Our Mission | East Georgia State College is an associate degree-granting, liberal arts institution of the University System of Georgia providing its students access to both academically transferable pathways and collaborative programs in occupation-related fields. The College also offers targeted baccalaureate-level degrees that support the University System’s initiative to expand educational opportunities. The College prepares traditional and nontraditional students for success in the global 21st century through a technologically-advanced teaching and learning environment that fosters personal growth by utilizing an expanding range of resources and amenities, including an on-campus student residential option. The College also continuously engages the communities it serves through public service and cultural enrichment.
For a lot of students, attending college is something that directly follows completion of a high school diploma. However, with the Dual Enrollment program, more and more students are choosing to take college classes while still in high school, simultaneously earning credit for both a high school diploma and a college degree, for free. East Georgia State College’s enrollment has seen a boost from these students as they start their college careers early, getting a jump start on their future and saving thousands in tuition and fees.

EGSC’s enrollment for Fall 2016 showed an increase across the board, but a significant number of the new students were dual enrolled. Students who are currently enrolled in the Dual Enrollment program are taking classes alongside traditional freshmen students on EGSC’s Swainsboro, Statesboro and Augusta campuses, and others are taking these classes in their own high schools.

One such Dual Enrollment student, Erika Driggers, was the first student from Screven County to enroll in this program at EGSC. She began her college career in the Fall of 2015 and, at that time, planned to transfer to Georgia Southern University after graduating from high school.

“I want to go into the medical field,” she said, “so I would be on the right track with nursing.”

Driggers said that, as part of the Dual Enrollment program, she didn’t go to her high school at all. She was a full time student at EGSC’s Statesboro campus, but was still enrolled in high school.

“If I hadn’t gone full time [to EGSC], I would have had to go to the high school for a certain amount of hours in the morning, then come here in the afternoon,” she said. “I think I’m the first person that has ever gone here full time or gone somewhere full time instead of doing it half and half.”

Driggers is one of many students choosing to move ahead with their careers before even completing their high school diploma. For her, she said that feeling older than she was made the decision to start college early easier.

“I really didn’t like high school,” she explained. “I had good grades and everything, and I wanted to go ahead and get a lot of classes done and finish college earlier.”
The year prior, she went to Ogeechee Technical College and earned her CNA certification. She was dual-enrolled, but only for the one class.

“I really would recommend [the Dual Enrollment] program,” she said. “I told my friends it was so great. The only thing I miss about high school is my friends, and I see them all the time anyway. I’ve heard people say not to do it because you would fail or not expect the course load, but this has been the best thing I’ve ever done.”

Driggers said that her father told her she didn’t need to start college classes so that she could have an easy senior year, but “I didn’t want it easy,” she said. “I didn’t want to sit at the school all day, not doing anything, when I could go ahead and get my first year of college out of the way.”

Dr. Tom Caiazzo, a family friend and Professor of Social Sciences at EGSC-Statesboro, said of Driggers, “She’s a great benefit to EGSC, not only because of what she’s doing, but because she can reach other people, not only at Screven County High, but at other area high schools.”

“I feel like I’m more comfortable here, having someone that I knew,” said Driggers of Dr. Caiazzo. “He helped me schedule my classes so I wasn’t confused. Not being organized stresses me out, and he really helped. That was one of the reasons I chose to come here, because he would be here.”

One of the major benefits of the Dual Enrollment program is that it pays for everything—books, tuition, fees, the works.

“A lot of people think that college is expensive, but through this program, they can go ahead and take classes. Full time goes toward your HOPE credit hours, but it is worth it,” explained Driggers.

It turns out, the program was such a great fit for her that she chose to continue on with East Georgia State College to earn her Associates degree after graduating high school.

“I don’t think these programs are ever really made a big deal in our school,” she explained. “It is not really made a big option. I mean, you can do it, but it isn’t really pushed.”

“Honestly, it is better. I know a lot of people don’t want to miss their senior year experience, but I don’t feel like I missed anything. I miss cheerleading a lot, but not enough that I feel like I shouldn’t have done this.”

To learn more about the Dual Enrollment program at EGSC, visit www.ega.edu/DualEnrollment or contact Dual Enrollment Coordinator, Brandy Murphy, at 478-289-2022 or at bmurphy@ega.edu. Further information can also be found by contacting EGSC’s Office of Admissions at 478-289-2169 or visiting www.ega.edu/admissions.
An integral part of life on campus is just that: having life on campus. With the addition of Bobcat Villas – West in June of 2016, East Georgia State College boasted 412 beds for on-campus residents beginning in Fall. Bobcat Villas – West joined the existing 200-bed residence hall, Bobcat Villas – South, as a hub of campus life. The new residence hall took just 13 months to build and was the source of much excitement across the campus and community.

Part of the P3 (Public-Private Partnership) Initiative, the construction of Bobcat Villas – West was the first of seven on-campus residence halls to be completed in phase 1 of the initiative, which included 3,683 new beds across the state of Georgia. The partnership with the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (USG) and Corvias Campus Living provides new campus housing, as well as the management of existing housing, across nine of the USG’s 28 campuses.

This model offers long-term financial, operational, construction and design components and creates significant benefits that include local economic impact, up-front funding for capital repairs and renovations and more.

The new residence hall, much like Bobcat Villas – South, has four-bedroom apartment-style suites with two bathrooms per apartment, a kitchen and furnished living room. The residence hall has 24/7 security through a series of key card checkpoints and is patrolled and monitored by the EGSC Police Department.

“As a parent, I would be pleased to have my children living in an environment with 24/7 security provided by certified police officers, managed by trained housing professionals, and with all-you-can-eat meals provided by the college’s outstanding food services division—all available at prices which are the lowest in the University System of Georgia,” said EGSC President Bob Boehmer.

Other amenities of Bobcat Villas – West include a laundry area, study spaces, outdoor recreation space, vending and ice machine, mail service and access to the Jean and L.C. “Shot” Strange Clubhouse, which houses a game room and fitness center. The residence halls also offer all utilities and wireless internet included in the price.

The residence halls at EGSC provide not only safety and security, but all of the amenities and convenience to campus that quality student housing should offer. Students also have access to EGSC’s dining facilities and are also easily able to attend activities happening on campus.

One of the biggest benefits of on-campus living isn’t just the convenience. As Senator Jesse Stone said at the ribbon cutting for Bobcat Villas – West, “You meet people who are going to be...
your friends for life in communal living like this.”

“My experience here has been amazing,” said Elyse Sherman during the ribbon cutting ceremony, speaking as a student of EGSC who lived in Bobcat Villas – South. “The benefit of living here is that you definitely get to class on time and get to sleep later! You make new friends and there is a lot of academic support here.”

“I’ve learned to live on my own here. It has taught me to be an independent adult,” she added.

Breanna Stidem, who graduated in Spring of 2016, lived in Bobcat Villas – South for two years at EGSC while earning her degree.

“I recommend living on campus because it allows you to be a true college student,” she said. “You grow up and learn responsibilities and you have to remember you’re an adult. You also get to meet new people!”

“I chose to live here so that I could be on campus 24/7. My favorite part of living here was being able to hang out with my friends any time I want to,” she said.

Stidem, like most on-campus residents, moved into the residence hall to get away from her parents and learn how to live on her own. She also said that the convenience of having her classes right across the street was wonderful.

“When I first moved on campus, I though everyone did things the same way my family and I did things... but when I got here it was totally different,” she said. “Living on campus has prepared me to be more responsible,” she explained. “You have to get your work done and it really shows you that, when you get older, you can’t just ask your parents for things—you have to be responsible for your own life.”

For more information about Bobcat Villas visit www.ega.edu/housing or contact the Admissions Office at 478-289-2169.
Did you know that East Georgia State College has an Alumni Association? Revived in 2016, the Association serves as a way for past graduates and former students of Emanuel County Junior College, East Georgia College and East Georgia State College to come together and reminisce, as well as to support the college’s mission and vision.

Alumni Association members receive monthly newsletters and hold regular meetings to keep abreast of events and changes at the college.

A Facebook page was created for members to join and receive information and share ideas. A link can be found below.

Alumni Association members gathered for the inaugural Alumni and Friends Gala on September 24, 2016, which was held at the Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center. The Gala was well-attended by members of the ECJC/EGC/EGSC family who spent the evening reminiscing about their time and involvement with the college, enjoying a wonderful dinner, and raising money for the Association through a silent auction. The event will be held annually.

