



2000 CLAYTON STATE BOULEVARD
MORROW, GEORGIA 30260

LAKER CONNECTION

THE CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE | FALL/WINTER 2019



WHAT'S NEXT?

26 50 YEARS ON: CLAYTON STATE'S BRIGHT FUTURE

Clayton State University is a place where dreams are made real. And in the last 50 years, we've made a tremendous impact through community engagement, academic excellence and student success. So, what could the next 50 years bring?

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Clayton State University's magazine is published two times a year in the spring and fall by the Office of Marketing and Communications. It is sent to alumni, donors and friends of the university. The magazine is part of University Advancement, led by Vice President Chase Moore. © 2019. Send address changes or cancellation requests to: Michael Little, Director of Alumni Engagement & Annual Giving, 2000 Clayton State Blvd., Morrow, Georgia 30260. Phone: (678) 466-4478 • Email: alumni@clayton.edu.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT, DR. THOMAS J. HYNES JR.

This volume of *Laker Connection* celebrates Clayton State University's past and its hopeful, community-based future. It points to inventive ways in which the university can be a center for discussions about leading success during changing and challenging times.

Feature stories range from a celebration of the collaboration between the University System Board of Regents and the community to bring the institution into existence to examples of how academic programs evolved over the years in response to regional economic changes and broader career needs.

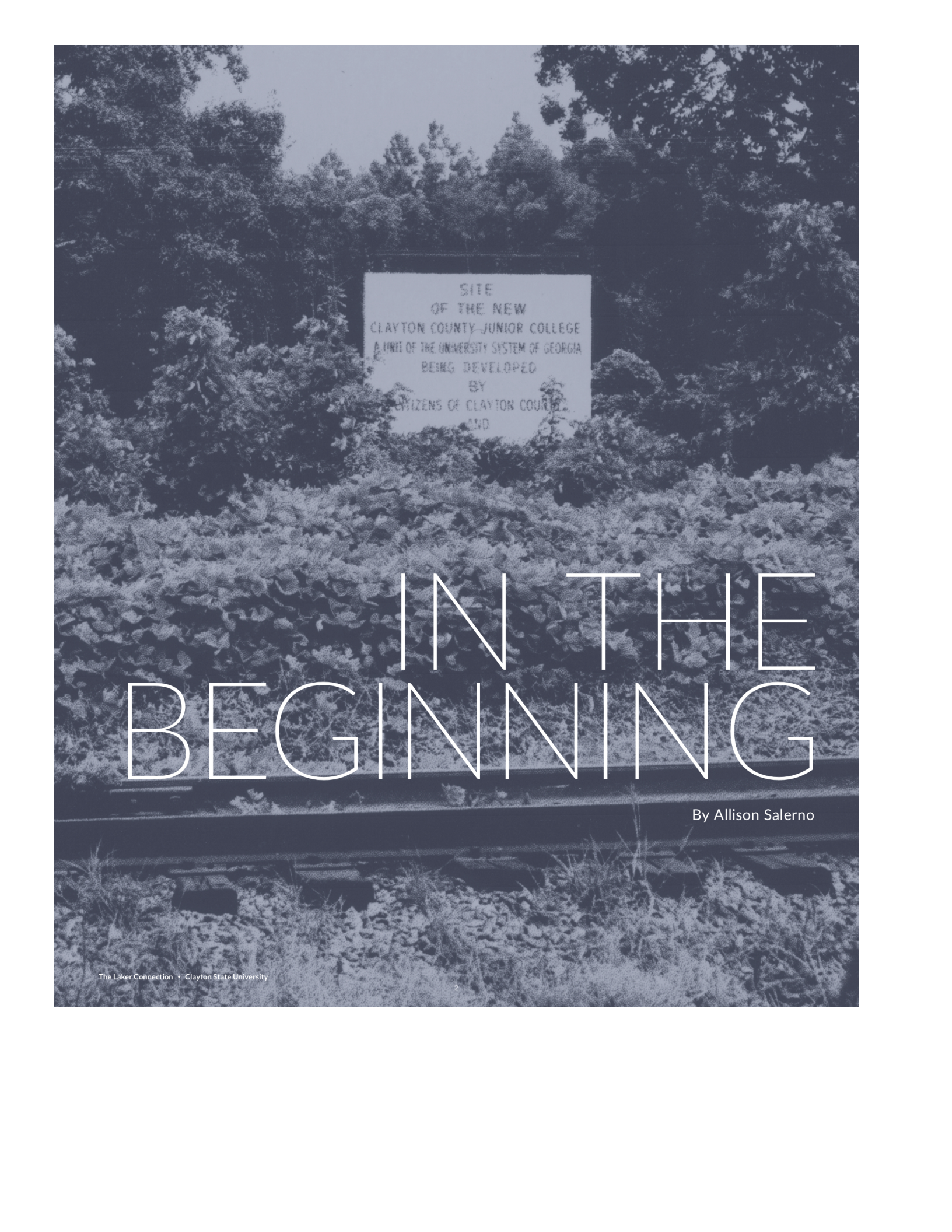
They note ways in which the university looked at itself as a site of innovations in learning—whether that included the laptop computer commitments of the late 1990's or the pedagogical partnerships with Mailchimp to enhance computing



education in 2020. These stories touch upon Clayton State's longtime activities in the arts including Spivey Hall's past and future role in music and music education, and our participation in Georgia's important and growing film and digital media industry.

It is difficult to project with any precision what the future holds for Clayton State University. The great American philosopher Yogi Berra observed some years ago, "The future ain't what is used to be... It's tough to make predictions, especially about the future." As difficult as predictions might be, I believe that Clayton State will continue to connect powerfully with its constituents. Those connections will continue to be rooted in learning, recognizing that innovative approaches to education in conjunction with the communities served will be at the heart of the university's strategic directions.

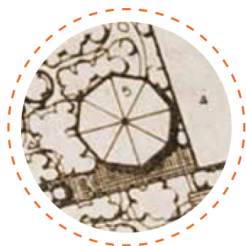
Thank you for your support of Clayton State University over the past 50 years and we look forward to another 50 plus years of serving our resilient and resourceful community. 🙏



SITE
OF THE NEW
CLAYTON COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE
A UNIT OF THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA
BEING DEVELOPED
BY
THE CITIZENS OF CLAYTON COUNTY
AND

IN THE BEGINNING

By Allison Salerno



When Clayton Junior College opened its 54-acre campus to 924 students on Tuesday, Sept. 30, 1969, expectations were high for the small institution. It was the 10th junior college operated by the University System of Georgia (USG) during a period of rapid population growth throughout the state.

That year signaled a new era in America—weeks before, Woodstock music festival drew half a million young people to a farm in upstate New York, Richard Nixon was months into his new presidency, the Apollo 11 mission put Neil Armstrong on the moon and the Plymouth Road Runner was named Motor Trend Car of the Year.

Much like the beginnings of social and cultural change felt across the rest of the country, the opening of Clayton Junior College marked the beginning of greater things to come for south metro Atlanta.

The birth of public higher education in Georgia can be described as “constant evolution,” according to Dr. Thomas Jackson, current heritage communications executive of the USG. Throughout the University System’s 85-year history, colleges and universities arose from mergers, relocation from one city to another or by evolution of existing schools.

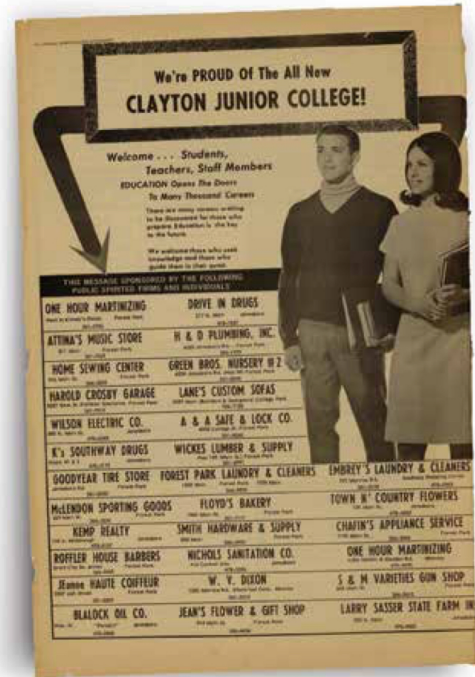
But a successful 1958 lobbying effort by local government officials in Atlanta to set up a separate system for state junior colleges to be established without oversight from the USG, demonstrated the desire of small communities to create their own institutions for post-secondary education.

The Junior College Act of 1958 only produced one junior college—DeKalb Community College, which was operated by the DeKalb County Board of Education. But the University System’s Board of Regents got the message.

“The legislature’s passage of the act was a ‘sharp spur’ to the Board of Regents to expand junior college opportunity,” Jackson notes.

As a result of that political move, the USG took matters into its own hands by establishing junior colleges around the state, including in cities such as Albany, Dalton, Gainesville and Kennesaw in the 1960s, Jackson explains.

“The moves sent the signal that the Board of Regents would mind the state’s junior college needs and no further locally sponsored institutions would be necessary,” Jackson says. “And the south side of metro Atlanta where Clayton State is, is certainly an area that had a population boom going and had the political wherewithal to get a college.”



▲ A series of advertisements from the *Clayton News Daily* feature warm welcomes to Clayton Junior College students and staff. Businesses in the area were excited about the positive economic impact the college would have. And it proved correct.

The original master plan rendering for the development of Clayton Junior College. (opposite page) ▶

Clayton Junior College's first course catalogue explains, "The genesis of the college can be traced to a report issued in 1963 by the Georgia governor's Commission to Improve Education. The report pointed out the need for additional community junior colleges in Georgia and stated that 'the comprehensive community junior college is the primary means by which local area and community needs should be met for education beyond high school.' The Commission recommended that these institutions should be established on the basis of a statewide survey using the best-known criteria."

Eight Georgia educators and two nationally known consultants conducted the study, and eventually the Board of Regents authorized the establishment of three new junior colleges, including Clayton Junior College.

Published in June 1965, the study noted that the state's population had swelled from 3.4 million in 1950 to 3.9 million a decade later—an increase

of 14.5%—and the number of Georgia residents was projected to continue to rise an additional 31.9% by 1975. Most of the growth happened in six metropolitan areas across the state: Macon, Savannah, Augusta, Columbus, Albany, and of course, Atlanta.

Clayton, Cobb, Fulton, DeKalb and Gwinnett counties were home to nearly a quarter of Georgia's 18- and 19-year-olds, and the percentage of high school graduates heading to college reached 30% with expectations of increasing. These circumstances demonstrated a clear need for more post-high school education in metropolitan Atlanta.

"Projections reveal that the five-county area of metropolitan Atlanta will experience phenomenal growth in population in the years ahead," the study said. Estimates for Clayton County indicated the number of 18- to 19-year-olds, slightly more than 1,000 in 1960, would reach about 2,700 within the decade and about 4,700 by 1975.

“The community support for a new college in Clayton County was far superior to other communities with which I had worked.”

— Dr. Harry S. Downs, first president of Clayton Junior College



Based on those numbers, the Board of Regents' study recommended founding a junior college in Clayton County "as quickly as practical."

Designed to educate not only county residents but also students commuting from nearby Fayette, Henry and Spalding counties, construction of Clayton Junior College was well under way by February 1969.

"The college extends a welcome sign to all who wish to learn, without regard to age," the first course catalogue reads. "Its programs are adapted to the current and changing needs of a rapidly growing metropolitan environment."

Indeed, Clayton County, like the rest of Georgia, was growing fast.

By February 1969, construction of Clayton Junior College was well underway. Chancellor George L. Simpson and the Board of Regents approached Dr. Harry S. Downs to ask if he would consider becoming Clayton Junior College's founding president. "I was honored," Downs wrote in the Fall 2009 issue of *Laker Connection* magazine.

On March 1, he set up a temporary office in Forest Park. Thus began Downs' quarter-century tenure as president. A native of Conyers, Georgia, Downs had been a Navy fighter pilot in World War II, but his heart was always in teaching. Downs went on to become chancellor of the University System and later a Clayton State Athletics Hall of Fame 2016 inductee for bringing intercollegiate athletics in 1990 to what was then Clayton State College.

By 1969, four years after the Board of Regents' recommendations, Clayton Junior College opened to offer students the opportunity to earn associate degrees in art and science, as well as a number of two-year programs in areas such as mathematics, and business administration that could lead to bachelor degrees.

The college also offered two-year professional programs in nursing and secretarial studies.

The college's core curriculum was designed so students who chose to later attend a four-year college within the University System could easily transfer their credits.

Downs, who died at age 91 in 2017, explained in the fall 2009 issue of *Laker Connection* that "the Board of Education that initiated the bond issue on which the voters agreed to fund the initial campus [for \$4.9 million] was a much larger local contribution than for any of the other similar colleges."

"The community support for a new college in Clayton County was far superior to other communities with which I had worked," wrote Downs.

He was right. A special section in the Clayton News Daily announcing the new college praised the partnership between Clayton County and the University System and lauded the citizens for spurring a "grass roots, at-home coalition for a cause."

Many local businesses—from a steakhouse to the local supermarket—placed ads in the newspaper to welcome Clayton Junior College to the city of Morrow.

