Investments. Over the last two years, Sherrell has helped more than 50 homeowners

avoid foreclosure. She thanks Clayton State for teaching her the tools necessary to be successful.

Steve Sogunro (B.I.T. Network Plan, Design & Management '04), of Atlanta, was married in September of 2008, and he and his wife had their first child in December of 2009. He earned a MBA in Project Management in 2008 and graduated with honors. He established an award winning photography company, Fotos by Fola (www.fotosbyfola.com), which was the recipient the 2011 WeddingWire Bride's Choice award. He works as a Telecommunications Systems Analyst for Intercall, which is the world's largest Audio/Web/Video conference provider.

2005

Carla (Gleaton) Hayden (B.A.S. Technology Management '05), of Marietta, GA, recently received a M.S. in Leadership & Management from Liberty University. She and her husband, James, were married in October of 2010. Hayden has worked as a business analyst at Aarons, Inc., since 2008.



Alumni athletes gather to wish a special farewell to retiring founding Lakers Athletic Director Mason Barfield. The group presented Barfield with a collage of photographs of Clayton State student-athletes throughout the years.

Nicia Puckett (B.B.A. Management '05), of Ellenwood, GA, recently began a new position with ATI Insurance as Client Systems Administrator. Puckett is a former standout on the Clayton State women's basketball team.

Kevin Young (B.A. Integrative Studies '05) was recently named the head coach of the Iowa Energy, a team in the NBA's D-League. The Energy are defending champions of the NBA's D-League. Young was most recently the head coach of the Utah Flash, where in 2011, he led the team to franchise record nine-game winning streak and its first playoff win on the road. Young is a former standout on the Clayton State men's basketball squad.



Young (B.S. '05)

2006

Cherry Cox (B.S. Integrative Studies '06), of Cartersville, GA, recently became certified as a registered microbiologist in Pharmaceutical and Medical Device Microbiology with the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists (NRCM). Cox is the lead sample Coordinator with WuXi AppTec, which is a leading global pharmaceutical, biopharmaceutical, and medical device outsourcing company with operations in China and the United States.

Lenzaree Owens (B.A.S. Administrative Management '06), of Oxford, GA, was recently named the energy education coordinator in Georgia

Power-served schools in Gwinnett, Fulton and Forsyth counties. Prior to this position, Owens was a business education teacher in the Newton County School System.

2007

Shamecqua Thompson (B.A. Integrative Studies '07) is in her fourth year as a seventh grade special education teacher in the Clayton County School System. She is pursuing a master's degree in Speech Language Pathology at Tennessee State University. She says she is enjoying marriage and motherhood.

2008

Angela Cobb (B.S. Criminal Justice '08), of Abbeville, GA, recently won the Marathon Bahamas with a time



Cobb (B.S. '08)



Lee (B.S. '11)

of 3:00.17. Cobb set the course record in the same event's half-marathon last year. Cobb, one-half of the "A-Team" (along with Alison Kreutzer) on the Laker cross country and track teams, is a former All-American for Coach Mike Mead.

Chinester Graves (B.S. Healthcare Management '08), of Lithonia, GA, earned her master's degree in health administration from University of Phoenix in 2010 and will pursue a doctorate in health administration with an emphasis in public policy.



Clayton State women's basketball alumni gather on their old home court for a group shot with Coach Dennis Cox at this year's Annual Alumni game.

Graves is currently a field representative with the United State Census Bureau in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. She is the co-founder and Chief Operation Officer of a non-profit organization known as Community Unification Initiatives, (CUI). CUI's mission is to make an impact on the community through HIV/AIDS literacy, tutoring children and adolescents and mentoring families in need.

2011

Andrew Hoang (B.A. Middle Grades Education '11), of Forest Park, GA, was recently named one of 40 of Georgia's best and brightest new teachers and is in line to receive the New Teacher Assistance Grant from Georgia Power. Hoang is an eighth-grade honors physical science teacher at Elite Scholars Academy in Jonesboro, GA. Candidates had to be in the top 25 percent of their class academically, be a first-year teacher employed by a public school in Georgia, and demonstrate a high aptitude for teaching.

Lynn Sanders (M.S.N. Nursing '11), of Stone Mountain, GA, recently joined the Navy Reserves nurse corps and says she has enjoyed the

new journey in her life after recently receiving her advanced nursing degree from Clayton State.

Chanielle Lee (B.S. Health Care Management '11), of McDonough, GA, sends the following testimonial of her years at Clayton State:

I had been a student at Clayton State University since 2007. Clayton State is a major part of my life, not because I took a few classes here, but because it was this environment where I developed my sense of character, integrity, and life-long goals. One of my biggest accomplishments was becoming active in a campus ministry here; it empowered me to lean on my faith to help me get through the next four years of my life. With that support, I became a Laker Orientation Leader, Career Services ambassador, Alternative Spring Break volunteer, Ask Me! program student coordinator, and peer health educator. Because of these experiences, prior to graduation, I was able to earn opportunities with companies such as Grady Health System, Emory Healthcare and Sherwin Williams Company, just to name a few. I am positive because of my experiences here at Clayton State, I will leave a benchmark for more students to achieve the impossible. Now, my five-year



A new alumnus signs his name to the fall Class of 2011 banner. Congratulations Clayton State graduates!

old son will see the importance of being goal-oriented, being a community leader, and having tremendous faith. From the bottom of my heart; thank you Clayton State University.



Emeritus Director of Student Life Rob Taylor celebrated the 40th anniversary of his first day at Clayton State with a party. Guests included people Taylor served with when he began his career. (L to R) Mary Lou (Burks) Perry ('73), Butch Perry, Carol Casavant Doris (Director of Counseling 1971-1974), Becky Armstrong, Clint Armstrong ('73), Heather (Croft) Russell ('73), Connie Taylor (former Clayton student 1974-77), Rob Taylor (Emeritus Director of Student Life - 1971-1996)



A member of the 2011 NCAA Division II National Championship team, Brittany Hall announces "Play Ball" during Clayton State Alumni Night at Turner Field.

LAKER PRIDE RIDE

Reserve Your State of Georgia Clayton State License Plate Today!

**Clayton State alumni, faculty/staff,
students, retirees and friends of the
University ... We Need Your Help!**

The University has been approved for a specialty license plate with the State of Georgia. In order to make it happen, the University needs 1,000 people to sign up before they will be manufactured.

The commemorative Clayton State plates, showcasing Clayton State's athletic mascot Loch, will be produced if the State of Georgia's Department of Motor Vehicle Safety receives a minimum of 1000 orders in a two-year period.

There is a one-time \$25 manufacturing fee to purchase a tag, plus an annual \$35 charge. These fees are in addition to the regular license plate fee, ad valorem tax, mailing fees or penalties that may be due.

Clayton State supporters who want to purchase the special tag must fill out a specialty tag application form (MV-9C) and submit the form and proper payment to the Clayton State Foundation.

Information about the tag campaign and specialty tag form may be accessed via the Clayton State website at www.clayton.edu/tag. The \$25 payment can be mailed to the Office of Alumni Relations, 2000 Clayton State Boulevard, Morrow, GA 302060 or can be made online at www.clayton.edu/alumnigift.

For more information and questions about the specialty tag program, contact Gld Rowell, director of Alumni Relations at gldrowell@clayton.edu or (678) 466-4477.

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