Staying in touch is important. To join the Alumni Association, please complete the Alumni Association form on the Association website at www.ega.edu/alumni_friends. This will allow us to keep you informed of events at the college, ensure you are aware of the benefits and advantages of being a member of the Alumni Association and allow you to provide us with updates.

You may also contact Marsha Moore, Development Coordinator, at 478-289-2193 or mdmoore@ega.edu.
In 2016, EGSC launched a new marketing campaign: Let’s Get Associated. With its use of a bright, kaleidoscope of colors, friendly san serif fonts and an up-front message, the campaign reaches out to students to let them know immediately what the college is about: earning your degree.

After a successful kick-off event that provided the entire faculty and staff of the college’s three campuses with green shirts emblazoned with the new slogan, the college went to work getting the message out. New colors popped up alongside the familiar green and gold, and students embraced the colors and the message, requesting everything from high heels to hoodies with the new design.

The marketing campaign came after months of work with World Design Marketing to find EGSC’s unique niche in the education landscape. As an access institution, the intersection between student need and a cultural nerve became the focal point of the campaign.

Many of EGSC’s students are first-generation college attendees, so the focus has turned to helping these students gain control of their lives and their education. The path to college is not an easy one without guidance, and, where there is no parental or peer support for the student’s decision to continue their education, EGSC steps in to help combat the fear of failure faced by these students. Through this campaign, emphasis is also placed on the economic impact of obtaining a college degree and how much of a personal and professional achievement there is in earning a degree.

Students want to live a better life, and one of the campaign’s secondary slogans spells it out: “Make the Association: College = A Better Life.” The emphasis on attaining one’s degree, whether it is an associates or bachelor’s degree, and starting at EGSC is the whole idea behind the campaign, with catchy slogans such as “Smart from the Start” and “Meet Your Fellow Associates (And a Couple of Bachelors),” a subtle nod to EGSC’s targeted bachelor’s degrees.

Over-all, the campaign has been well received in the community and on campus, with more and more people recognizing that the value of an education goes beyond a price tag, and the price tag is affordable at EGSC. Students have even embraced the idea by decorating their graduation caps to reflect this theme, a trend that the college hopes to continue for years to come as more and more students attain their degree and earn their way to a better life.
SERVING OUR COMMUNITIES’ MEDICAL NEEDS

In May of 2016, the University System of Georgia Board of Regents voted to approve a new Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at East Georgia State College. The program serves as an RN to BSN Bridge Program to create an educational pathway for associate degree nurses to earn advanced credentials. Helmed by Dr. Sylvia Rozier, Director of Nursing, the online program is especially appealing to working nurses and is a targeted baccalaureate-level degree program that fills an immediate healthcare need in our area.

Dr. Rozier joined EGSC from Middle Georgia State University, where she served as the Assistant Department Chair of Nursing. She has over 40 years of combined experience in the nursing field, including positions at Savannah Memorial Hospital’s Cardiovascular Surgery Intensive Care Unit, Houston Medical Center Medical Intensive Care Unit, and the Carl Vinson V.A. Memorial Center.

She started her nursing career at Swainsboro Vocational School in 1976 at a satellite campus in the old Laurens Memorial Hospital in Dublin, and says that, since then, her life has come full circle.

Dr. Rozier is joined by another experienced nurse, Dr. Patrice Pierce. She joined EGSC as Associate Professor of Nursing, coming from Middle Georgia State University, where she served as the BSN Program Coordinator and Assistant Professor of Nursing. She also served as Director of the Nursing Program at Central Georgia Technical College and the Over House Supervisor at Oconee Regional Medical Center.

The combined experience of both of these highly-qualified professionals will provide pointed insight into the future careers of EGSC’s BSN students and will allow them to share their knowledge with the next generation of nurses.

“I chose EGSC because I was informed that Dr. Pierce was going to be an instructor here, and she was a practical nursing instructor for me,” said Latosha Lowe, one of the BSN students. “She made me very comfortable, and she gave me a lot of great tips as a student that I carry on in my nursing now.”

The RN to BSN program at EGSC is offered in partnership with Southeastern Technical College in Swainsboro, which greatly reduces costs for facilities. Agreements with other RN degree-granting institutions will follow as the program grows.

The program will also have a close partnership with Swainsboro’s local hospital, Emanuel Medical Center.
This partnership has worked out well, as three of the first cohort are currently nurses at EMC. One, Denise Peebles, said, “I chose EGSC because it is close to home and because I could do the program online. If you’re thinking about it, just do it. I had thought about it for a long time, and I wasn’t sure when the time was right. I think sometimes nurses don’t go back because they’re scared, but when you feel like the time is right with your family and with your career, you just need to give it a try!”

More information about EGSC’s RN to BSN Program can be found at www.ega.edu/nursing.

Working Nurses!
Want to earn your BSN Online for just over $5,000?
Visit www.ega.edu/nursing to find out how!
Bridging the Gap Between Campus and Community: 
First Fridays at The Morgan House

Starting in September of 2015, East Georgia State College gave the campus and community a whole new way of looking at the first Friday in each month. The Morgan House, formerly the home of James H. and Jean Morgan, was donated to the college in the Spring of 2015 and has since become a hub of activity each month as students, faculty, staff, Foundation members and community friends come together for an evening of food, music, art and fun.

First Friday at The Morgan House began as a way to bridge the campus, which is removed somewhat from downtown Swainsboro, and the community it serves. Each month, an art show is prepared and local musicians tune up their instruments in preparation for First Friday. There have been events such as an oyster roast and EGSC President Bob Boehmer getting a little overzealous with the whipped cream on hot chocolate night, and art shows featuring the work of students, alumni and also friends of the college.

The evening is always well-attended, averaging 60 people each month. The events are an occasion for everyone to get out, relax a bit and enjoy each other’s company off campus. It also serves as an opportunity for students to get to know their professors and the college staff, as well as members of the community, in a fun, easygoing setting.

The Morgan House has become the focal point in EGSC’s pursuit to include the community in more of their activities and has become a hub for seminars, community meetings, small events and parties, club socials and more.

The home was donated to EGSC by the Morgan family after the passing of James H. “Jimmy” Morgan. This special house has been a fixture of Swainsboro’s social scene throughout the lives of the Morgans, and EGSC plans to continue that legacy.

Currently undergoing renovations, The Morgan House has seen an amazing transformation on the outside as boards and roofing have been replaced and the entire house has gotten a facelift through a fresh coat of paint. A new handicap-accessible bathroom was recently added and additional renovations on the inside are planned for the near future.

East Georgia State College and the EGSC Foundation can’t do it alone, however. Anyone who has ever been in a grand old home knows that the upkeep is quite an endeavor, and EGSC relies on donations to make its community outreach programs come to life.

To learn more about how you can help restore The Morgan House, or if you have questions about donating to the college, visit www.ega.edu/donate or contact Elizabeth Gilmer, Vice President for Institutional Advancement, at 478-289-2037 or egilmer@ega.edu.
The Morgan House

First Friday
Where Campus and Community Meet

Art Exhibits • Music
Light Refreshments

The Morgan House
Every First Friday
Of the Month
5:30 - 7:30 P.M.

521 W. Morin Street • Swainsboro
On Tuesday, October 4, 2016, East Georgia State College broke ground on the expansion of the Academic Building. This project provided more classroom and laboratory space on the growing Swainsboro campus and was completed in the Summer of 2017 and ready for Fall semester classes.

One of the original buildings on the Swainsboro campus, the Academic Building has housed the majority of EGSC’s classrooms since the campus was opened. However, the growing needs of the student body necessitated an expansion to provide more classrooms and labs for students.

“I’m one of the ones old enough to remember when this building was originally built, and it has been a long time coming that we are able to do these things,” said State Representative Butch Parrish during the groundbreaking ceremony. “It is a testament to the fact that East Georgia is a vibrant school that is growing and has the suppot from the community and surrounding areas.”

EGSC President Bob Boehmer added, “There’s been an amazing transformation in our physical campus in the past year, and I’d like to thank Senator Jack Hill and Representative Parrish, as well as Senator Jesse Stone, because their advocacy in the legislature has made this possible.”

The expansion of the Academic Building follows on the heels of the completion of Bobcat Villas - West, EGSC’s newest residence hall. The ongoing construction has added to the college’s economic impact, pushing it over $70 million during fiscal year 2015.

Total economic impact for the college on the commu-nities in our region during FY16 was $80,140,200. The campuses in Swainsboro, Statesboro and Augus-ta also contributed 991 jobs, including on-campus positions and off-campus jobs that exist due to the institution.