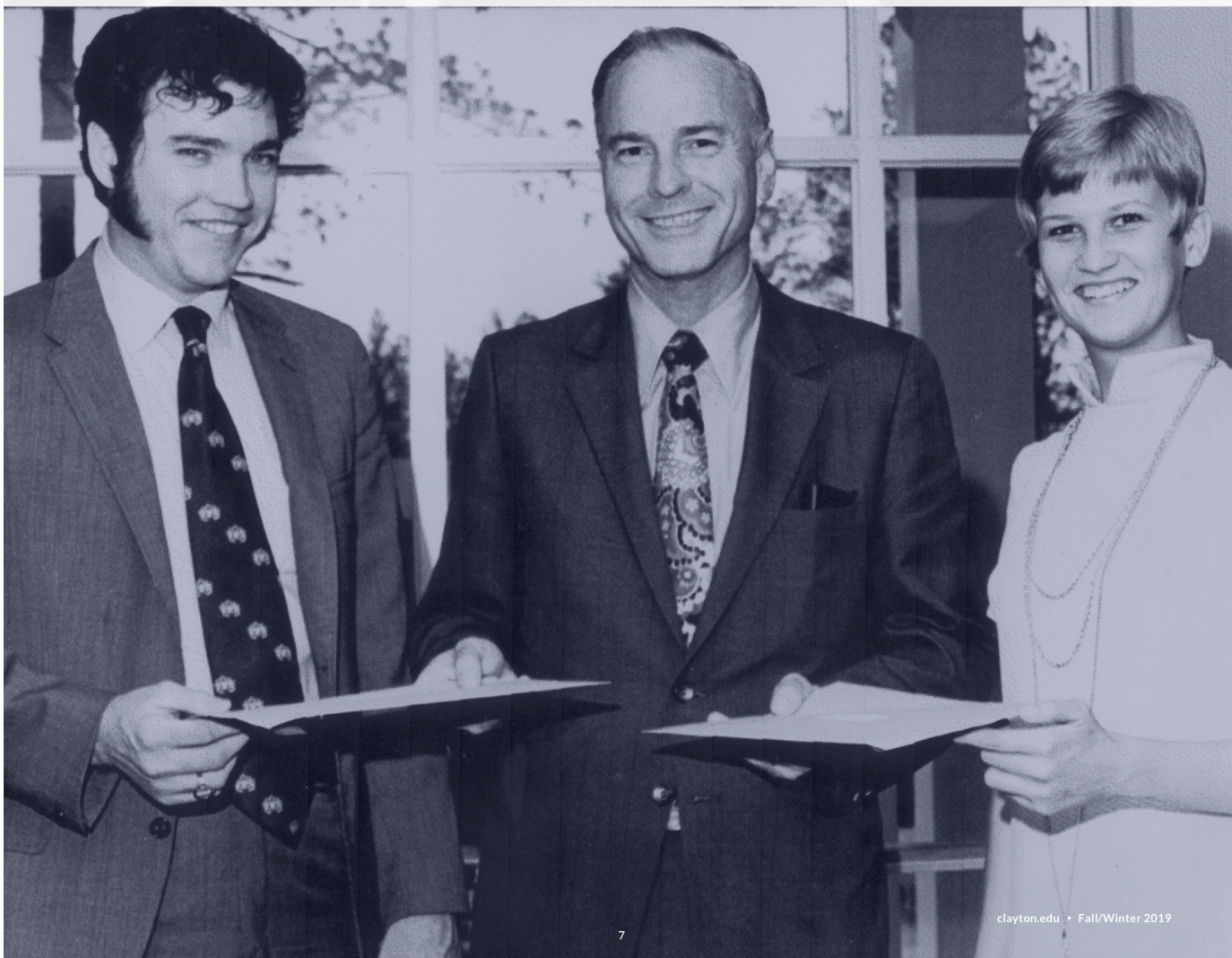
One week before the college opened, Georgia Governor Lester Maddox stated, "I am certain that in the years to come this institution of higher learning will prove an invaluable cultural, economic and industrial asset to Clayton County as well as to the surrounding areas. I have no doubt the investments you make now will be multiplied many times."

His optimism has borne fruit.

Today, Clayton State University stands as a four-year institution offering more than 40 undergraduate degrees, 10 graduate programs and a large number of certificates, minors, online degrees and specialized academic programs.

It boasts 25,000-plus alumni and serves nearly 7,000 students each year. But more importantly, Clayton State continues to be a place where anyone can make their dreams real.

▼ Clayton Junior College's first president, Dr. Harry S. Downs (m), with first graduates Henry Morgan '70 and Dianne Anderson '70.





By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

Clayton State University has been a welcoming and inclusive community since it opened its doors to its first class in 1969, and few people are more qualified to attest to that than Jerri Hager. She was a member of the first cohort earning associate's degrees when Clayton State University began as a community college. After 33 years working for the institution and eventually earning her bachelor's, Hager holds dear to them memorable moments she has of her alma mater.

"Clayton State was personal from the beginning," Hager recalled. "I graduated from high school at 17 and knew I 'should' go to

college but didn't feel ready to leave home. At the time, everyone in town was talking about the new college—everywhere you went—so I looked into it."

As an example of the founding value of welcoming students, as well as the community at large, Hager met and had what she recalls a pleasant, informal conversation with the school's first president, Harry Downs, when she went to pick up her application paperwork. That isn't something that happens on most college campuses.

"I felt embraced," Hager said. "It felt right to stay home but do something new. Everyone made me feel very comfortable at Clayton State."

In those early days, Clayton State had fewer than 1,000 students, many of whom were taking classes while holding down jobs. The average class size was about 20 to 25 students, and, as Hager remembered, “the first graduating class had only three students!”

Hager remembers feeling good about the school going in different directions from its identity in her student days and its institutional youth.

“We were going from the community college to the four-year model. The continuing education

“I felt embraced. It felt right to stay home but do something new. Everyone made me feel very comfortable at Clayton State.”

“You knew everybody,” she said. “I saw a lot of folks from high school. It was also a beautiful, serene setting, with only a few buildings and faculty who was very visible—you’d see them walking around on campus. There was a friendly and safe feeling.”

The community college approach contributed to the friendly, personal atmosphere: “It was the first time I went to school with nontraditional students.”

Hager earned her associate’s degree and started working on campus as a student assistant. She moved up to a full-time position in 1971 as a mailroom clerk and then as an accounts payable clerk in the business office, followed by positions in public relations and the social sciences before being named conference coordinator in continuing education and, ultimately, director of career and professional training. That was her sweet spot.

“In continuing ed, I felt I had found my spot,” Hager said. “We were training people for jobs or for something fun to do.” She found it fulfilling to be involved with students from a variety of backgrounds and interests and provide them with ways to make those interests part of their work lives.

sector changed and expanded its mission as the school did the same. We saw an increased number of students because you could stay at Clayton State for all four years.” Even the evening, continuing ed programming increased in response to the greater scope of the school, she said.

During that time, Hager took advantage of the school’s growth and expanded resources and programs to go back and earn a Bachelor of Science in Integrative Studies. “That was a brand-new program at the time, and it was perfect for me,” she said. “You put together your own degree; I took business classes. It was ideal for students who had found jobs they loved that didn’t match their degrees.”

Such programs made it possible to use academic resources to craft a degree that fit a job better than an original degree undertaken before experiencing the work world.

As Clayton State grew and evolved into a four-year institution, Hager’s status as both student and employee gave her a front-row view of its changing nature and structure. She liked what she saw, especially “another side of the faculty that was very warm.”



▲ Hager keeps old newspaper clippings of herself at Clayton State as mementos of her days as a student and employee on campus.

Being an employee gave Hager somewhat of an insider's perspective that a typical student wouldn't have. "I probably saw more of the changes as an employee than as a student," she said. "I felt very included. We all did—faculty, staff, students, community members, business leaders and more—and still do. All along the way, we were included and asked for our input. The process always felt open. We felt like part of the plan, and it had been carried out beautifully."

After 33 years at the school, Hager moved to the Coastal Georgia Historical Society as director of development, marketing and PR, largely thanks to the wealth of experience she enjoyed at Clayton State. When her husband's job took their family to Manhattan, Kansas, she worked at the Flint Hills Discover Center as a development officer for the city.

She and her family are now back near Clayton State, and she is enjoying seeing the school's continued growth.

The only cloud Hager sees on the horizon is something shared by all higher education institutions. "The challenge, not just for Clayton State, but for all schools, communities and businesses, is to help students get a handle on college debt and make the debt worth it," she said. "We need a focus on education that helps employees advance in the workplace."

To this pioneer alumna and former employee, Clayton State's future looks brighter than ever, "based on our past and what the school has accomplished so far, with faculty involved in planning and collaborating with other institutions, the local community and beyond."

And with regard to that chance meeting with Clayton State's first president 50 years ago, Hager says, "I guess I'm still trying to make Dr. Downs proud of me."

It doesn't look as if that would be a problem.



WORKFORCE RESET

New Leader of Continuing and Professional Education Has Lofty Goals for Program

By Ruth E. Thaler-Carter

With a new executive director at the helm, Clayton State University's Center for Continuing and Professional Education is poised to reach ambitious heights in its commitment to providing practical, applicable resources to nontraditional students seeking career advancement, retooling and retraining, or fulfillment through hobbies and personal interests.

Reginald Turner, Ph.D., joined Clayton State in January of 2019, bringing a unique range of experience to CaPE; through more than 25 years in higher education, he has been a college president, worked in student and academic affairs, served in a community college and promoted workforce economic development in the private sector.



Clayton State trains individuals for "below the line" jobs in Georgia's growing film industry.

Image Credit: Erin Fender and Caleb Lorentz



◀ Continuing education's phlebotomy course offers students an opportunity to get hands on experience preparing for the medical field.

“What’s unusual about my background is that I have experience in the traditional university and community college settings as well as in nonprofit and for-profit institutions and in business,” said Turner. “That makes my approach to continuing education a lot different because I see the world from a different perspective, especially in terms of a collaborative approach. I can see how we can be of service to other departments in the university, as well as in the community. I’m always looking for ways we can create partnerships throughout the university.” He is also continually

on the lookout for how CaPE can join forces with local, regional, national and even international partners to craft offerings that will appeal to a wide range of potential students and their employers, both current and future.

“We are focused on three models in effecting a transformation,” Turner said of CaPE’s current approach. “One is academic: making sure what we offer is important and in good standing in our academic role. The second is business: running the department like a business because we are self-sustaining—we don’t receive any contributions from the university or the state. The third is community partnerships: working with employers to provide contract training and helping educate the population of potential students about the value of being trained or retrained.”

The third aspect may be most significant, Turner noted, as the fast pace of change in today’s technology and the workplace means “people have to constantly learn and expand their skills.”

Among CaPE’s new initiatives is the concept of “stackable credentials,” a trend aimed at helping students get work-related certificates or coursework and return for additional credits that “make continuing education even more valuable,” Turner said. This approach is useful for people who find jobs they love that don’t necessarily match their degree fields and makes it easier to build their value to employers without undertaking lengthy new study programs.

“We also will offer digital badges with training in the skills employers are looking for,” Turner noted.

AN IMPRESSIVE HISTORY

While Turner has ambitious plans for CaPE, he is also proud of its success so far.

In the past five years, CaPE has provided about 5,000 courses to more than 11,000 students in person and 1,100 students online in more than 26 states in addition to hiring 142 instructors, teachers and trainers. Plans include expanding both online and hybrid offerings, Turner noted.

CaPE earns its keep; the program has raised \$5 million to date from student fees, conference services and managing requests to film movies on the campus. “A lot of filming is done on our campus, and it all runs through CaPE,” Turner said. For the future, “we’re looking to expand our funding through grants,” he noted.

The program serves not just Clayton County but also students and businesses in Henry and Fayette counties. “We are unique because we serve students from high school through 95 years old,” Turner said. He and his staff are also in discussion with universities in India about the possibility of bringing some of their students to the program for training on campus.

FLEXIBILITY AS A KEY TO SUCCESS

One aspect of CaPE that makes it successful and relevant to current workplace needs, Turner said, is that “continuing education is nimble. We are designed for, and very good at, being responsive to market needs. We have the ability to develop, write up new courses and hire providers for them in short order and at reasonable cost without a lot of lengthy bureaucracy. We can create our own course objectives and customize our offerings.” That’s an invaluable attribute because in the world of work, and sometimes even in the area of personal interests, “you have to strike while it’s hot,” he said.

Levon (Lee) Alexander is a perfect example of an adult student who found CaPE to be the ideal fit for his personal goals. He had a fulfilling career in medical education and compliance until health issues demanded his retirement, which gave him a chance to indulge a long-time goal.

“Photography was a lifelong hobby and interest,” he said. “There were times when I wanted to shoot photos for myself, and once a friend had me take photos at his wedding in Jamaica.”