Economic impact is measured annually by the University of Georgia’s Selig Center by calculating several important categories of college and university-related expenditures: spending by the institutions for salaries and fringe benefits, operating supplies and expenses, and other budgeted expenditures; spending by students who attend the institutions;
and spending by the institutions for capital projects (construction.)

“East Georgia State College has been a cornerstone in our community for more than 42 years,” said Swainsboro-Emanuel County Chamber of Commerce and Joint Development Authority CEO Ken Wannock. “The economic impact to our local economy is recognizable by the expansion of residential rental units and on-campus housing here in Swainsboro in the last few years. We often bump into EGSC Bobcats at just about every business in Swainsboro, bringing those ever-important out-of-town dollars into our local economy and strengthening our local businesses’ futures.”

“EGSC is a clean, revenue-generating industry that requires very few local resources but adds several million dollars to our economy each year,” he continued. “We are excited about the future of EGSC.”

Fast-forward to August 17, 2017, and the vision became a reality as the Ribbon Cutting and Open House was held for the new Academic Building Expansion. Attended by over 300 community members, EGSC’s employees, students and retirees were joined by Chancellor Steve Wrigley, Regent Laura Marsh representing the Board of Regents, former EGSC Presidents Dr. John Black and Dr. Willie Gunn, Senators Jack Hill and Jesse Stone, Representative Butch Parrish, EGSC Foundation Chairman Denny Key, Swainsboro Mayor Charles Schwabe, EGSC 2017-2018 SGA President Kandanasia McNeal, and numerous members of the community.

“These are not just bricks and mortar, they are expanded opportunities for these amazing students to learn, to graduate and to give back to this region,” said EGSC President Dr. Bob Boehmer in his introductory speech.

Chancellor Wrigley was the last to speak at the ceremony, emphasizing EGSC’s strengths. “This is a strong institution and President Boehmer is doing a terrific job. We have 28 campuses, and he is a leader among the leaders of those campuses. He is a strong advocate for this institution, and I am proud to call him a friend.”

“How does this happen? There is a lengthy process,” he explained. “Competition for resources is very fierce. There are 28 institutions, but there is also the rest of state government, all vying for a small amount of resources. Governor Deal is a very strong supporter of the University System, and the three legislators
here are strong advocates of this institution. Be sure to thank them. We wouldn’t be here today without them.”

“We can serve students because of their success,” he concluded.

Sights have now been set on the upcoming expansion to the Jean Anderson Morgan Student Activities Center. A date has not yet been set for a groundbreaking ceremony, but it is anticipated to be before the end of Spring semester 2018 and open by Fall of 2019 to better serve EGSC’s students.

The acreage of the Swainsboro campus is also expanding thanks to the generous gift of 138 acres by the family of Luck Flanders Gambrell. This land will soon be put to dedicated use and is included in the newly-created Master Plan of the college.

East Georgia State College’s main campus in Swainsboro is comprised of over 300 acres of pine forest. Since the college’s buildings currently occupy less than one quarter of that land, and the college is growing to meet the needs of the region, the need for a physical master plan was identified to strategically plan the long term growth of the college.

As a top priority, UGA’s College of Environment and Design provided EGSC with a solution to this challenging need. Students from the College Masters of Landscape Architecture program developed an outstanding and creative master plan over the course of three semesters.

Both practical and comprehensive, the new plan provides a vision for the future of EGSC’s physical campus and is consistent with the history and unique mission of the college. Having this master plan will enable the college to grow in a responsive and sustainable manner.

All of these projects are made possible through the concerted efforts of our staff and community as we work to help EGSC’s students fulfill their potential and earn their degree close to home in state-of-the-art and comfortable surroundings.

To learn more about how you can help EGSC provide a quality education to our area’s students through scholarships, visit www.ega.edu/donate.
2017 | **Bobcat Tracks**

**EAST GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE**
**CAMPUS MASTER PLAN**

**SITE METRICS**
- Location: 2 miles from Statesboro
- 28 miles from Savannah
- Institution Type: 4 year state college
- Campus Size: 383.41 acres
- Overall Student Population: 3,000

**ISSUES + DESIGN INTENT**

**Problems:**
1. Lack of campus icons and connectivity
2. Lack of adequate gathering space
3. Lack of shade and landscaped effort

**Solutions:**
1. Create a main campus entrance and focal point by providing clear paths and creating a welcoming area.
2. Create a series of gathering spaces that extend down the main walk for students and events.
3. Provide an integral tree corridor throughout the campus and water features in key nodes in order to reduce heat.

**LEGEND**
- Existing Buildings
- Proposed Buildings
- Improvements
- Decorative Elements

--END DESIGN STUDIO | SUMMER 2017 | UGA COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT - DESIGN | LONGHEERER
It seems like only yesterday that East Georgia State College was celebrating its 40th Anniversary. Now, we are looking towards our 50th Anniversary Celebration in 2023. As part of this milestone, EGSC will be producing a series of Foundation-sponsored publications to chronicle the College's history and its impact on the region.

These magazines will preserve the College’s history and will be published each year until 2023 as full-color, glossy publications, culminating in 2022 with a hard-bound collector’s edition for a 50th Anniversary special.

East Georgia State College needs your help. Many of those who were instrumental in beginning this special place have moved from the area or have retired over the years. We ask that people who were involved in Emanuel County Junior College, East Georgia College, and East Georgia State College share their stories, photos, memorabilia and knowledge with us so that an accurate compilation of the last 50 years of history can be made.

A series of socials for retirees and friends of the college are being held to allow the sharing of stories. To be added to the mailing list for these events, please contact Norma Kennedy, Associate Vice President for Institutional Advancement, at 478-289-2002 or nkennedy@ega.edu.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page and the EGSC webpage for more information, and feel free to share your memories using the form on the opposite page. We look forward to hearing everyone’s stories and sharing the history of East Georgia State College!
We need your memories to bring life to our publication! Please take a few minutes to complete and send us this questionnaire!

Name:

Dates of Employment or Attendance as a Student:

Fondest Memory:

Biggest challenges you remember:

What did students do on campus when they were not attending class?

Notable Faculty/Staff/Students:

What was the consensus of the campus/community when the College’s name changed?

Describe what the physical campus looked like:

Were there any "hot topic" issues faced by the campus?

Describe the educational, economic, and/or social environment of the campus/community during your time at the college:

Highlights of your life since retiring/graduating:

Please return this questionnaire to Norma Kennedy

Mail:
East Georgia State College
Attn: Norma Kennedy
131 College Circle
Swainsboro, Ga 30401

E-Mail:
nkennedy@ega.edu

Phone:
478-289-2002

FAX:
489-419-1271
Help support the EGSC Foundation’s mission

The mission of the East Georgia State College Foundation is to help transform and enhance the lives of our diverse student population by providing educational opportunities, financial support, and advocacy for our students. By generating, processing and allocating gifts, the Foundation supports efforts that enhance the quality of programs by funding scholarships, new academic initiatives, technology, endowments, faculty/staff development, athletic programs, and capital projects.

What would you give to change the world?

The students of East Georgia State College depend on investments from stakeholders like you to provide them with the best opportunity for higher education.

Your donations help provide scholarships, educational and cultural programming, textbooks, student support, trips and events, learning opportunities and so much more.

The possibilities for your investment are endless: cash and check donations, deferrments, land and asset donations, bequeathments and more.

No gift is too small to make a difference in the lives of our students.

Donating to the EGSC Foundation is now easier than ever!
Text GiveEGSC to 41444 and follow the link to donate or contact Elizabeth Gilmer at 478-289-2037 or egilmer@ega.edu.

You can also visit our website at www.ega.edu/donate or connect with the EGSC Foundation on Facebook!
EGSC BELIEVES IN YOUR POTENTIAL:  
THE COLLEGE READINESS TOUR

“East Georgia State College believes in you.”
This simple phrase was the centerpiece of the 2017 College Readiness Tour, which visited high schools throughout the region to emphasize the importance of a college education.

“We don’t care if you come to East Georgia State College,” emphasized EGSC President Bob Boehmer in his presentation. “We just want you to get a college education and achieve your dream of a better life.”

The College Readiness Tour is held annually, typically during February, and, for two weeks, President and Mrs. Boehmer, EGSC’s senior staff, faculty, student representatives and recruitment specialists hit the road on a whirlwind tour of high schools throughout Georgia. The message sent? “Everyone has the ability to go to college, and we believe you have that ability.”

Dr. Boehmer’s 2017 presentation focused on the benefits of earning a college degree, including increased employment and higher income.