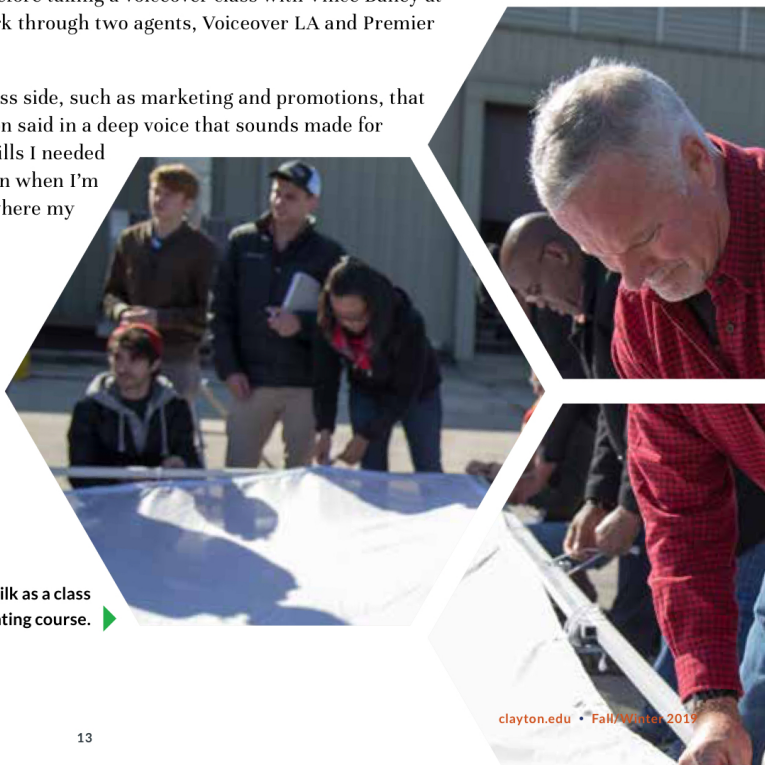
Alexander took two Continuing and Professional Education courses in digital photography with Kalika Wade that he found very helpful. “I’m basically self-taught in photography, and I knew from my career in education that you could always learn something new in life. I wanted to sharpen what I thought I knew and pick up additional skills,” he said.

The courses gave him insights into what he could have done better or differently in shooting events like his friend’s wedding, giving him greater satisfaction with the images he takes now.

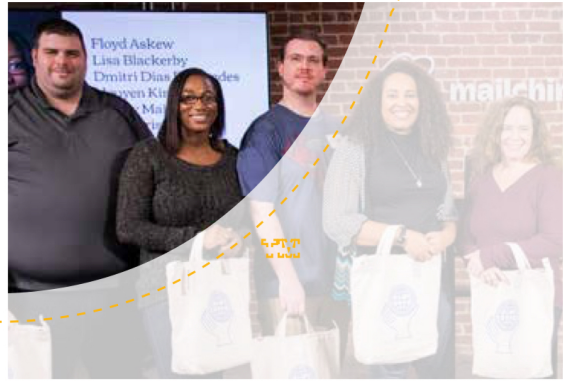
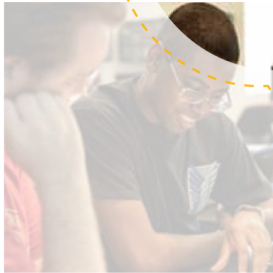
For Devante Johnson, CaPE created a path to a fulfilling new career. He had gone straight from high school to working as a firefighter and in emergency medical services (EMS). Then he decided to study acting at the Alliance Theater in Atlanta before taking a voiceover class with Vince Bailey at Clayton State. Now, he does voiceover work through two agents, Voiceover LA and Premier Model & Talent.

“I definitely learned a lot about the business side, such as marketing and promotions, that helped me find work in voiceover,” Johnson said in a deep voice that sounds made for his preferred profession. “I learned the skills I needed to do the work. It’s an exciting career. Even when I’m working here (in Georgia), I never know where my voice will be heard.”

Johnson recommends CaPE for any field. “There’s so much importance to learning something new,” he said. “This program is a perfect way to get your feet wet [in a new career or hobby]. It’s a great jumping-off point.”



Students set up a diffusion silk as a class assignment for a film lighting course. ▶



LAUNCHING NEXT-GEN DATA MASTERS

By Kelly Petty

On the fifth floor of downtown’s hipster hangout, Ponce City Market, is Mailchimp, a leading email marketing platform known as much for its services as its mammalian mascot. The company’s offices are completely millennial-driven—co-working spaces, street art on the walls, a board room complete with actual skateboards and an espresso machine. It’s a place designed to merge technology with creativity.

But for a group of Clayton State University students, Mailchimp’s office has become a second home that’s flipping the idea of computer science and information technology learning on its head.

In 2018, Mailchimp patterned with Clayton State University and made a generous \$300,000 investment to establish a leadership program that prepares students for careers in the IT field.

Housed in the university’s College of Information and Mathematical Sciences, Launchpad Academy brings students and Mailchimp staff together to create a learning environment that reaches beyond the fundamentals to develop skills students need to be a valuable employee from day one.

“Talent comes from everywhere, but metro Atlanta’s under-tapped southside stands in stark contrast to the opportunity-rich communities north of I-20,” says Joe Uhl, chief architect and vice president of engineering at Mailchimp. “Partnering with Clayton State gave us the incredible opportunity to tap directly [into] the talent pipeline at the university, not only to help equip talented

students with real-world work experience but also allow us to bring in new, diverse perspectives that help make our teams stronger and build better products.”

Launchpad Academy goes beyond classroom lectures and textbook work to show students how to apply what they’re learning through practical application. Lessons are more than just writing code; students are taught to test for website vulnerabilities, fix corrupted code and improve user experience.

“When Launchpad students start their internship at Mailchimp, they tend to know technical concepts in isolation,” says Josh Penny, corporate citizenship manager at Mailchimp. “In completing the program, they can apply those concepts to solve problems and achieve tangible business goals, which helps them grow their confidence and find a deeper connection to their work.”

In addition to being valuable for the participants, the experience also supplements the instruction students get at Clayton State.

“I think that what we give them is the basics... [but] they’re learning stuff we don’t teach them,” says Jillian Jones, lecturer and director of the Launchpad Academy.

Jones remembers sitting in one of the sessions at Mailchimp and watching as students learned html and JavaScript, web development languages they hadn’t been exposed to yet in the classroom. The students got to see the code in a web application and run tests to improve the code.

“They just jumped into it; they weren’t timid. They just started trying to figure it out,” Jones says. “It was really awesome to see, and that’s exactly what they’re supposed to do. Nine times out of 10 they’re not going to know the exact language that they need. They’re going to need to go figure it out.”

But what’s more important, Uhl says, is for students to walk away from the program prepared to enter a workforce built upon a digital economy.

“Launchpad’s purpose is actually quite simple. By helping students gain hands-on learning

“Talent comes from everywhere, but metro-Atlanta’s under-tapped southside stands in stark contrast to the opportunity-rich communities north of I-20.”

— Joe Uhl, chief architect and vice president of engineering at Mailchimp

Real-world application of the concepts is what makes Launchpad exciting for many of the students. The program gives them a chance to dive into the latest trends in IT and data management, as well as improve their problem-solving skills with a “learning-by-doing” approach.

“It’s cool to see what’s relevant and what’s not,” says senior computer science major Abu Hassan. “It’s not an ordinary class. It reinforces my love for computer science.”

Beyond gaining insight into software development, cybersecurity and data science, the students hear personal testimony from Mailchimp employees who share everything from best practices for various IT problems to what unconventional paths they took to get into the field. And there is an incentive: *Mailchimp selects some members from the cohort to stay on as interns in their offices.*

experiences in a 21st-century work environment, Mailchimp can help bridge the gap between what they learn in the classroom and what they can expect in their careers,” he says.

Launchpad is proving to be a success. In its second year, more than a dozen students have entered the program, and three students from the first cohort have spent the last year as interns.

For the instructors, Launchpad has given them the opportunity to step away from behind their desks and take part in shaping the academic curriculum for the students.

“My experience of sharing knowledge of my field that I am so passionate about was awesome. The students were very inquisitive and collaborative. I enjoyed their enthusiasm for the interactive exercises,” says Daneez Owais, senior quality analyst at Mailchimp and Launchpad instructor. “I was able to share things which are not talked about in college classes like Agile, Scrum and user stories.

When they join any engineering team, they will come in with that knowledge and that thought is very satisfying to me personally!”



Launchpad is already solidifying the career aspirations of some of its participants.

Ashley Mains, a computer science major and a test engineering intern for Mailchimp, is already planning to pursue a graduate degree in machine learning and artificial intelligence with the hopes of finding work as a quality analyst once she graduates in the spring.

“It’s almost dreamlike,” she says. “I didn’t think a year ago when I was solving much more theoretical problems as a student that I would end up like what you see on TV. I definitely feel way more confident in logical thinking and my ability to solve problems.”

Mains was part of the first cohort of students in 2018 who entered the program. Since being in Launchpad and then interning with Mailchimp, she has gotten a deep dive into how the company operates, from conducting cybersecurity testing on a cloud platform to working on process improvements for Mailchimp’s framework to creating automated scripts to test software more efficiently and quickly for the user.

“I feel like my coworkers are pleased with my grit and willingness and openness to communicate,” she says of her Mailchimp experience.

Because of the internship, Mains has been a mentor of sorts to the newest class of Launchpad students. She’s also managed to recruit a few students to the program.

“Her enthusiasm caught on to me,” says Shaquille Smith, a senior computer science major.

When he made his first visit to Mailchimp in the summer of 2019, he was surprised by the diversity

he saw among the company’s staff and the enthusiasm they had for their jobs. Much like his classmates, Mailchimp’s employees are a mix of women and men of various ethnicities, ages and backgrounds.

“It felt like a real, inviting place,” he says. “I’m a first-generation college student, [so] It was really inspiring just to see people that look like me working there.”

Smith, who plans to become an indie game developer, said the program has expanded his professional network and given him the skills needed to prepare for his career after graduation.

“It’s just a good opportunity to have that leg up in the competition when it comes to applying for jobs,” he says.

Uhl hopes through Launchpad they can expand the available talent pool in Atlanta for employers seeking IT professionals, and as the state of Georgia continues to grow its technology industry in the coming years—with more investment in financial technology and cybersecurity—the state will need to meet greater workforce demands in IT and computer science.

“As we enter our second year of the program, we’re focused on building out our curriculum and hands-on learning opportunities even more,” Uhl says. “One goal is to engage with other companies to help place our students into internships and get hands-on learning experience, even if it’s not at Mailchimp.”

We think this program can have even more of an impact if other tech companies join in to offer internships. The more we can encourage companies to build programs of this type, the more opportunities can be made available to Clayton State specifically and Atlanta generally.”





▲ Dr. Joanna Harris-Worelds, assistant professor of dental hygiene (right), works with a student to conduct an oral assessment on a migrant worker.

A FRESH START

By Kelly Petty

On a sweltering evening in Moultrie, Georgia, a group of more than 100 students, professors and volunteers unloads packs of healthcare supplies and sets up makeshift triage units at a migrant camp on one of the many farms in the small town.

While the group fights off mosquitoes and gnats, several men come out of their homes in the camp and line up to receive health

checkups. The wives chat with each other and watch all of the activity happening while the children play and peek out windows.

The migrant camp is small and outfitted with the bare necessities: bathrooms, a mess hall for eating and a row of housing units for the farmworkers and their families.

As dusk settles into night, the camp swells with hundreds of patients.

The volunteers quickly move the men and women through an assembly line of care—a basic checkup, physical therapy, oral health screening and massage.

In addition to basic health services, they also receive donated clothing and shoes that the students and volunteers collected prior to the trip and reap the benefits of an oral health exam station Clayton State University's dental hygiene students

manage. Each patient receives an assessment and a bag with toothpaste, floss, toothbrush and other oral health items.

This is the scene of the Farmworker Family Health Program (FWFHP), an annual service initiative where students, professors and other medical volunteers visit Colquitt County in southwest Georgia for two weeks each June to provide healthcare to migrant workers and their families who lack access to healthcare.

FARM TO HEALTH

Crops are king in Georgia.

At \$75 billion in economic impact, agriculture is one of its leading industries. Peanuts, pecans and blueberries are some of highest produced crops in the state. And more than 22,000 jobs can be found in farming, fishing and forestry according to the Georgia Department of Economic Development.

To keep up with customer demand and get produce to the market, farmers rely on migrant workers, who often come from Mexico and Central America via the U.S. visa process, to plant and harvest crops. In return, the workers benefit from being able to earn wages to support their families.

The Farmworker Family Health Program steps in to take care of the medical needs of the workers and their families, which can reduce the burden of access to healthcare in the rural rich counties of south Georgia.

“These guys are working in the field 14 [to] 16 hours a day, so traditional clinic hours are not easy to get to. Access to care is the number one

health problem in rural areas,” said Dr. Erin Ferranti, associate professor at the Neil Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing at Emory University and the director of FWFHP. “Bringing healthcare to where people are is a way to bridge that gap, open up care and refer them for anything beyond what we’re able to provide here out at night camp as well as the schools.”

The Farmworker Family Health Program was created 26 years ago after Georgia State University’s nursing program recognized the need to bring healthcare to the migrant worker population in south Georgia. The goal of the program was to merge healthcare with education.

Migrant workers gain direct access to quality care at no cost while students earn valuable hands-on experience working with a vulnerable patient population.

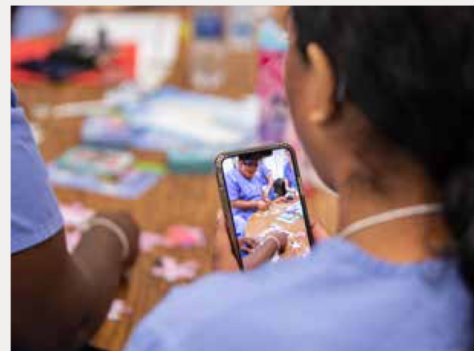
Emory partners with the federally-funded Ellenton Health Clinic to address medical referrals migrant families receive during the screenings.

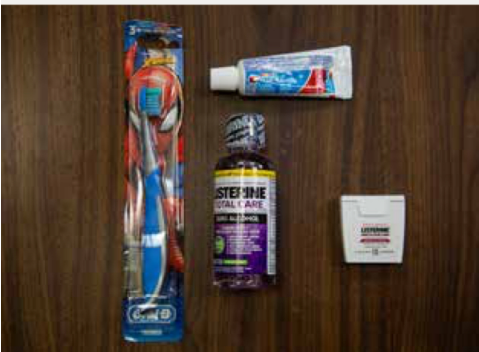
Eight years after the program formed, Dr. Judy Wold, a retired clinical nursing professor, took on the role of director-emeritus of FWFHP.

Wold expanded the program, developing partnerships with schools such as Emory University, Clayton State University and the University of Georgia to offer additional healthcare expertise to the migrant workers.

The collaboration between schools also means students learn from each other to understand how each specialty—be it dental hygiene,

(Top to bottom): Taking a break to play games and chat on the phone; Children learn to properly brush teeth; Students work late into the night servicing migrant families.





▲
(Top to bottom): The volunteer group sets up for night camp; A dental hygiene student does an oral health checkup on a farmworker; A kids dental pack comes with a toothbrush, toothpaste, floss and mouthwash.

physical therapy or nursing—works together to improve a patient’s overall health. “We have over 100 students that we bring every summer for two weeks and they’re able to work in the field [and] work interdisciplinary,” Ferranti said. “When they are working as a licensed professional, they have to work across disciplines and inter-professionally. Knowing the scope of the other disciplines opens their eyes to how they can collaborate more, advocate for their patient to seek care from the other disciplines and provide a full holistic provision of care. It’s a really neat thing. You can’t do this in an acute care setting.”

Ferranti took over the program from Wold, whom she calls her mentor, in 2019. She and co-director Laura Layne, deputy chief of nurse-quality improvement at the Georgia Department of Public Health, continue to build on Wold’s work by seeking greater financial support from donors as well as conducting a research study on heat illness among the migrant population.

A BRIGHTER SMILE

Earlier that same day in June, the Clayton State students, along with nursing, physical therapy and pharmacy students from other Georgia schools, conducted well-child health visits for children at Len Lastinger Elementary School in nearby Tifton, Georgia.

The children, whose parents are migrant workers, each received an oral health screening, lessons on how to brush their teeth and sealants, thin protective coatings put on molars to prevent cavities.

The needs of the migrant workers and their families vary. The dental hygiene students usually find decay, abscesses and sensitivity in the teeth among the adults. A deep cleaning, or regular cleaning for a healthier mouth, also can be prescribed.

The children experience dental issues typical of most adolescents their age, like cavities. But dental education helps ease any fears or concerns that the migrant families may express to the students.

“I think patient education is really important because if they don’t [understand their health], then how will they take care of themselves,” said Ayumi Lashley, a senior dental hygiene major.

At times, the one-on-one interaction with the migrant families was quite eye-opening for the Clayton State students.

“Some of the children don’t even know how to brush; they just haven’t had that education,” said Jennifer Carmona. “As far as night camp, they are undertreated, and they just don’t have the support to go see a dentist.”

Conducting such a large number of dental checkups can be exhausting. Besides days that go on for 12 hours or more, the group faces extreme heat, language barriers and lack of computer access and traditional patient setups that are typically found in clinics and doctor’s offices.

“The more challenging thing for me was the weather,” Thanh Ngo quipped. “When I stepped out of the car, I was sweating.”

But seeing the bright smiles on the children’s faces and hearing from the



migrant workers how grateful they are for the information and service that will help them maintain their health, makes the work worthwhile.

“They’re appreciative of [us] providing some type of care,” said Dr. Joanna Harris-Worelds, an assistant professor in Clayton State’s dental hygiene department. “Knowledge is often power. They’re happy to know that the problem they thought they had was not as pressing or concerning as maybe they once thought.”



To learn more about the Farmworker Family Health Program visit www.clayton.edu/laker-connection to see a video.



And to hear what one day is like for Clayton State dental hygiene students caring for the migrant families, listen to our podcast, the Laker Lounge, at the www.thelakerlounge.podbean.com.

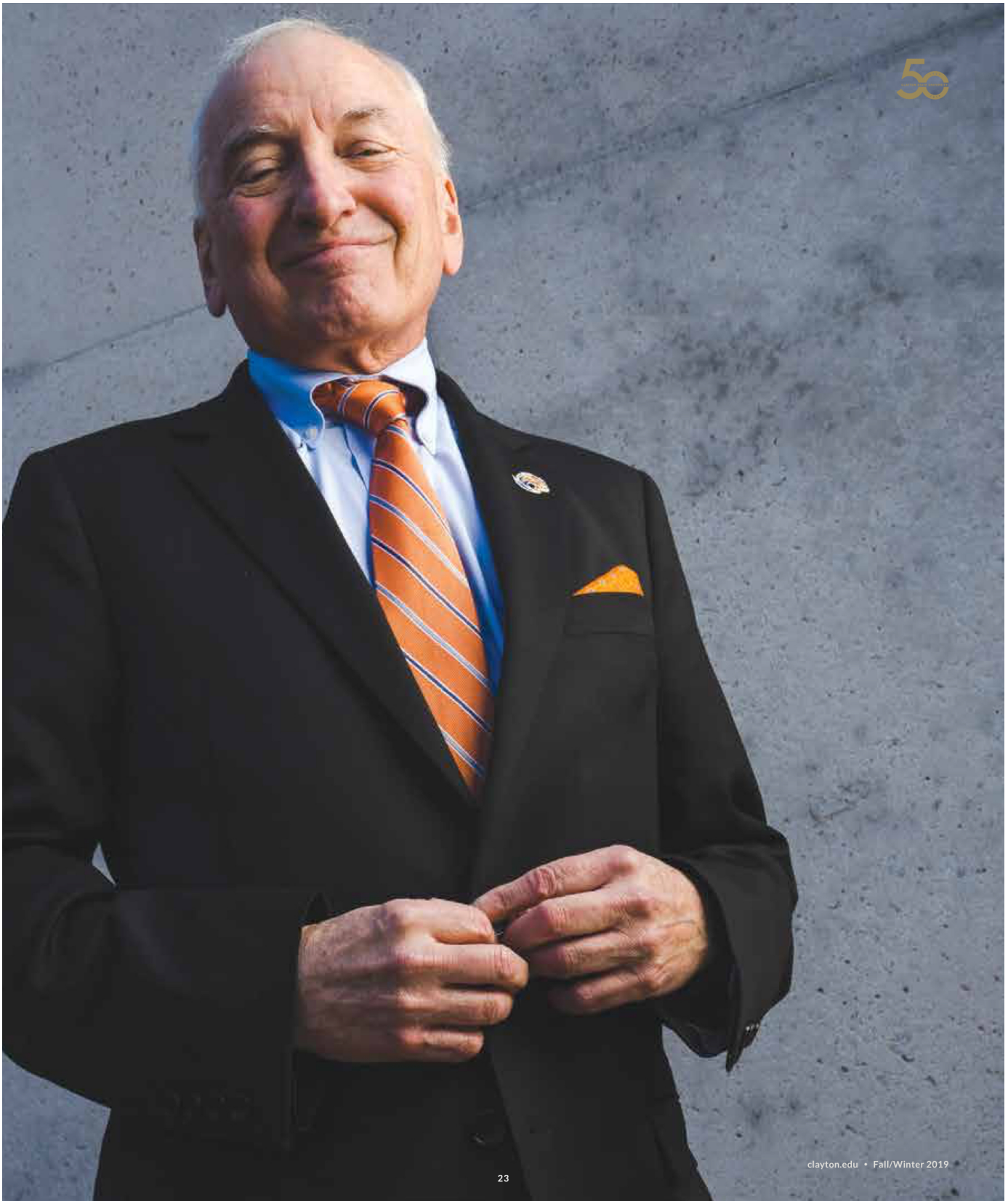
▼ Clayton State University’s dental hygiene students hone their skills while providing a much needed service to the families of workers who support Georgia’s agriculture industry.



A CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESIDENT

By Adina Solomon

Tim Hynes is the first to admit that he doesn't like dwelling on the past. He prefers to focus on what the future could hold. For the last 10 years, Hynes has led Clayton State University through transformation—an increase in students, the opening of more academic buildings and the expansion of student housing. Hynes was interim president in 2009 and began his tenure as permanent president the following year. He spoke with Laker Connection about his work at the university and his outlook on where the university will go next.



Laker Connection: *What is your vision for Clayton State?*

Hynes: The place to start in talking about our vision and our mission is our belief that a university's core business is learning. The usual understanding of that learning is the learning of student, but faculty and staff must continuously participate in the learning process so the learning experiences for our students can accommodate a changing external environment.



University-based community engagement [also] is meaningful. We think one of the special things that emerged for our institution over its 50 years has been a close connection with the community from its origins, in which the community taxed itself to have some startup dollars for the siting of this institution in Clayton County on Swan Lake, to the notion that the learning that we can create here can be applied in really specific and meaningful ways to the communities that surround us in the south metro Atlanta area.

LC: *Over the past 10 years, have you accomplished what you set out to do?*

H: Institutions accomplish things. Leaders create the conditions in which the institution can work collectively to facilitate those accomplishments, and leaders can sometimes be effective at finding partners who will support visions and missions of an organization to accomplish those goals. And so, the university has accomplished a bunch of things over the last 10 years, probably best demonstrated by the 10-11% increase in graduation rates in the 10 years since we've arrived.

There's been wonderful support from our funding partners at the office of the University System [of Georgia] as well as the [Georgia] General Assembly and several governors in the construction of the Lakeview Discovery and Science Center, a science lab annex, the complete restoration of what we now call Magnolia Hall, two-thirds of which was [previously] unusable, the complete renovation and a doubling of useful size in the library, a road connecting the east and main campuses, and the complete renovation of the east campus.

LC: *What has been your proudest moment while you've been at the university?*

H: The thing I point to most frequently is the inclusion of Clayton State by an article in the New York Times this past May as one of 10 institutions with the greatest level of graduation rates for students above what would have been expected based on the income and other characteristics of the admitting class. That was the manifestation of first, the most important thing that we can accomplish, which is student success, and second, some external validation the actions we took to change advising to be intentional in identifying students with challenges and to create support systems to meet those challenges had come together.

LC: *What do you think the future holds for Clayton State? What's next?*

H: It's hard to predict. We know that all of us are going to be using significant levels of data analytics in order to utilize the large datasets universities have in new ways to create the support for what students are learning. Degree programs will likely change to a whole array of just-in-time learning [specific information or knowledge sets that are required by somebody externally in a given timeframe]. One of the things that universities do incredibly well is provide [professional] credentials. What will be interesting to see is what credentials will look like, even 10 years from now, and [if] that accumulation of certificates will be the way in which we determine who has a degree and who does not. I think we're in amazingly exciting times.

LC: *How do you think academics at Clayton State will change?*

H: Learning is a constant. The means by which learning is accomplished may change. The growing emphasis on analytics in our College of Information and Mathematical Sciences as well as in our College of Business is adapting to the notion that we will be more fanatically driven by data. Those are examples of what I think the future will bring, a continued evolution of programs focused upon our ability to serve students who are looking for applications of learning that will serve them well in an external environment, in the public, private and nonprofit sectors where they're going to get jobs.

LC: *In the future, what do you want people to remember about your time as president?*

H: Things happen while you're here that until they break down, people won't recognize that they were there. The first year I arrived for instance, there was a discovery—this was the year after Laker Hall opened in 2008—and one of the things that hadn't been accomplished

was the expansion of water pipes and water delivery system. Students in a residence hall take showers and flush toilets, and the demand on water for the campus was greater than what it had been before we had a residential presence; and so, I thought for a while when I was interim president that the legacy I would leave would be digging a hole, taking out an old pipe, putting in a new one and then filling the hole back up...I use that as an illustration that it's unclear what will be left as a legacy.



I hope I leave Clayton State with a constant and continuous focus on student learning as the hallmark of what this institution will accomplish; and I believe that in a time of amazing change and with increasing demands for innovations in education, that it will be that centering of the university, regardless of what students we serve, their demographics or the careers for which we will be asked to prepare those students. Focusing on learning will mean that the institution will continue to be a force in south metro Atlanta.



▲ Kevin Demmitt, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs, dedicating Clayton State University's newest building, *The Lakeview Discovery and Science Center*.