The College Readiness Tour brings this message to over 5,000 students each year. The 25 schools visited during the 2017 tour represented a diverse cross-section of the area that EGSC serves.

EGSC believes that this personalized approach to college a core value. Many students are first-generation college students who do not have the expectation of ever gaining a college degree.

The access mission of East Georgia State College provides a less complicated admission process for those students so they can reach their potential and earn a degree. The College Readiness Tour is just a part of that personal touch that EGSC offers.

Each student reached during the the College Readiness Tour receives a backpack containing a booklet on how to prepare and apply for college, and the different programs of study, extracurricular activities, and financial aid opportunities offered by EGSC.

The tour also features EGSC students who speak about their experiences with professors, coursework, living on campus and earning scholarship money. As stated by EGSC Recruiter Leah Cornwell at the presentation, “We know you don’t want to sit here and listen to a bunch of adults tell you how important college is. You want to hear from people your age.”

Students are also available to answer questions and serve as a real bridge between the college’s administration and the college’s heart and soul--its students.
Serving Students through Internship and Conference Opportunities

One of the most sought-after parts of a college education is a resume-worthy internship or participation in a professional conference relating to a student’s field of study. East Georgia State College is doing its part in providing these opportunities for students. Each summer and throughout the semester, students across several disciplines enjoy internships and conferences in their field of study which helps prepare them for their future careers.

Caitlan Coleman, a Spring 2016 graduate of EGSC, spent her summer in Washington D.C. at the Alexander Hamilton Institute, interning there as part of a program on national security. She was one of 21 students in the program, which had each student talking about different aspects of national security threats and how to combat them. They visited the Afghan Embassy, State Department Annex, Archives Department at the Holocaust Museum, Voice of America and more.

Coleman explained that the group met with different speakers each day to discuss things like ISIS, Russia, China, decreasing the US’s naval stance, cyberhacking and how the political system hasn’t caught up with technology, as well as the many grey areas in national security. She said that she enjoyed meeting students from all across the country.

The internship allowed Coleman to observe the process of national security policymaking up close, from the perspective of the practitioners themselves. The program encouraged and enhanced each student’s leadership skills, as well as created opportunities for future professional development.

Coleman says that she didn’t think she would be as prepared for the switch to a larger college without this experience. “I made lasting friendships and it was a very rewarding experience, not just for my education, but for my life in general.”

EGSC Biology major and graduate Kaitlin Warren spent a week in Wilmington, N.C. where she attended workshops and panels to learn about water conservation. The Waterkeeper Alliance was held the
first week in June. She attended to learn more about the organization and what they do.

Her participation was part of her internship with Jill Hillburn, the Altamaha Riverkeeper. Warren was working on research with Hillburn on the Oconee River watershed. Her research was in the area of the Oconee River watershed that has not been evaluated for some time, therefore it is very important in determining water quality for the area.

Warren said the conference taught her a lot. “You hear about other Waterkeeper experiences in areas where there aren’t laws, or civil suits aren’t available, and it really opens your eyes.”

Another EGSC Biology Major, Lindsey Howell, interned with Dr. Glen Borcheret of the University of South Alabama, continuing research begun with Dr. David Chevalier, Chair of the Department of Biology at EGSC. She identified new microRNAs from the algae species *Chlamydomonas reinhardtii* using a bioinformatics approach.

Howell’s internship at the University of South Alabama allowed her to work on a comprehensive analysis of the small RNA sequence from two algal species, *Dunaliella salina* and another related, but not fully-characterized *Dunaliella* species.

Joleishia Cooper, another EGSC Biology major who has since earned her degree, attended the First Detector Workshop on Invasive Species in Macon. The conference, hosted by the Georgia Forestry Commission, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Exotic Pest Plant Council and others, featured workshops on common invasive species in Georgia, how to report invasive species, management and treatment of invasive species, and also featured data collecting. The program was designed to help focus attention on the effects of exotic pest plants on the diversity of Georgia’s native plants and animals, the use of exotic pest plant management to prevent habitat loss, the socioeconomic impacts of these plants, and additional related subjects.

During the Summer of 2017, more internships ensued as Kaitlin Warren, now a graduate of EGSC, took on Zach Davis as an intern after being hired by...
the Altamaha Riverkeeper. Warren now serves as the Oconee Watershed Manager for the Altamaha Riverkeeper after her experience as an intern.

Davis helped take samples of the Ohoopee River to measure any changes in the water quality. Warren says that the internship program with the Altamaha Riverkeeper will eventually evolve into more, including community outreach and education.

EGSC Biology major Tanner Peebles also benefits from EGSC’s commitment to provide real-world experiences after EGSC and Emanuel Medical Center joined forces to offer internship opportunities to students enrolled in EGSC’s Biology degree program. Peebles, a Correll Scholarship recipient, will be the first to enter the internship program, which promises to provide a high-quality learning experience while enhancing the resources available for Emanuel Medical Center’s patients.

“Internships have become significant in today’s economy, and students with internships on their résumé have a much better opportunity of achieving a full-time position upon graduation,” said EGSC President Dr. Bob Boehmer.
Bobcat Athletics Has a Year for the Record Books

Though still a young program, EGSC’s Bobcat Athletic teams have certainly shown prowess on their turf and off. The 2016-2017 season was no exception, with not one, but two, coaches being named GCAA Coach of the Year, and numerous athletes being recognized for their hard work in sports and in the classroom.

Women’s Basketball

The Lady Bobcat Basketball Team made history for the college by hosting the first conference playoff game in the EGSC gymnasium and by moving on through the conference tournament, only to fall to Georgia Highlands.

The Lady Bobcats saw their coach, C.J. Pace, named Co-Coach of the Year by the GCAA, and they had two GCAA Players of the Week, Shunseere Kent and Lawranz “Star” Toomey. Kierra Hall was named to the GCAA Conference All-Academic Team, and Kent went on to be named GCAA Player of the Year.

Several Lady Bobcats signed on to play for other colleges, including Toomey, who signed to play for USC Aiken; Kent, who signed to play for Bradley University; and Hall, who signed to play for Tuskegee University.

“I have not one complaint about how hard this group worked and how much we accomplished over the course of the entire season,” said Coach Pace at the end of their season. “I always called this group the pioneers, and we had a lot of firsts! I am thrilled to have made East Georgia State College and the community proud, and we will continue to strive and work.”

Men’s Basketball

EGSC’s Men’s Bobcat Basketball Team fell short in the conference standings, but saw Eric Johnson named a GCAA Player of the Week. Several team members were named to GCAA All-Star teams, including Tariq Jenkins (All-Freshman Team), Kinsey Burgess (All-Academic Team), and Jahmari Etienne (All-Team Honorable Mention.)

They also saw members of the team transfer to other colleges, with Jahmari Etienne signing to play for South Carolina State, Jervon Walker signing to play at Rhinehardt University, and Stacy Masten signing to play for Voorhees College.

Women’s Softball

The Lady Bobcats Softball Team made history for EGSC by winning the most conference games in the program’s history and playing in the 2017 GCAA Championship. They were undefeated in the tournament until championship play, when they fell to Georgia Military College.

“We never doubted these girls one bit and knew they would achieve these accomplishments,” said Head Softball Coach Becca Hewitt. “This is a special group of girls, and we’ve been saying it from the beginning.”

Taylor Long, Myranda Hand and Libbi Lance were named to the GCAA Conference All-Region Second Team for their perseverance and skills during the season.

Men’s Baseball

The Men’s Bobcat Baseball Team had a lot to boast about, with Head Coach Matthew Passauer named GCAA Coach of the Year and EGSC’s powerhouse pitcher, Payton Phillips, named Player of the Year. Phillips had also been previously named GCAA Player of the Week, and went on to sign to play for Columbus State.

The team had several players named to GCAA Conference Teams. Phillips and Closer Braxton Johns were named to the First Team All-Conference, while outfielders Brandon Roberts and Marcus Chan were named to the Second Team All-Conference. Chan and Phillips were also named to the Gold Glove Team.

As if that wasn’t enough, the team made program history by competing in the Conference and traveling to Dyersburg, TN after taking the Regular Season Conference Championship. Though they ultimately fell to Dyersburg State, the season was definitely one to remember.
Established in October 2015, Bobcat Apiary started with two hives but, shortly thereafter, suffered from a colony collapse. East Georgia State College’s unofficial beekeeper, Professor of Chemistry Dr. Paul Cerpovicz, restarted the hives, supplementing Bobcat Apiary with frames of his own honeybees from hives at his home.

“A major threat that honeybees have faced in recent years is Colony Collapse Disorder,” explained Dr. Cerpovicz.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency and other sources, the symptoms of CCD are seen when the majority of worker bees abandon the hive, leaving behind the queen, food, young brood and a few nurse bees. Without enough worker bees to maintain the hive and care for the queen, the hive perishes.

Soon, the hives were humming again but, as with hives throughout the region, keeping Bobcat Apiary going can be a struggle. The hives once again suffered a collapse shortly before winter break in 2016, leaving just one hive still going. Again, Dr. Cerpovicz worked to bring the hives back up.

The collapse of hives is not unique to Bobcat Apiary, as other beekeepers around the region have reported collapses as well. Thus far, no scientific reason has been found for these colony collapses, so EGSC continues to work with their bees to keep campus humming.

 “[The loss of EGSC’s hives] has been very frustrating, especially since the exact reasons are unknown,” Dr. Cerpovicz continued. “Despite the initial losses, the hives were replaced, and the college currently has one well-established hive and a smaller hive that is attempting to raise a queen. The goal is to build up the college apiary to at least four hives.”

In the winter before the collapse, Bobcat Apiary’s bees had begun producing small amounts of honey, much to the delight of those involved in the project. Dr. Cerpovicz was able to provide samples of the honey while displaying the hive’s traveling frame at the Annual GreenFest in Statesboro, EGSC’s Club Day, and during the annual Parents, Family, Friends and Alumni Day in September. He remains optimistic about the Apiary’s honey production in 2017.

Erin Youmans, Coordinator Magolia Midlands Georgia Youth Science and Technology Center (MMGYSTC), which is housed in the Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center on EGSC’s Swainsboro campus, has presented programs using the bees of Bobcat Apiary. These Family Science Nights, titled “Bee-Cause We Love STEM,” provide activities for area primary, elementary and middle school students. The programs raise awareness, interest and concern for the loss of honeybees and connect these issues with STEM fields.

“The primary reason for having honeybee hives on campus is to better inform and educate our students, our faculty and staff, students in local schools, and the general community about the importance of honeybees and other pollinators to our lives, as well as the challenges these pollinators face for survival,” said Dr. Cerpovicz. “The exposure of our hives to the general public helps promote the importance of honeybees and pollinators and the role that EGSC is taking to help achieve this.”

“My goal is to educate teachers
and students about the importance of honeybees so that we can all work together to improve their chances of survival,” said Youmans. “By engaging students, our leaders of the future, this project could have a lasting impact on the plight of the honey bee. By educating and cultivating a respect for the honey bee through this project, MMGYSTC can also play a part in solving this real-world program.”

As further support of these programs, funds from the GYSTC Innovative Grant were used to purchase a camera and software to create Bobcat Apiary’s Bee Cam, found at www.ega.edu/bee-cam. This camera allows viewers to watch the residents of Bobcat Apiary go about their day-to-day (and nightly!) business and is a great tool for getting students to engage with the bees during Family Science Nights.

As Bobcat Apiary continues to grow, work has also been done to have EGSC named a Bee Campus USA. The Bee Campus USA program began in April of 2015 as a subset of the Bee City USA program, focused on marshaling the strengths of colleges and other educational campuses for the benefit of pollinators.

In September of 2016, East Georgia State College became the second institution in Georgia to be designated a Bee Campus, joining Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta.

The program is still small, with 31 members across the United States as of the writing of this article, but it continues to grow as more and more campuses and communities recognize the benefits of hosting pollinators in their areas.

As a member of the Bee Campus USA program, EGSC and Bobcat Apiary are committed to educating the community about pollinators through programs with MMGYSTC and through establishing more pollinator-friendly habitats, reducing unnecessary use of pesticides and herbicides, developing an Integrated Pest Management plan, visiting local school groups and conducting workshops and classes to help better educate students on how to care for pollinators.

The bees of Bobcat Apiary are and continue to be an important part of our world, and EGSC is committed to supporting their on-campus pollinators!

Want to watch the bees of Bobcat Apiary at work? Visit www.ega.edu/bee-cam!
The slogan for East Georgia State College’s African-American Male Initiative (AAMI) says everything you need to know about what the program does at the college—they drive.

AAMI began with a grant award in 2012 and has turned into a full-fledged opportunity for African-American young men at EGSC to better their lives through mentoring, academic enrichment and professional development.

“When they were first inquiring about AAMI, President Boehmer asked that Deborah (Kittrell-Mikell, Director of Academic Advisement) and I take students to the 10th Anniversary Conference in Atlanta,” said Program Director Antré Drummer. “The guys that we took with us were truly moved by the conference, and they wanted to have something of that nature on EGSC’s campus. That was the catalyst.”

The catalyst has sparked a group that works to change college attendance expectations for African-American men, who are typically the most under-represented demographic at any college or university.

“It grew much faster than I ever thought it would have,” said Drummer. “As the students involved started seeing the benefits, they started telling their peers, who then started to come and take part. Faculty members started noticing the changes in the students who were part of the AAMI program, and they started sharing it with their students and making strong referrals to come by and see the leaders of the organization.”

Drummer said that a lot of the success of the program comes from transparency. “I would share my background and, once they saw that I was a regular human like them, they were more apt to talk about things,” he said. “Opening up and having that avenue to talk about things helped boost their academic performance.”

When the students were able to understand that the leaders of the organization had gone through similar things that they were going through, they opened up.

The goal of AAMI is to improve persistence and completion rates among African-American males through four key program elements: academic skills enrichment, student support services, adult/peer mentoring and engagement with successful role models, and leadership development.

“For me, having a strong team and strong support system with the belief that we can make this happen makes students successful,” said Drummer. “I put myself out there as a poster child for hardship after hardship, showing that, if you stick with it, it will happen in a more positive way. I don’t take credit for my personal triumphs because I had so many around me that believed and encouraged me to do it.”

Drummer emphasized that the most important thing to know about AAMI is that it is serving students who are first-generation college students. “I wouldn’t be afraid to add on an additional definition of ‘first generation,’ because it is past that for some of them. Some first generation students come to college with an idea of what it is,” he said. “Many of these guys have no idea whatsoever. They have no idea how to communicate with a professional, no idea how to relay that they’re going through a hardship. They come into college with these backgrounds that say hardships are their business and no one else needs to know—to figure it out. They’ll be in situations where there is help available, but they’ve been programmed all their lives not to seek it.”

“The big thing for us, first off, is going out and embracing them and giving them a whole new perspective on life,” he explained. “They don’t come in saying that they’ll go to college, then this will happen—there’s no plan. We help them develop a plan. There’s no family support because the family doesn’t understand the strains of college and that they’re still at the library at 11 o’clock studying. They don’t get that. Family members will ask things like ‘you need to maximize your student loan so you can give me money to pay off these bills.’ It isn’t for books, its for their home. Their family members think that they’re going to college, so they’ll get a check. They’re dealing with all of these situations and they don’t have the concept of understanding that...
they have to pay their student loans back.”

Drummer also said that a lot of these young men choose their field of study without having a plan of where they’ll work. “So many will say that they’re majoring in business, and when you ask them what they want to do, they’ll say ‘I want to own my own business.’ But when you ask them what type of business, they have no response,” he said. “Then they start thinking of things they like to do, but they have no plans. They see people that look like them in business, so they want to major in business.”

This is why one of the large components of AAMI is mentoring. Students are paired with professionals in the field that they are interested in and are able to sit down and gain insight into these professions. “Just putting them in an environment where they can see what the jobs are like and not just seeing it on television,” explained Drummer. “They come in never having heard of an internship or a stipend. They don’t know any of that stuff. Our goal is to provide guidance and support so that they understand what they’re getting themselves into when they say what they want to do.”

He emphasized that AAMI is more than an organization and more than a club. The mentorship provided by AAMI is beyond measure, because students and mentors discover new things each day. “You can’t assume anything,” said Drummer. “Some of these guys don’t know how to send proper emails, so we coach on that. We teach them the proper way of speaking to interact professionally.”

Drummer explained that the program emphasizes responsibility, and that members know up front that they have to be responsible for things. They work with time management skills and share stories in group settings. “Sharing in group settings and sharing my personal struggles means that they are more willing to connect with me,” Drummer said. “Not only do I do that, some faculty and staff mentors have started to adopt that process. Mike Moran, for example, shares his story on why AAMI is important, and it comes across a racial barrier. For them to feel that security in another being outside themselves helps them become more open to talk. Once they are open to talking, we can work through things like study habits, study environments and more. Then we can show them that what they’re saying isn’t lining up with what they’re doing.”