50 YEARS ON:
CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY'S

bright f

By Adina Solomon



The sun sparkles off of Swan Lake as students mill around the James M. Baker University Center. Two students approaching from opposite directions recognize each other and say hello outside the doors. Inside the building bustles with people talking and walking. Just a few steps outside Dr. Tim Hynes' office, students ignore the hum of conversation and sit perched in chairs to study.

As Clayton State University moves into the future, figuring out how to deal with changes in learning methods and student needs, Hynes believes the university will continue to witness scenes such as this one.

"There are some futurists who like to believe in the demise of the brick-and-mortar university," says Hynes, president of Clayton State. "I'm not one of those."

Hynes sits in a small conference room near his office, a poster of Clayton State's campus hanging on the wall. The first 50 years of Clayton State's existence have spurred growth—in buildings, in number of students, in academic programs. But we're not here to talk about the past. Instead, Hynes talks excitedly about the future.

Now that Clayton State has reached its 50th anniversary, university and community leaders evaluate how Clayton State's campus, students, academics and effects on south metro Atlanta will evolve over the next half century.


The student body, which had just under 7,000 people in fall 2019, will multiply, says Corlis Cummings, vice president of business and operations. So will the number of faculty and staff to serve those students.

The makeup of the students could change, too. Clayton State already has an older population, with an average age of 25.6 years old in fall 2019. The numbers of those non-traditional students will continue to rise, says Kevin Demmitt, provost and vice president for academic affairs. Graduate education has become more common. Clayton State's fastest growing school is the School of Graduate Studies.

"A lot of people are seeing the need to come back and continue their education in order to advance with their careers or to enter a new career," Demmitt says.

Not only that, but the student body will become even more diverse. In the fall 2019 semester, the enrollment was 62.5% Black, 17.1% white, 8% Latino and 6.8% Asian. But going forward, Clayton State will reflect the local community's thriving Asian and Latino populations.

uture

Corlis Cummings, vice president of Business and Operations, and University Provost Dr. Kevin Demmitt, have worked over the last few years to expand campus facilities to create an academic environment that fosters discovery and innovation. 

“Our service proposition—to try and convince an amazingly diverse population that they belong in education—will be a harbinger of what other institutions will be required to do,” Hynes says.

That increasing diversity will require Clayton State to ponder inclusiveness, embracing and exploring differences in order to bring the campus community closer together, says J. Celeste Walley-Jean, associate professor of psychology and dean of Graduate Studies and Inclusive Engagement.

“We’re a diverse institution by accident,” Walley-Jean says. As Clayton County has become more diverse over the years, so the university has followed. In 1990, the county’s population was under 24% Black. By 2018, it had tripled to 72%.

This goes beyond ethnic and racial diversity, also encompassing diversity in age.

“I would love to see [that] rather than having these things happen kind of passively, for us to really focus and be intentional about creating the environment that we want to see,” Walley-Jean says. This could include increasing programming around inclusiveness.

The increase in students over the next 50 years will have physical effects on Clayton State. Today, the main campus in Morrow stretches across 214 acres. But more students will require more space, Cummings says. Think more classroom buildings and greenspace for intramural fields. Shared community spaces, such as a convocation center that can host sports games, graduations and

other events. Perhaps Clayton State will need another student center for club meetings and activities.

A projected surge in traditional students, typically ranging in age from 18 to 22 years old, could lead to more people looking to live on campus. That means a need exists for more housing, Cummings says. Clayton State has no family housing now for older and graduate students, so the university could also build that.

As for where this space will come from, Cummings says the university can acquire property from neighbors and build on parking lots, replacing them with parking decks.

As for what goes inside these buildings, forget the traditional classroom with chairs facing the front of the room for a lecture. Demmitt says Clayton State could build more flexible workspaces, complete with chairs that students can move when they need to interact with each other.

How students learn in those classrooms will also morph. A traditional college major focuses on a single idea, but the world will require a more broadly educated student, Demmitt says. Clayton State is looking to adapt its curricula to this type of education.

And a bachelor’s degree will not mark the end of a person’s education. Demmitt says as people move through their careers or transition to a new career or position, they


need to develop new skills. So, it will become more common for them to turn to continuing education to fill that gap, especially as more older students come to Clayton State.

“We often talked about lifelong learning, but we have not had much of a platform to actually promote or encourage that,” Demmitt says.

Clayton State wants people to come to them for that education. To that end, the university is looking at micro-credentials, a mini certification for specific skills, in competencies that employers look for: data analytics, IT, critical thinking, the ability to work with people across cultures. It will serve as a way for people to document what they learned or accomplished, Demmitt says.

While an academic degree program typically takes longer to develop and requires multiple approvals from state and national agencies, continuing education is a rapid response to immediate workforce needs. It can also be shorter term, spanning weekends or a week.

To see how continue education can work, take the case of entertainment. Georgia’s once-nascent film industry began to take off in 2008 due to a tax credit for projects that shoot in the state. By 2017, the state was the top shooting location in the country for the highest-grossing U.S. movies. Film and TV production now supports 92,000 jobs in Georgia.



We have to be good neighbors and good stewards. The Southern Crescent region is our backyard, so we want to be a part of this and make sure that the area is successful.

Corlis Cummings, vice president of Business and Operations



▲ The university's newly-named Crescent Theatre



▲ The renovated Athletic Center lobby

As the film industry took off, Clayton State was among the first to offer a film production program. It launched that through the Center for Continuing and Professional Education. Demmitt says the university got the program up and running in a matter of months. Clayton State now has a 10,000-square-foot film studio in Jonesboro, seven miles south of the main campus.

The film program itself is expected to expand, concentrating in post-production. Demmitt calls it the next employment wave in the state's entertainment industry. "Not only will the films be shot here, but they'll also be edited and finished in Georgia as well," he says.

Continuing education is not the only avenue that Clayton State

will pursue. Online learning will also evolve. In fall 2012, under a quarter of all postsecondary students in the U.S. studied online. In 2017, about a third took at least one online course.

Non-traditional students often need the flexibility of online classes, so that's where a lot of growth in that area has centered, Demmitt says. But many people prefer a combination of online classes and access to study groups, tutorials and professors.

"I see us increasingly finding ways to offer the convenience of online but offer the impact that comes from face-to-face interactions," Demmitt says, whose background is in sociology. "There is a special dynamic that comes from actually interacting with a person face to face that I think

increases understanding of how others view the world. And I believe that a central part of a college education is learning to see the world from multiple perspectives."

At the same time, people can find it hard to come to Clayton State's main campus while dealing with work and family demands and traffic. In the future, the university could place smaller centers throughout metro Atlanta where people can meet other students and hold study groups.

"It gives them a sense of contact with the university, even if they cannot make it to campus," Demmitt says.

But online learning will still play a large role. Demmitt wants Clayton State to offer more resources to support students,



especially keeping in mind those who balance work and family demands. Resources could include watching classes on video and meeting with study groups online. Someday, it could become routine to connect with students and faculty throughout the day on different types of media, he says.

Clayton State's reach goes further than the confines of its main campus in Clayton County. It has extensions throughout south metro Atlanta in Henry and Fayette counties—areas that are ripe for change in the coming years. The total population of Clayton, Fayette and Henry counties in 2015 was about 596,000. By 2050, it is projected to jump by around 52% to just over 900,000 people, according to Atlanta Regional Commission numbers.

With that population boom will likely come more businesses and development, requiring the knowledge and guidance of Clayton State.

“What the relationship [with neighboring communities] will be is unclear, but that there will be a relationship I think is essential to the identity of this institution,” President Hynes says. “We’ve been incredibly intentional in trying to find ways to serve our community... Exactly what talents will be needed, what workforce needs there will be, what the nature of the community, the south metro Atlanta environment will be, my fondest hope is that the university will adapt and, in many instances, take the lead in pushing forward those changes to support that community.”

Clayton State can work with its neighbors by providing expertise in conversations of the future, Cummings says. Budding entrepreneurs now come to the Small Business Development Center, part of the University of Georgia but on Clayton State's campus in Morrow, for free consulting services and low-cost educational programs. Cummings says capacity exists to increase Clayton State's entrepreneurship services, perhaps with incubators that provide physical space for people to come receive advice and start their business.

In addition, people in the community could use the university's faculty and expertise.

“I would anticipate that as there are either problems that needed to be solved or strategic plans or visions that needed to be discussed and implemented that we would always definitely be at that table

to help guide and participate,” Cummings says. “We have to be good neighbors and good stewards. The Southern Crescent region is our backyard, so we want to be a part of its growth and make sure that this is successful.”

One of the impending challenges to success that the region faces? Getting around that backyard. Over the next 50 years, south metro Atlanta will need to rethink mobility beyond traditional cars, says Gerald McDowell, executive director of the Aerotropolis Atlanta Community Improvement Districts around Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

McDowell believes that Clayton State could become a leader in south metro Atlanta's mobility dialogue by directing students to explore new modes of transportation for surrounding communities.

“It's very similar to how film and television started exploding in Georgia and then the university started offering opportunities for students to participate in that industry,” McDowell says.

As it becomes more commonplace in our everyday lives, autonomous and connected technology will shape how people move. “All that autonomous technology is going to be in our community over the next 50 years, and so we need to recreate and rethink our road networks and our interstate system,” he says. Clayton State could create opportunities for students to research and provide leadership on how to accommodate these innovations, similar to how the Aerotropolis now works with the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Clayton State could even have a center of excellence for mobility, housing a research or demonstration lab to show off new technologies and partner with the private sector.

As more and more people live in south metro Atlanta, building out transit is crucial. By 2050, Clayton's population will swell by 44% over 2015. Fayette will spike by 33%, while Henry will have one of the highest growth rates in metro Atlanta at 70%, according to the Atlanta Regional Commission.

A car-centric system will make moving around all those people difficult. McDowell says Clayton State could develop opportunities for students to explore how south metro can build in a healthy way that will integrate anticipated expansion and development.

That development will include new businesses opening up. The top issue that they face is recruiting a well-trained workforce, says Colin Martin, president and CEO of the Fayette Chamber of Commerce. He says Clayton State is in a position to help fill those needs into the future.

"Clayton State could become the single most important economic driver for our region," Martin says.

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport stands in Clayton State's backyard, forming a strong aerospace industry

Advance manufacturing and engineering will also continue to expand, he says.

In addition to business, Clayton State could cultivate prospective county leaders who will help decide the trajectory of the region, says Shannon James, president and CEO of the Aerropolis Atlanta Alliance.

He expects the university can create a talent pipeline for future employer needs and at the same time serve as research center to find the solutions that will make the south metro Atlanta region economically competitive.

"I think the university is going to play a critical role as a resource engine to provide recommendations for solutions to help solve some of the challenges that exist within the municipalities of Clayton County and within the county itself," he says. "Clayton State has the opportunity to serve as a thought leader for some of the county's challenges and strengths."

Clayton State already sends their students out into the community to use their existing skills and develop others. Right now, the university runs Partnering Academics and Community Engagement, where students work with community groups on projects that apply what they learn in class. For example, paralegal students could go to a senior residential facility to help people prepare their wills.

Inside the James M. Baker University Center



Demmitt says Clayton State wants to further build that program.

“Students are going out, finding out the relevance of what it is that they are learning and also identifying gaps in their education that, when they come back to the classroom, they’re more anxious and ready to fill,” he says.

Students are not the only ones going out into the community, though. In the coming years, the university could grow its instructional sites in Fayette County’s Peachtree City and Henry County’s McDonough, Demmitt says.

Martin says the Fayette Chamber has talked about the need for a permanent Clayton State campus in Fayette. No university has a permanent campus in the county.

“A permanent campus for Clayton State would bring a younger demographic here and could be a center point for arts, entertainment and culture in the county,” he says, pointing to the revitalization that happened in downtown Columbus after Columbus State University opened a riverside campus there.

So much has happened at Clayton State in its first five decades. A campus in Morrow of more than a dozen buildings on six lakes sprung up. Thousands of students—not to mention faculty and staff—have walked the halls of the university. Instructional sites arrived in Henry and Fayette counties.

Even the past 14 years have seen a lot. When Walley-Jean arrived at the university in 2006, it didn’t even have a dorm.

Clayton State will need to respond to and help guide tremendous change in the next 50 years, both inside and outside of its walls.

“I am impressed and optimistic about our future because we’ve done so much in a very short period of time,” Walley-Jean says. “Having a relatively stable institution puts us in a good position to do more and be more than we have been.”

As south metro Atlanta’s communities, transportation and economy evolve, Clayton State has a chance to use its power for the good of the region. It can foster the future.

The Student Activities Center ▼



Clayton State University’s brand tagline ▼



CELEBRATING THE DREAM

50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



DONOR
MITCH JOHNSON
SHARES A LAUGH
WITH DR. MELODY CARTER,
SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT.



DR. TIM HYNES HOLDS A LEGISLATIVE PROCLAMATION
PRESENTED BY STATE REPS. KIM SCHOFIELD,



DONORS
JIM & BETH BAKER.

UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION
PRESIDENT JACK HANDCOCK,
PAST FOUNDATION PRESIDENT
LEONARD MORELAND AND
HIS WIFE KAY.



DONORS TERI
WILLIAMSON (L) AND
DR. ANAPURA BHAT
CHAT WHILE GUESTS
ENJOY THE RECEPTION.