Camaraderie is a large part of the organization as well. The group takes African-American history trips, has social gatherings and talks about things that are
going on in society using round table discussions to talk about issues such as police brutality and how to grow the black community. “We measure what they say is important and what their actions say is important so they can see what doesn’t line up, mapping truth between what they’re saying and what they’re doing, and helping them transition from boyhood to manhood,” Drummer continued.

Another vital component of AAMI’s success is their Elites. A member is named an Elite by having a 3.0 GPA or better, and an award dinner is held each semester to recognize these members who stuck to their D.R.I.V.E. and excelled academically.

“They started taking it so seriously,” said Drummer. “When we started, there were maybe five who were named Elites. There were those that came up to me after the awards were given out that said they’d be an Elite next time, saying they didn’t want to be left out.”

The program works, and the numbers show it. In fiscal year 2016-17, the AAMI program saw seven members graduate and 21 named Elites. The average GPA for an AAMI member (in Spring 2017) who had attended five or more one-on-one mentor meetings was 0.61 points higher than the average for students who did not attend mentor meetings. Of the 79 members of the program, the ones who attended more meetings and mentoring sessions performed better academically than their peers who did not.

The five original AAMI members—called the AAMI 5—also make a point to come back and talk to the new members. One of these, Willie Powell, graduated from Augusta State with a degree in business and now works as a manager at UPS. He was the first of the AAMI 5 to speak at an AAMI dinner.

“He was 23 when he came back,” remembered Drummer. “All of the guys that were in the program were looking at him, because of his maturity, thinking he was 29 or 30. He was talking about his role as manager and everyone that was under him in his field. When he told them his age, they were amazed.”

“Many of the ones who graduate from EGSC and go on to other universities want to be big brothers to those who are in AAMI now,” said Drummer. “They try to stay in contact with me, and we help link them up with ones who have gone on that have the same interests.”

“The strength in AAMI comes from the support that we’ve developed as a team,” said Drummer. “Having all these people just saying ‘hey, we see your vision, we believe in it, let us help you develop it.’ That’s the strength of the program. It trickles down to the guys in the organization. I’m able to be more transparent with them because they are able to go to anyone and feel they can be transparent. The guys in the organization see the vision and ask what they can do to make it go further. It grows in a nice cycle, and I’m so grateful for the AAMI team that we have here at East Georgia.”

To learn more about AAMI at EGSC, visit www.ega.edu/aami
Creating Higher Education Opportunities to Increase College Experiences—CHOICE—is East Georgia State College’s two-year inclusion program to provide students who may traditionally be excluded from post-secondary education the opportunity to participate in college classes and develop work-readiness employment skills. Students with intellectual and developmental disabilities can now attend EGSC to further their education, develop lifelong friendships, develop career opportunities, gain independence and create life-enriching experiences, all while attending college classes and even living in the residence halls.

“Dr. Boehmer was the catalyst for this program,” said Program Director Theresa Davis. “He found out about a grant possibility from the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, a state agency that helps promote individuals with disability getting into the mainstream of life, whether it be school or work. They saw how well that was working for a small group of people at Kennesaw State [the only program before ours], and they wanted to expand it across the state.”

“These students were underserved and underrepresented,” she explained. “Dr. Boehmer was truly the first Program Director, because he brought this concept to EGSC. He knew that we dealt with a population where the majority of students came here because we were an access institution. They needed help, they needed structure—the same things this population needed. And it would add diversity to our campus.”

The CHOICE Program provides enrichment in career development and employment, academic enrichment, campus and community engagement, self-determination and independent living. The program also allows students to participate in internships throughout the community, as well as take educational trips to conferences which enables them to explore career options and develop employment skills.

“For these students, this is an opportunity. They’ve been told all their lives that they’ll never go to college. Their siblings and friends go to college, and when they are asked where they’re going, they either make up something or say they don’t know. The catchphrase is ‘I’ll get a good job.’ They don’t know what that means, but they’ve heard it all their lives—go to school and get a good job, go to college and get a good job,” explained Davis. “To these students, the way it has been expressed to me, it is their chance to continue to strive for their personal goals just like their peers. We explore their options and interests and teach them about fields, and they have the choice on what to do.”

Davis said, “High school is very different than college. You learn more independence skills—more ways to live independently. There’s no bell, the teacher is not in the same spot, and you do most of your learning outside the classroom. For any college freshman, whether they’re in this program or not, they have a transition phase of thinking they’ve got it and finding out they don’t.”

As a member of the CHOICE Program, students audit classes for institutional credit and attend tutoring sessions with a peer mentor. They are also required to participate in job shadowing and internships, on or off campus, depending on the student’s plans. A minimum of 50% of the students’ experiences are in inclusive settings.

“This program, and programs like this, allow the students to find their voice. They learn that in college they are asked ‘what do you think? what do you want? how do you feel?’ rather than simple facts. They take the skills they learned in high school and start thinking critically,” she continued.

Upon completion of the CHOICE Program, students are presented with a Certificate of Accomplishment in Work Ready Skills during the regular East Georgia State College Commencement Ceremonies.

Programs like CHOICE have spread to other colleges and universities, and they continue to grow. Each one is different in their focus, and EGSC’s CHOICE
Program focuses on work-readiness skills.

“We encourage our students to continue their education, just like any other college student would,” said Davis. “Of the five students who have graduated, three in fall of 2016 and two in 2017, two are continuing at Georgia Southern University’s post-secondary inclusion program, two are employed at full time jobs that manifested from their internships, and one has chosen to continue at EGSC. She said ‘I just learned to learn, and I’m done? I want to keep learning!’”

Job shadowing and internships play an important role in the CHOICE Program. During their second semester, CHOICE students go out into careers that they’re interested in to observe. Like high school, where students have an Individual Education Program (IEP), the students at EGSC have a Person-Centered Plan. This plan works with the student’s interests and uses core concepts to guide their thought processes. It becomes a guide with their gifts, talents and struggles—a visual guide to what they see themselves doing in the future. Job shadowing allows them to take their Person-Centered Plan and learn how to merge the things that make them feel good into a career.

“When they come back after three or four shadowing visits, they pick one to do job skills development,” explained Davis. “They are going to that job, learning what they have to do, committing time, and they participate in activities based on the plan developed with the employer. That leads to their internships in their last semester.”

Adjusting to college life is difficult for any freshman, and to help the CHOICE students become more comfortable with campus life, a Summer Leadership Orientation is held in June. The orientation allows students a glimpse into their life as EGSC students, familiarizing them with the campus, the people, living on campus, and the expectations of the program.

“They get to come on campus, live in the residence halls for a week, and go to classes and meet people. That week helps immerse them into how to navigate the campus, how much space they have in the residence halls and what part is theirs,” said Davis. “The struggle they have at the beginning of the semester was just that there were more people. It gave them a heads up, and it gave them a successful beginning. Some of these students have never spent the night away from their family, so this program helped tremendously with the transition of living in the residence halls.”

Davis said that having residence halls open to the CHOICE Program students has made a significant difference. “By the nature of where these students come from, because of housing being available, we can now have more students come, because they can stay.”

All of these factors make for a better life for the CHOICE students. “It’s neat, because they’re living the same life as their peers,” said Davis. “They’re getting to meet people, go to college, have friends.”

“One of our students said that they’re used to everyone knowing that they’re in special ed. Its like a hat you wear,” Davis explained. “When you come to college, no one is really concerned about that. It seems less focused on, and I think it is because of how college is where you move around and it is more free. They’re less self-conscious. They’ve matured a little bit and they see other people that struggle in classes just like they do, and there’s no separation between the fact that they have a disability and others don’t. They’re learning that it was a stigma that they probably placed on themselves because they were lacking confidence.”

Another aspect of building confidence and helping CHOICE students form relationships is attending conferences. During the summer, CHOICE students participated in the Third Annual Inclusive Southeastern Postsecondary Education Conference and Capacity Building Institute in Nashville, TN at Vanderbilt University.
The conference is held to bring together students in inclusive postsecondary education so that they can learn from conference presenters and so they can realize that they’re not alone,” explained Davis. “In some of the states, it is a small number of students, but in other states, there are huge numbers of students being served in these programs. It is to say ‘yes, there are people like you,’ and they get to share experiences.”

“There are also speakers who help lift them and motivate them to be more involved in the college setting,” she continued. “They make friends from all over the Southeast. It is an engagement time, social time and learning time. The sessions are not just delivered from the speaker to the listener, but through conversation and engagement, which helps develop their voices. We are looking forward to traveling with our students to next year’s conference in Tennessee!”