DR. CASS PARKER, CHAIR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
AND PHYSICS WITH HIS WIFE,
DR. ANNE GAQUERE-PARKER.



MATION HONORING THE UNIVERSITY'S 50TH
MIKE GLANTON, AND RHONDA BURNOUGH.

CELEBRATING THE DREAM

50TH ANNIVERSARY BIRTHDAY PARTY

FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS INDULGED IN BIRTHDAY CAKE AND CUPCAKES.



LONGTIME STAFF MEMBER KEVIN FITZGERALD HOLDS A MOTHERBOARD HE ADDED TO THE CAPSULE MANY YEARS AGO.

PRESIDENT TIM HYNES SHOWS OFF SOME OF THE TIME CAPSULE ITEMS TO PARTY GUESTS.



MUNDY'S MILL HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND KICKED OFF THE PARTY WITH SOME CELEBRATORY TUNES.



SONYA GAITHER, DEAN OF LIBRARIES, AND UNIVERSITY ARCHIVIST FEECHI HALL OPEN THE TIME CAPSULE WITH LOCH.

A GROUP OF ALUMS CHAT IT UP AT THE PARTY.



50

ALUMNI WEEKEND

ALUMNI WEEKEND DREW MORE THAN A HUNDRED FORMER LAKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES FOR SOME FOOD, MUSIC AND FUN.



THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION CELEBRATED THE 50TH WITH SOME BIRTHDAY CAKE.



THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HELD ITS ANNUAL ALUMNI WEEKEND OCTOBER 6TH TO CELEBRATE LAKER PRIDE.



ALUMNI MEMBERS ENJOY THE FESTIVITIES.



TIME UNLOCKED

When a committee of faculty and staff came together in 1994 to create a time capsule containing historical items from the school's 25 years since its inception, they left a simple message: "The 1994 Time Capsule Committee humbly places these precious items within the capsule in the hopes that future friends of Clayton State College will enjoy reminiscing over the past of this noble institution."

Since then, Clayton State has experienced a number of milestones—university status, new buildings, the addition of more degrees and thousands of students graduating the institution who are making their dreams real. The items in the time capsule show the best of who we are as a campus and a community.

A "DEAD" NETWORK BOARD



1990-91 INAUGURAL SEASON CSC LAKERS
TICKET AND ASSORTED BUTTONS



CLAYTON STATE COLLEGE FABRIC ARM AND
CLAYTON JUNIOR COLLEGE METAL BADGE

“The 1994 Time Capsule Committee humbly places these precious items within the capsule in the hopes that future friends of Clayton State College will enjoy reminiscing over the past of this noble institution.”

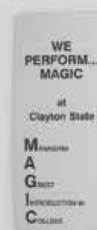
A 1969 ISSUE OF STUDENT NEWSPAPER, THE BENT TREE



CLAYTON STATE LAKER SHAKER



1994 CSC STUDENT SURVIVAL KIT



FIRST GRADUATES OF CLAYTON JUNIOR COLLEGE



AN EMPLOYEE TIMECARD



1974 CENTURION

DENTAL HYGIENE LAB KIT AND PHOTOGRAPHS



AN EMPLOYEE PARKING STICKER

#PLAYHOMIEPLAY

An Atlanta Native Shows That Hip-Hop and Classical Can Mix to Make Musical Magic

By Kelly Petty

Drew Forde is not afraid to tell you that the classical music experience of today can feel like a museum—old, preserved and full of relics.

The 26-year-old viola player, who goes by his moniker “ThatViolaKid,” believes the time is now for classical music to shake off its stuffy traditions and emerge with fresh sounds and new voices to attract younger mainstream listeners.

And at Spivey Hall this past fall, Forde took the lead in reaching new audiences during a one-week artist residency he conducted that merged classical music with hip-hop and started a conversation about how the two opposing musical genres are actually more similar than they appear.

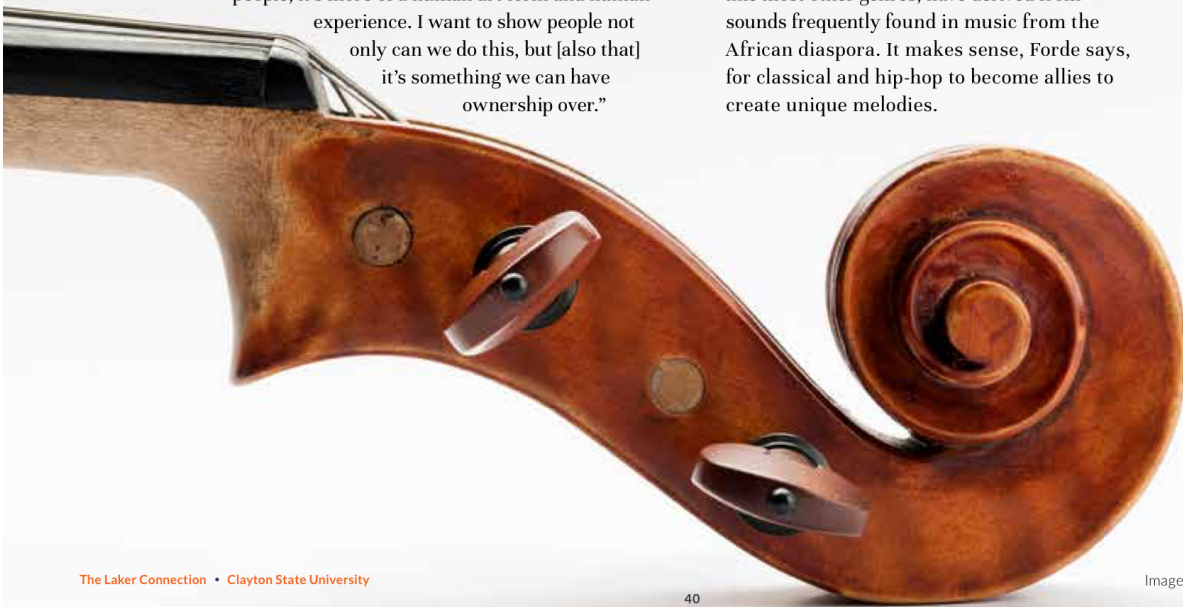
“There is a perception that black people don’t play classical music. Black people don’t play string instruments,” he says. “Even though it was written and canonized by white, European people, it’s more of a human art form and human experience. I want to show people not only can we do this, but [also that] it’s something we can have ownership over.”

During the week of Nov. 10, Forde toured middle schools in Clayton County to educate the students about the viola and classical music. He also hosted a master class with select students from Clayton State and a local high school.

To close out the week, Forde performed two concerts—a young people’s concert and an evening recital entitled *#playhomieplay* which were open to the community. Connecting with the students of nearby Clayton County Public Schools was especially meaningful for him. Many are African American and it was important to Forde for those students to see themselves represented in a more traditional musical genre.

“I’ve seen the switch flip in the kids’ eyes,” he says. “The Q-and-A’s tend to be the most important to me. Many of the questions the kids asked were way more advanced than when I was a kid.”

Forde notes that elements of classical music, like most other genres, have derived from sounds frequently found in music from the African diaspora. It makes sense, Forde says, for classical and hip-hop to become allies to create unique melodies.





THAT *Viola Kid*



“ There is a perception that black people don’t play classical music. I want to show people not only can we do this, but [also that] it’s something we can have ownership over.”

– Drew “ThatViolaKid” Forde

Take rapper Nas, for example. The Brooklyn native scored a big hit in 2003 with the song “I Can,” which sampled parts of “Für Elise” by Ludwig Van Beethoven.

Or listen to the gritty sound of rap classic “K.I.M.” from EPMD featuring Keith Murray and Redman, which immediately kicks off with a sample of “Symphony No. 40 (Third Movement)” by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, backed by a solid bass beat.

“Classical music is not necessarily as syncopated as jazz derivatives of music,” says Forde. “But if you go back in history, there’s a lot of evidence based [on] the prevalence of the pentatonic scale...that this basic system was developed in Africa. And as people spread out, they took those basic principles of rhythms and then they developed their own systems based off the different cultures that spread—[like] China, India. And when you strip [music] down to the pentatonic structure, they all have a lot of commonalities.”

Forde feels it’s important for young people of color to see the connections between genres because it encourages willingness to explore classical sounds. And it’s up to the traditional organizations who are gatekeepers of classical performance to make the genre and performance more attractive to the next generation.

“[Have] accessible concerts, allow people to record with their cell phones; make it more of a fun event.”

Forde discovered his own passion for music in his elementary school days. He took music class, joined his school’s chorus and later began to play percussion. But it was in sixth grade that he learned about string instruments and found his niche.

“It was super different,” he recalls. “I wanted to be unique, and I found that I fell in love with the viola.”

As a teen, he began to focus on chamber music and string quartet in high school. He gained attention for his skills and was even

featured on a 2009 CNN segment about the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra’s talent development program.

After high school, Forde attended the Robert McDuffie Center for Strings at Mercer University’s music school, where he earned a Bachelor of Music in 2014. He was one of 10 students awarded a talent-based \$20,000 career advancement grant to attend The Julliard School. Forde graduated from the prestigious institution in 2016.

Since then, Forde has traveled the country playing viola as an independent artist. He has shared the stage with celebrities like Alicia Keys, Camila Cabello, Lindsey Stirling, Evanescence and Josh Groban, and he has been featured on several popular video game soundtracks, including *Final Fantasy XII Remastered: The Zodiac Age*, feature his work.

The key to his success, though, lies in the organic relationship he’s developed with the public through social media. You can often find him on Twitter, Instagram and YouTube offering tips to other musicians, sharing his life experiences and performing classical versions of popular songs.

In fact, it was a cover of Adele’s hit “Hello” that he performed with cellist Nathan Chan that propelled him into the public eye. The YouTube video has over 500,000 views.

“We need to utilize social media and the whole digital space to be able to document what’s going on with classical music,” he says.

Forde hopes that his personal journey into the world of classical music and his success as a nontraditional musician breaks down the barriers that separate classical art from contemporary audiences and motivates other young people to be as outward about what they love as much as he is about the viola.

“I just want to perform my music, be my authentic self and plant the seed,” he says. “I just want to give these kids permission to be who they want to be.”



EXPRESS YOURSELF

By Carol Brzozowski

Nathan T. Anderson, a 32-year-old sophomore at Clayton State University, says his greatest joy in life is life itself.

“Even on my birthday, I tell people whatever money they plan to spend on me, keep it. Just pay a bill. I already have my gift. I woke up,” he says. “Life itself is wonderful. There are a lot of ups and sometimes you have downs, but it is worth it.”

Anderson indeed has had his share of ups and downs. At the pinnacle was landing a role in the 2018 blockbuster “Black Panther” as a Border Tribe warrior with actor Daniel Kaluuya playing the leader. He appears in two scenes toward the movie’s end in the last battle between the tribe and the Black Panther.

A native of College Park, Anderson dabbled in acting in high school and during his time at Fort Valley State University.

In 2007, at the age of 20, Anderson dropped out of college and enrolled in the United States Marine Corps, in which he served as a Military Operation Specialty 035 also known as an infantry assault Marine.

Anderson spent time in 20 countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan. He returned to the U.S. after an honorable discharge in 2016 as a disabled veteran due to PTSD, a gun wound and injured knee for which he’s had surgery. He sought help from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in taking his next steps in life.

“After so many hours of counseling for PTSD, I wanted to get back into acting,” Anderson says. “I loved the performing arts. I like the art of it, not just acting or becoming famous.

“You get to express yourself. I never got a chance to express myself when I was in the military because I had to follow orders all the time. You feel the way they want you to feel.”

Anderson says before he had enlisted in the military, he was socially awkward.

“I thought the military was going to be easy for me because all I had to do was take orders. You don’t have to make friends,” he says. “But once I had been overseas in all of those gun fights, I finally saw how important it is to express yourself and come together as one to accomplish a certain goal. That’s what got me into acting.”

In 2017, Anderson landed a background role as a shadow warrior in the TV show “Valor,” filmed in Atlanta and aired on The CW. In November of that same year, he began filming for “Black Panther.”

Anderson says he was “amazed” by his two-week experience during the film shoot for his scenes in the Marvel film.

“It takes a lot more work than people think to prepare for a role, especially if you have to do some fighting,” he says. “You go for your hair and makeup, and they have your costume to put on. After that, you go on set and recite your lines. People are coming with umbrellas to shade you or are fanning you, giving you water.

“Between takes, you’re with A-list actors like Michael B. Jordan and Daniel Kaluuya and they’re just amazing. During lunch, they joined us. The B- and C-list actors wanted to talk to us. We had surf and turf every day. I got paid very

handsomely. I thought man, I could get used to this.”

After acting in “Valor” and “Black Panther,” Anderson says he wanted more out of his acting career. He started spring semester classes at Clayton State University in January of 2019 on the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill and is majoring in theater and performing arts.

Anderson says he chose to attend Clayton State University for its reputation of offering a good visual and performing arts program. Anderson also credits Georgia for having a robust film industry, referencing Atlanta’s reputation as the “Hollywood of the South.”

“All of the acting professors are awesome,” he says of Clayton State’s theatre faculty, adding his studies have helped him hone his skills for stage and film auditions.