The CHOICE Program continues to grow. The program is developing an enrichment year and working on expanding. It is also looking into a dual enrollment program where students would spend part of the day at their high school and part at EGSC.

“I see that the program is evolving into the needs of this particular area that EGSC serves,” she said. “Students in this program represent students from all over the state, from north of Atlanta, to Augusta, to Savannah, to counties that touch ours. We are expanding the awareness of inclusive postsecondary education and EGSC’s program.”

This expanding awareness is readily apparent in the increase in program participants, with sixteen expected in Fall of 2017, up from just four in the Spring.

“I think the increase in awareness is the work that we do with the Georgia Inclusive Postsecondary Education Council. The members of that council are committed to sharing information, even if it is not in their home area,” Davis explained. “We travel across the state, and that’s the footwork to which I attribute the increase.”

“Also, EGSC has the Link to Success initiative,” Davis explained. “When I was in my own county, I didn’t know that these programs existed, and I was someone who should have known. It became a mission for me to travel and let people know that these programs exist and say ‘Yes, you can go to college, and this is how you accomplish it.’ I knew that if I didn’t know about this, a lot of people weren’t aware that this was happening and available.”

Davis has begun a K-12 initiative to bring awareness to the teachers and give hope to kids. She, with help from her peer mentors, came up with the idea of a “Link to Success,” where they reach EGSC’s K-12 service area and offer the opportunity to go out and talk with schools, talk with students, train teachers, and help them build IEPs to support a smooth transition to college.

“We want students to have more opportunities to have an active say in their IEP,” Davis explained. “Through the Georgia Council on Developmental Disabilities, a core of program directors got together to develop a plan to deliver the same message, and I think that has been vital to the spread of the program.”

Davis is very passionate about continuing the program. “[At my previous job in a high school], I got these students to the door, got them through Vocational Rehabilitation, and hoped that they could get a job. Their life changed so much after graduating from high school, because a lot of these students just went home and were trapped there. This is their next phase. Some students choose to go to college, some choose to go to work, and these kids only had the one choice—CHOICE has given them the option of going to college and has given them a voice.”

To learn more about the CHOICE Program, visit www.ega.edu/CHOICE
EGSC leads USG in summer enrollment growth

On August 16, 2016, University System of Georgia Board of Regents released a report outlining enrollment for Summer 2016. In the 30 institutions in the USG, there was an overall increase of 1.9% (or 2,610 students) over 2015’s Summer enrollment. East Georgia State College had the distinction of having the largest percentage of growth in the state with an increase of 15.3%, or 119 students. The second-highest percentage of growth was Georgia Southwestern State University at 14.3%. EGSC’s Summer enrollment totaled 895 students, an increase of 15.3% from last Summer’s 776. The student body was comprised of 70 dual enrollment, or Move on When Ready, students; 493 freshmen; 249 sophomores; 44 juniors and two seniors, as well as 35 transient students and two others. Those enrolled were mostly Georgia residents, though 25 were out-of-state and five were international. Sixty-one point three percent of the students enrolled in EGSC during the summer were female (above the state average of 58.8%, but below the State College average of 64.9%).

Record amount of scholarships awarded in Fall 2016

In the Fall of 2016, students at East Georgia State College were awarded more scholarship money than has ever been awarded in the college’s history. A total of 139 students were awarded $298,812 in 2016-17. There were 40 Correll Scholars, granted $5,000 annually by the Correll Family Foundation, and 19 Foundation Leadership scholars, awarded a minimum of $1,000 and a maximum of $2,500 annually from individual donors. In addition to the Correll Scholars and Leadership Scholarship recipients, 87 students were awarded a total of $32,656 in need-based funding obtained from individual donors, the University System of Georgia Foundation and the Gambrell Family Need-Based Scholarship Fund. To be a part of creating these opportunities, please visit EGSC’s website at www.ega.edu/donate or call Elizabeth Gilmer at 478-289-2037.

Graduation numbers continue to increase at EGSC

The 2016 Fall Commencement ceremony on December 10, 2016 saw a new Fall Commencement record as 107 graduates earned their Associate of Arts degree, and three students earned a certificate of accomplishment for their work as members of the CHOICE Program. Speaker for the ceremony was EGSC Professor of Social Science Randy Carter. The 2017 Spring Commencement ceremony on Friday, May 5, 2017 in the EGSC Gymnasium saw 172 students cross the stage to accept their diploma after earning their degrees, with 56 of that number being reverse transfer and four Bachelor of Science in Biology graduates. Two members of the CHOICE Inclusion Program also earned their Certificate of Accomplishment in Work Ready Skills during the ceremony. Dr. Tim Goodman, who retired as Vice President for Academic Affairs in Summer 2017, was the ceremony’s speaker.
NEW FACES, NEW TITLES

Dr. Vess joined EGSC on July 1, 2017 as the Vice President for Academic Affairs. She came to us from Amarillo College in Texas, where she served as VPAA. She also served as VPAA at Rivier University in New Hampshire.

**Dr. Deborah Vess**
*Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Kelch was named Director of EGSC’s Augusta campus in March of 2017 after serving as Interim Director since November of 2016. He joined EGSC - Augusta as Assistant Director of Student Affairs in 2013 and has been an ambassador for the school since that time.

**Nick Kelch**
*Director, EGSC-Augusta*

Peebles was named Associate Director of Financial Aid/Processing and Default management in January of 2017. She manages the day-to-day processing of financial aid, training of new staff, and oversees the Federal Work Study Program and Default Management initiatives at EGSC.

**Ciara Peebles**
*Associate Director of Financial Aid*

Dr. Chevalier was named Interim Chair of the Department of Biology in July of 2016. He joined EGSC in 2013 from Mississippi State University. He also serves as a professor of biology and the advisor for the TriBeta Biological Honor Society.

**Dr. David Chevalier**
*Interim Chair of the Department of Biology*

Goosby was named Assistant Director of Student Life in December of 2016. He was previously part of the EGSC family as a volunteer coach with the EGSC Men’s Basketball Team. He works with Intramural Sports, PREP, The Hoopee Bird and other Student Life projects.

**Warren Goosby**
*Assistant Director of Student Life*

Dr. Rozier was named Director of Nursing in August of 2016. She took charge of the new Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, which serves as a bridge for students with their RN degree who want to earn their BSN. She comes to EGSC from Middle Georgia State College.

**Dr. Sylvia Rozier**
*Director of Nursing*

Dr. Pierce joined EGSC as Associate Professor of Nursing in June of 2017. She previously was Assistant Professor of Nursing and BSN Program Coordinator at Middle Georgia State University.

**Dr. Patrice Pierce**
*Associate Professor of Nursing*

Dr. McKinney was named Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning on November 1, 2016. She reports jointly to the VP for Academic Affairs and the VP for Information Technology and directs EGSC’s teaching and learning program and eLearning.

**Dr. Dee McKinney**
*Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning*

Storck came to EGSC after serving as Assistant Director of Housing and Residence Life at Armstrong State University. She joined the EGSC family in March of 2017.

**Angela Storck**
*Director of Housing and Residence Life*

Ansley joined the EGSC Library in the Fall of 2016. She previously worked at the Dekalb County Public Library as a Library Tech and at Kennesaw State University as a Research and Instruction Librarian and a Librarian Assistant Professor.

**Kelly Ansley**
*EGSC Library Director*

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Publications and Professional Development

Dr. Cheek publishes book, chapter
Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Dr. Lee Cheek, contributed a book chapter to a volume honoring the life and scholarship of Dr. Tom Darby, an internationally respected political scientist on the faculty of Carleton University in Canada, in July of 2016. In February of 2017, it was announced that Manchester University Press, a major international academic publishing house in the United Kingdom, will publish Dr. Lee Cheek’s forthcoming book on the creation of the American political system, The Founding of the American Republic.

Howell publishes book on Hazel Brannon Smith
Associate Professor of History Dr. Jeff Howell published a book in July of 2017 entitled Hazel Brannon Smith: The Female Crusading Scalawag. The book examines a female pioneer in journalism in the Deep South. Smith earned a national reputation in 1940s Mississippi by fighting bootleg alcohol and corrupt Sheriffs. Later, she earned national recognition in her fight for free speech, a free press and civil rights. She was the first woman to earn the Pulitzer Prize for Editorial Writing in 1964. Her story demonstrates the complex response of white “liberals” during the height of racial oppression in 20th century America.