Anderson is now setting his sights on an opportunity to work with Marvel again. He’s been picked for a role in the sequel to “Black Panther.”

“I want to be a more notable actor,” says Anderson. “I want to get to the point where at least I could do whatever film production I’d like to be in.”

Anderson advises others to take pride in anything they seek to do.

“Don’t wait on anybody to do what you want to do,” he says. “Success is on the other side of fear. All you have to do is take that first step.”

He says he hopes his experiences acting will positively impact other young people who want to start acting on film or stage.



“Now I have a chance to express myself here at Clayton State University on stage being a thespian and a theater major.”

“A lot of those artists out there busted their butt to get there, just like me, and it’s well-deserved,” he says.

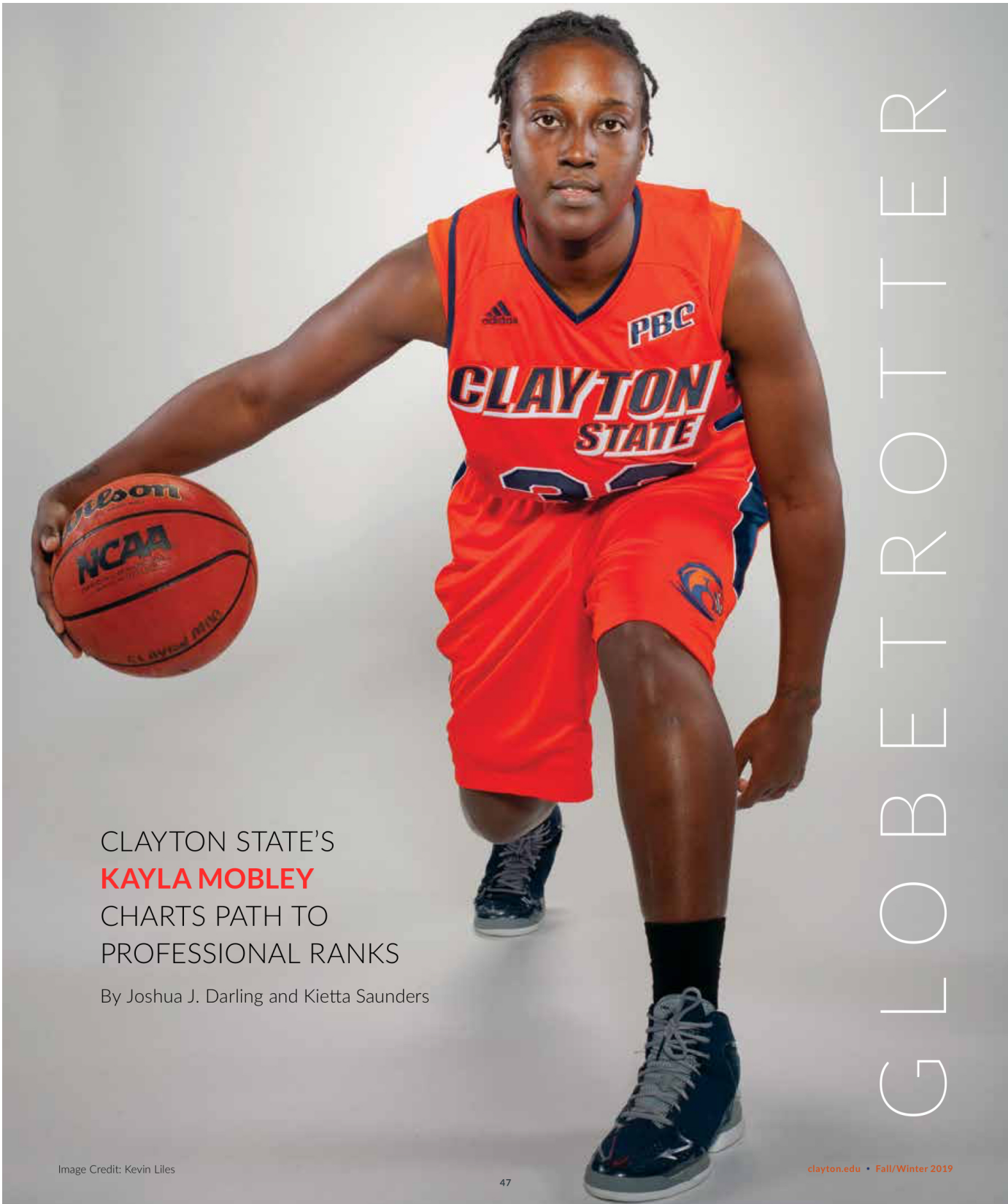
Anderson’s biggest challenge in life is staying focused while balancing a busy schedule that includes schoolwork, his acting career and participating in roller derby.

“I have no breaks in between,” he says.

Anderson draws his strength from inspirational quotes. He cites Malcolm Gladwell’s theory that it takes 10,000 hours to master something.

“Once I get those hours in, I know what I’m capable of,” he adds.


By putting in the work, Anderson intends to use his power to change the world. These wise words from Muhammad Ali motivate him: “Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they’ve been given than to explore the power they have to change it.”



CLAYTON STATE'S
KAYLA MOBLEY
CHARTS PATH TO
PROFESSIONAL RANKS

By Joshua J. Darling and Kietta Saunders

Image Credit: Kevin Liles



Scholar-Athlete. Record Holder. National Champion. Graduate. Professional Athlete. International Champion. World Traveler. Role Model.

Each of these titles perfectly describes Kayla Mobley '13, and while the foundation for her personal and professional success may not have begun at Clayton State, it was certainly where it was set in place and became the launching point for her to make her dreams a reality.

Joining the Lakers women's basketball program in the fall of 2010 after a season at North Florida, the 5-foot-11-inch point forward made an immediate impact on a team that already had six straight NCAA Division II tournament appearances and a pair of regional titles.

The next three years that Mobley donned orange and blue was the most successful stretch in the history of the illustrious program. In that time, she helped lead Clayton State to an incredible 96-6 overall record, 47-2 mark at home in The Loch and nearly unbelievable 52-1 record in the Peach Belt Conference.

Those wins would lead to more, as the Lakers claimed a total of four PBC championships, made three appearances in the NCAA tournament, took two trips to the Elite Eight and, most notably, won the first and only national championship in Clayton State Athletics history.

On their way to a 35-1 season in 2010-11, Mobley and the Lakers proceeded to win all six games in the NCAA Tournament by at least 17 points, capped by a dominant 69-50 decision over No. 3 Michigan Tech on March 25, 2011. It is still the only national championship won by a four-year women's basketball program in the state of Georgia.

Certainly, the highlight of any student-athlete's career and often the culmination of a career at the Division II level, it was just the beginning of Mobley's story.

Following 61 more wins as a Laker, setting the women's track and field program record for the shot put and earning her degree in psychology and human services in 2013, her journey would take her far afield, courtesy of the sport she loves and the skills, determination and connections gleaned from her time at Clayton State.

"I've been on this journey since 2013 and it wasn't always easy," said Mobley. "I had to tell myself not to give up just because it didn't happen as quickly as I would have liked sometimes. I stayed after it and controlled what I could. I would tell those athletes that in order to take their career to the next level they have to eat, sleep and breathe it. You can't cheat the game. When you step on the court, it will show just how much work you have, or have not, put in."

The journey she speaks of is one that "shows the work" and has taken her to three different continents and six different countries in the past six years as she's chased her dream of playing professionally.

One of just a handful of Clayton State women's basketball players to accomplish that feat, she has been the most successful. After getting her start with the startup Women's Universal Basketball Association (WUBA) in Atlanta, Georgia, in 2013-14, Mobley would earn the opportunity to play overseas.

That opportunity would take her to Morocco in May 2014 and then to Europe and England with the Northumbria Newcastle Eagles (2014-15) of the Women's British Basketball League.

After averaging 14.6 points, 8.0 rebounds and 1.4 steals for the Northumbria Newcastle Eagles, her journey would continue to Estonia in January 2016 with Tallinna Ulrikool before landing back in North America in Mexico for the next year. Then, her career truly started to take off.

She earned Most Valuable Player honors with Soles de Ojinaga and an Alianza Chihuahuense De Basquetbol Championship after averaging a double-double before joining Lobas de Aguascalientes for five months. Her average 18.1 points, 10.1 rebounds and 1.7 steals per game were keys factors in winning the 2017 Liga Nacional de Baloncesto Profesional Championship.

Her connections at Clayton State, specifically with the help of former teammate and current assistant head coach Brittany Hall, helped her land her most recent contract.

"I've received contracts from the teams I've played on through networking with people who are in the field of overseas basketball," said Mobley. "The coaches at Clayton State have always been supportive and have checked in on me from time to time to ask how everything is going. Brittany put me in touch with Alexia Adams who helped me get the first contract I had in Romania."

That contact and contract have paid dividends on all fronts as Mobley led Liga 1 Romania in scoring (26.3 ppg) and rebounding (13.6 rpg) while playing for Targu Secuiesc in 2018-19.

That success continued this past year with Mieleras de Guanajuato as she led the franchise to the LMBPF Championship, earning MVP honors behind averages of 19.3 points, 12.1 rebounds and 1.6 assists.

An extremely successful member of the Clayton State Athletics alumni community, Mobley imparts a very straightforward message to those that would follow in her footsteps.

"Do the work now and you will reap the results later. If you want it badly enough, you will go after it no matter what it takes and no matter what anyone else has to say about your dreams. It is possible, but it takes sacrifice, continuous preparation, always being ready for your name to be called and never giving up. You may encounter a few setbacks along the way, but don't let that stop you."

She certainly hasn't.



A STEP AHEAD

By Carol Brzozowski

Tomorrow's leaders face continued changes that call for a new leadership approach to address housing, education, healthcare, job opportunities, transportation and cost of living factors.

Clayton State University's Division of University Advancement and External Affairs is working to address the need for effective public leaders through the development of the Institute for Leadership and Civic Engagement.

The future program will be designed to help tomorrow's change agents who are

geared to shape the south metro Atlanta region define their civic identity against the backdrop of Clayton County's increasingly growing and diverse population.

"If citizens don't understand what they need or want, they can't understand their relationship to government and how to shape it," notes Chase Moore, vice-president of the Division of

University Advancement and External Affairs.

South metro Atlanta "is wildly diverse in terms of populations, density, zoning and municipalities," Chase points out. "As a result, there is a long-standing critique that south metro Atlanta lacks a common vision."

According to "Clayton Forward: Comprehensive Plan 2014-2034," the county is one of the fastest-growing in the state. Recent data from the Atlanta Regional Commission 2050 Population Forecast shows Clayton County's population is on track to increase by 43%, adding an additional 119,000 residents by 2050.

The shifting demographics of the county and its surrounding communities over the past three decades has produced a community that is predominately African American with growing Hispanic and Vietnamese populations. Nearly 28% of the population is under the age of 18, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.



In terms of economic development, Aerotropolis Atlanta, a metropolitan subregion centered around Hartsfield–Jackson Atlanta International Airport, plays a key role in connecting business leaders, manufacturers, suppliers, distributors to clients and marketplaces.

“The Aerotropolis has done a marvelous job helping to build an economic vision for the region, which has in some ways inspired Clayton State University to create an institute to act as the convener for our civic, appointed and elected officials throughout the region to tackle deeper issues that directly impact our communities at a governance and policy level,” says Moore.

At the moment, local public leaders in Georgia have access to the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia for training and resources. Moore says Clayton State’s Institute will augment the resources found at UGA and target local leaders in south metro Atlanta so they can further explore public policy issues throughout the year in their own backyard.

“Through the Institute for Leadership & Civic Engagement, we can provide ongoing opportunities for leaders— regardless of political alignment or jurisdiction—to engage

in dialogue that can ultimately help shape our region.”

The goal of the Institute, Moore says, is to provide the leadership training to help individuals build the qualities of a good leader, as well as provide a space for leaders from different backgrounds and ideologies to have conversations about issues that affect their communities.

“Some leaders are specifically good for a moment in time and some are good for an era,” he adds. “Something leaders have in common is both courage and an ability to rally people to some sort of action. To be a good leader or leader for good, I believe a leader also needs to be able to understand their personal biases and be willing to learn— sometimes even to be wrong.”

A longer-term strategy is to engage the current student body of nearly 7,000 students in community engagement programs and projects designed to help shape their civic identity.

Data shows that typically 80-85% of Clayton State’s graduates stay within 35 miles of the university, says Moore.

“We believe if we foster a deeper understanding and appreciation for

the role citizens play in building their communities that our graduates will be more likely to not only seek out opportunities to be civic leaders, but also have the toolkit to be thoughtful about the challenges the future will bring,” he adds.

Building the foundation for the Institute for Leadership & Civic Engagement will require identifying the early champions—a task now underway—as well as refining the case for support, states Moore.

The Institute will have an interdisciplinary approach, operating under the Office of the Provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. Moore says an individual will be identified to take the lead for establishing programming.

Moore indicated the development process will last until at least the end of 2020 before the institute will be able to deliver the types of programs deemed critical to its success.

He hopes the institute will have the most impact locally on city, county and state public officials as well as with the current student body.

“As a university, we have the opportunity to go much deeper into unpacking issues like policy, zoning or even the effects of an economic development plan,” Moore says.



“If citizens don’t understand what they need or want, they can’t understand their relationship to government and how to shape it.”

— Chase Moore, vice president of University Advancement and External Affairs



The *U.S. News & World Report 2020 Best Colleges* rankings named Clayton State among the top 122 best regional universities in the south. Researchers looked at a variety of factors including graduation and retention rates, class size, faculty resources and student excellence. The university's nursing program also earned two rankings in this year's Best Colleges rankings. The school is no. 78 in the nation for best online graduate nursing programs and no. 162 for best nursing schools with a master's degree. Accreditation, faculty credentials, acceptance rate, faculty-student-ratio and peer assessment were just some of the indicators used to measure nursing programs.



Assistant Professor of History **Jelani Favors** penned a new book about historically black colleges and universities and their role in the fight for freedom and justice for African Americans. Entitled *Shelter in a Time of Storm*, the book chronicles the history of HBCUs from the 1837 founding of Cheyney State University to the present, told through the lens of how they fostered student activism and became a vital seedbed for politicians, community leaders, reformers and activists.

Associate Professor of Biology **Dr. Christopher Kodani** received the Innovation in Adopt-A-Stream award for his work to support the goals of the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) program. Kodani conducted 125 stream sampling events and also serves as an active AAS trainer and local coordinator for Clayton County. He completed a project using Adopt-A-Stream data that he collected with his students. The project used geographical information system analysis of satellite imagery to examine the relationship between the health of macroinvertebrate communities and the imperviousness of their watershed. His research was published by the *Georgia Journal of Science* in May 2018.



The university earned the 2018 **Tree Campus USA** School designation for the sixth consecutive year. Clayton State joined more than 300 other higher education institutions who were recognized by the nonprofit, Arbor Day Foundation, for effective campus forest management. During the annual Arbor Day celebration held last April, faculty, students and staff planted an Eastern Redbud Tree near the Athletics Center. The tree is native to North America and Canada and was noted by Spanish explorers as being cousins to a similar tree species found in the Mediterranean region in Europe.



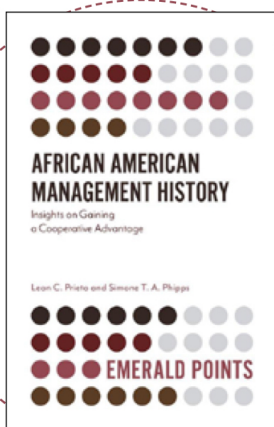


The College of Arts and Sciences is now offering a **bachelor's degree in elementary education** to increase the number of early childhood education teachers in Georgia. Students will take relevant coursework in early childhood education in both traditional and hybrid formats. Field work experience via practicum and internship courses begin in the first semester and will be completed in community schools across seven area counties. Elementary Education is projected to grow by 28% by 2022, according to the Georgia Department of Labor.



Clayton State is one of 90 colleges and universities across the nation to receive the **2019 CASE Educational Fundraising Award** by the Council for Advancement in Support of Education. The award recognizes institutions for excellence in fundraising programs. The university increased its number of corporate partnerships and individual donors to garner a number of large gifts to support first-generation and female students, as well as those interested in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields.

Associate Professor of Management Dr. Leon Prieto published a new book entitled ***African American Management History: Insights on Gaining a Cooperative Advantage***, which details the ideas and practices of historic African American business leaders of the late 19th and early 20th century whose contributions were largely ignored in the field of management. Dr. Prieto co-authored the book with Dr. Simone Phipps, associate professor of Management at Middle Georgia State University.



Assistant Professor of Legal Studies Dr. Antoinette France-Harris, J.D. co-authored a textbook entitled ***Georgia Wills, Trusts and Estate Administration*** regarding Georgia law related to the field of estate planning. France-Harris, along with former Clayton State adjunct instructor and current legal studies advisory board member Teri Fields, developed the book to provide a general framework and basic understanding of the substantive theory of wills, trusts and estate administration. The book is written to be practical and straightforward to serve as a guide for paralegals and attorneys as they enter private practice.





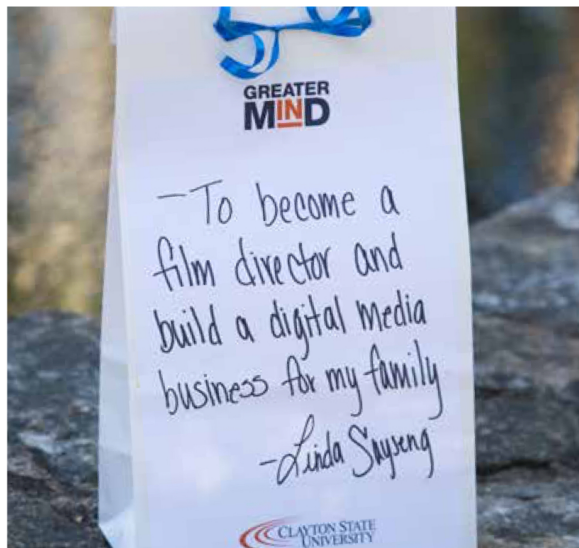
Clayton State generated more than **\$283.2 million in economic impact** in the surrounding region for fiscal year 2018. The university positively impacted 2,854 jobs locally, including creating or retaining 826 on-campus jobs, in addition to supporting 2,028 positions that exist off-campus due to institution-related spending. The largest portion of Clayton State's "output impact" is student spending. The University System of Georgia reported that spending among Clayton State's students reached \$120 million for the fiscal year. Researchers indicated spending is inclusive of daily living expenses ranging from groceries to healthcare, textbooks and dining out.

The College of Business launched a **Master of Science in Supply Chain Analytics** and a **Master's in Strategic Leadership Development** last year in response to the growing need for supply chain professionals and organizational leaders in the state of Georgia. Students in the supply chain analytics program will take courses in logistics, operations, global sourcing and managerial economics. Specialized courses that cover visualization and design, database technology and data analytics will prepare students for roles that requires analytical decision making on supply chain issues. Students completing the strategic leadership development degree will take courses in talent development, leading diversity and inclusion, human resource consulting and managing conflict to help students develop qualities essential to organizational leadership.

Individuals interested in advancing their careers in public service can do so through the University's new **online Master of Public Administration degree**. Students can concentrate in general administration and policy or criminal justice. Courses include foundational work in local government administration, research and applied statistics, human resource management, organizational theory, as well as ethics and legal issues. Students can also gain practical experience in the public sector through a supervised field experience in a governmental or non-profit agency.

Faculty from the **Department of Interdisciplinary Studies** won a **\$25,800 University System of Georgia's Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grant** to study the effects of implementing affordable alternatives to expensive commercial textbooks. Their research found that over 500 Bachelor of Applied Science students across four courses experienced a cost-savings of between \$69,960.75 and \$93,900.21, along with improved final course grades, drop/fail/withdraw rates and student satisfaction after implementation.





The university's first-ever comprehensive campaign, **Greater In Mind**, raised **\$15,783,653**, exceeding its original goal by **more than \$3 million**. The campaign launched in 2017 as part of the University's strategic plan goal to enhance the institution's ability to support students seeking to complete their education by limiting the burden of tuition costs.



Associate Professor of Music **Dr. Richard Bell** and Clayton State University music education major **Jessica Hutcherson** participated in the annual **Advocacy Summit** sponsored by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) in Washington D.C. last summer. During the summit, they had the opportunity to learn about and get involved with NAfME's advocacy initiatives at the national level. Following training about pending legislation dealing with education policy and funding, they traveled to the U.S. House and Senate office buildings to meet with staff members of Georgia's two senators and of **House Rep. David Scott**.

The university expanded its footprint on campus with the addition of a new road, **Laker Lane**, which connects the main campus to the CSU East campus. The road was developed after the acquisition of the Trammell Road property in January 2016 located behind Woodlands Hall at CSU East. The new road was designed to create a seamless connection between the campuses for pedestrians and drivers, as well as to provide emergency access for public safety vehicles and an excavation route for the CSU East campus.



ON THE MOVE

By Allison Salerno

At 22, Clayton Carte already is making a name for himself in local politics. In 2019, the political science major earned the opportunity to chair a committee in Henry County charged with laying the groundwork for the next Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) referendum.

With the lessons he's learning in his classes at Clayton State University, Carte hopes to continue to build his political ambitions to serve the public.

"When the opportunity to serve on the SPLOST committee came, I absolutely jumped on board," said Carte, who plans to graduate from Clayton State in May 2021.

Counties in Georgia use SPLOST to pay for local projects. Henry County Board of Commissioners Chair June Wood appointed Carte to the committee, and members of the seven-person committee chose him as their leader. If voters approve a November referendum, the SPLOST will collect an estimated \$204 million in Henry County over a five-year period.

This wasn't Carte's first foray into local government. At 18, he served on the Henry County land use plan update committee.

"I am most often the youngest person in the room by a longshot," he says. Folks in Henry County became familiar with Carte through his transportation blog, "Moving Henry Forward." The blog and its Facebook page, launched in 2017, has more than 6,400 followers.

Carte originally chose to go out of state for school, beginning college at Jacksonville State University in Alabama, 130 miles from home but transferred to Clayton State before his junior year. Now Carte commutes about 30 minutes north on I-75 from his family home in Locust Grove to take classes at Clayton State, and he's built some strong bonds with his professors.

"So far, I have met several professors that I have connected with who are potential resources in the future," Carte says, citing in particular Dr. Augustine Ayuk in the political science department and Dr. Adam Tate, a history professor who also chairs the Department of Humanities.

"They're not necessarily local government guys like I am," Carte noted, "but I've really enjoyed their teaching styles, [and] they are really useful people I can talk to or collaborate with if I have questions or need assistance."

Carte aspires to earn a master's degree in urban planning and then land a job in transportation, planning for a position in "either a state department of transportation or a metropolitan regional commission."

He sees himself "working with local governments on their transportation plans."



The Laker Connection • Clayton State University



CLASS
NOTES

John Poch '89

A.A. Physics & Engineering

Published his fifth and sixth collections of poetry. In "Texases," his fifth collection of poems, Poch offers readers a kaleidoscope through which to view his home state—its geography and people, its past and present. In "Between Two Rivers: Photographs and Poems between the Brazos and the Rio Grande," he explores the wonder of the two waterways and the landscapes they host.

Lorena Lockhart '06

B.S. Psychology

Entering her 13th year of teaching in Cobb County School District. She also is an entrepreneur, offering tutor services as well as owning Hart4Jewelry boutique. Lockhart received her master's degree in special education in 2011 from the University of Phoenix. Her children are all grown with the youngest entering her junior year at Georgia State University and her oldest employed as an engineer.

Sherrie Miller '09

MBA

Joined KANE Is Able third-party logistics in September 2019 as vice-president of sales operations and planning. Miller directs KANE's sales efforts in effectiveness and productivity, with a focus on planning and operational execution, customer relations management, reporting, process optimization, and coordination with marketing to support all sales initiatives. Prior to KANE, Miller held similar roles with Ryder Last Mile and XPO Logistics.

Benjamin White '10

B.A. English

Joined Graydon's Litigation practice group, focusing on commercial litigation, appeals and data security. Prior to joining Graydon, White clerked for Justice Pat DeWine on the Ohio Supreme Court, where he worked on a broad range of issues including commercial law, election law, public utilities, public records, writs, criminal procedure, and adoption, in addition to contract, statutory and constitutional interpretation. White earned his JD from the University of Cincinnati College of Law. White is licensed to practice in Ohio.

Kelly Jarrard '13

B.A. Music

Released debut album "It's Time" in January of 2019, which focuses on the singer-songwriter's thoughts about time.

Linda M. White '13

B.S. Integrative Studies

Employed as academic program administrator for the Neuroscience and Behavioral Biology programs at Johns Hopkins University in October 2017. Oversees the day-to-day operations of the programs, including budget, advising newly declared students for the majors, and serving as staff advisor for Nu Rho Psi Honor Society.

Holly Hampton '15

B.A. English

Gained employment as the head of user services/user experience librarian at California State University San Marcos, starting July 2019. Previously served as circulation supervisor with Clayton State University Library.

Jelinda Ellis '16

B.S. Psychology and Human Services

Owner and instructor at Elevé Dance Studio in Jackson, Georgia. The studio offers a variety of classes for ages 2 and up.

Regina Lewis Ward '17

B.A. Liberal Studies,

Recently published a children's book entitled "Jason Keeps A Secret" about a nine-year-old who loves video games and hopes to get a computer on his birthday. The book is available on Amazon Kindle.

Nancy Nguyen '18

A.A. Film Production

Works for Microsoft's Cloud business platform, specializing in big data, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Nguyen works with enterprise companies to build solutions that will help them transform digitally. Since graduation, she has traveled to 22 countries, competed in the official Miss Georgia United States Pageant. She also volunteers to feed people in abandoned villages in third world countries like Vietnam. Nguyen is the current titleholder of Miss Atlanta United States and currently serves on the Clayton State University Alumni Association Board.

Anatasia Foster '19

B.A. Liberal Studies, minor in Corporate Communication

Employed full-time as a communications dispatch officer in the Office of Public Safety at Clayton State University.



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