Caiazzo, Mancill publish book on Georgia politics
Professors Dr. Tom Caiazzo and Daniel Mancill recently published their new book, Georgia Politics Today. The book’s foreward was written by Georgia State Senator Jack Hill. The book also features a chapter on higher education in Georgia written by EGSC’s President, Dr. Bob Boehmer. According to Caiazzo, this book will serve as both a stand-alone text for state and local politics, as well as an online supplement for American Government classes. Mancill explained that the book examines Georgia politics in a very scholarly, yet student-friendly manner, so that they can understand politics from the local and state perspective.

Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center
Fulford Center hosts a number of summer camps
Every year, the Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center hosts summer camps to benefit the children of our area. Between Camp Adventure, Ooey Gooey Science Mini Camp, STEM Discovery Camp, Travel Through Time Art Camp, Chess Camps and the wildly-popular Camp Invention, the Fulford Center is a hive of activity throughout the summer as they serve students from second grade and up. To learn more about camps at the Fulford Center, visit www.ega.edu or call Director Jean Schwabe at 478-289-2464. Scholarships are available for some camps, and all require advance registration.

Annual Family Astronomy Night a success
The Annual Family Astronomy Night was held on October 13, 2016 from 5 to 7:30 p.m. Students enjoyed planetarium shows, hands-on science activities and experiments, and NASA interactive activities, as well as livestreaming from the International Space Station. Held in the autumn each year, Family Astronomy Night is a great time for young and old to visit the Fulford Center and learn more about the universe in which we live. Special guests such as Max McKelvey, retired Oatland Island Education Coordinator and astronomy enthusiast, are on hand to show attendees the wonders of space and share their knowledge, and the activities make learning about the universe fun.
**Faculty & Staff Accomplishments**

**Dr. Goodman retires after 44 years in higher education**

On June 30, 2017, Dr. Tim Goodman, Vice President for Academic Affairs, retired after 44 years in higher education. He joined EGSC as VPAA in 2000. He was named Vice President Emeritus for Academic Affairs during the Spring Commencement Ceremony on May 5, 2017, where he was also the chosen Commencement Speaker.

**Dr. Boehmer earns Service Excellence Bronze Award**

On October 25, 2016, the annual Chancellor’s Service Excellence Awards Ceremony was held to recognize University System employees who embodied the concept of service excellence. East Georgia State College and its president, Dr. Bob Boehmer, received the bronze award in the category of Outstanding Institution of the Year and President. This award recognizes a president and his or her employees who have demonstrated the highest commitment and performance levels in service excellence across the institution. Nominees’ actions must reflect all of the five customer service attributes: responsive, being a process agent, implementation, being a technology enhancer and knowledgeable.

**Governor’s Teaching Fellowships awarded to Goss and Vora**

Natasha Goss, Assistant Professor of Accounting, and Mina Vora, Associate Professor in the School of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, were awarded a Governor’s Teaching Fellowship by the University of Georgia (UGA) in June of 2017. Professors Goss and Vora participated in the Fellowship on UGA’s Athens campus. The Governor’s Teaching Fellows Program was established by Zell Miller, Governor of Georgia from 1991 – 1999, to provide Georgia’s higher education faculty with expanded opportunities for developing important teaching skills. The program is offered through UGA’s Institute of Higher Education.

**Jones selected for ELI, ALA participation**

Karen Jones, EGSC’s Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management, was selected to attend UGA’s Accelerated Leadership Academy. The ALA is a system-wide leadership development program to provide executive leadership development beyond the Executive Leadership Institute, a comprehensive, 102-hour development program facilitated by leading experts in leadership. Those selected for the ELI enhance their leadership skills to prepare for potential high-level advancement within the USG. Jones was selected for the ELI earlier this year. While the ELI focuses on enhancing leadership skills from the inside out, the ALA focuses on preparing ELI alumni to excel in executive leadership roles and aligns their long-term professional goals with organizational opportunities. The ALA program identifies a pool of talented individuals in preparation for critical position vacancies within the University System of Georgia.

**ALG Grants awarded to Andrews, Drummer, Lee and Kearns**

Professor Da’Mon Andrews and Professor Antré Drummer were awarded Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants in December of 2016. They chose to work with Developmental Mathematics, a course that gives additional instructional support to students before they take College Algebra. Andrews and Drummer will incorporate LibGuide, which organized an array of open educational resources into a single document.

EGSC psychology professors Deborah Lee, M.S., and Tori Kearns, Ph.D., were awarded their second ALG Textbook Transformation Grant in June of 2017. They received the first ALG grant for the college in 2014, transforming Introduction to Psychology by creating their own online textbook chapters and other materials. The ALG grants are part of a University System of Georgia initiative aimed to lower college costs and contribute to retention and graduation. Their specific project targets cutting costs for psychology majors by providing students a no-cost textbook alternative for the required psychological adjustment course.

**Moore earns Newcomer Award at GEAC**

The Georgia Educational Advancement Council (GEAC) recognized Katelyn Moore, communications coordinator, with the Outstanding Newcomer Award at its annual Fall Conference Awards program in Savannah, November 17. GEAC, Inc. is a state-wide organization for staff at public and private colleges and universities who work in educational advancement including the areas of alumni, development, public relations/public affairs, and communications. Each year, GEAC recognizes excellence within Georgia’s advancement community through nominations received from institutions across the State. Winners are selected by a committee of GEAC members representative of the various disciplines in advancement, as well as the different types of institutions within the organization. Advancement staff who have been employed less than five years are eligible for the Outstanding Newcomer Award.

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STUDENT LIFE

Hansley, Snyder named Homecoming Royalty
The Annual Homecoming Casino Night and Formal was held on Friday, Feb. 24, 2017 at the Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center. The 2017 Homecoming Court was made up of Brannon Braddock and Kayla Davis representing Phi Theta Kappa, Morgan Scott and Maurice Sutton representing the International Club, Naomi Mason representing the EGSC Student Ambassadors, Mikella Hansley and Craig Conyers representing the Student Government Association, Kinsey Burgess representing EGSC Men’s Basketball, Leari-Jenee Jones and Phil Booker representing the Criminal Justice Club, Jasmine Fann and Brandyn Snyder representing Bobcat Cheerleading, Shunseere Kent representing EGSC Women’s Basketball, Myranda Hand representing EGSC Softball and Maya Wilson representing the Robert Feline Playmakers. Bobcat Cheerleading’s Brandyn Snyder was voted Homecoming King, while Mikella Hansley of the Student Government Association won Homecoming Queen.

Keyton crowned Miss East Georgia State College
On Saturday, February 4, 2017, six young women competed for the title of Miss East Georgia State College 2017. They competed in the categories of Lifestyle and Fitness in Swimsuit, On Stage Questions, Talent and Evening Gown, with preliminary interview competition happening earlier that day. The theme of the scholarship pageant was “Once Upon a Time,” and the fairy tale theme carried throughout the competition. This year’s Miss EGSC is Miley Keyton, 18, of Swainsboro, the daughter of Lyn and Pam Keyton. Her platform is Turning Disabilities into Possibilities, and, for her talent, she performed a tap routine. She is a freshman nursing major at EGSC and plans to attain her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, then go on to work in the NICU with newborns or be a travel nurse. In addition to being named Miss EGSC, Keyton also tied for the Evening Gown competition winner and was awarded the Rachel Jane Frederick Interview Award. In June, Keyton participated in the Miss Georgia Pageant in Columbus, GA.

Robert Feline Playmakers perform
The Robert Feline Playmakers held their annual Fall performance on December 1, 2016 at the Luck F. Gambrell Center Auditorium. The Playmakers performed dynamic scenes from two plays by John Cariani, *Almost, Maine* and *Love/Sick*, as well as scenes from an original cowboy play, Liars and Laughters, by Ronald Ellison. Featured performers were actors Caleb Ely, Maya Wilson, Joshua Jackson, Candice Mims, William Collum, McKenzie Harden, Macy Johnson, Trevor Harris, Kennedy Russell, Ronald Ellison and Christian Kraus.

On April 12 and 13, 2017, the Playmakers presented *Bob: A Life in Five Acts*, a play by Peter Sinn Natchtrieb. The play focuses on Bob, a young man who embarks upon a life journey with joyful optimism and ambition, despite woeful misfortune. The cast of the play featured Trevor Harris as Bob, Maya Wilson as Helen, Zrinka Dunn as Jeanine, Maiya Lundy as Bonnie, Caleb Ely as Connor, Mekenzie Harden as Amelia, Karly McDonald as Vera, Gabriel Aldridge as Gunther, Joan Martin Dunn as Chorus One, Christian Kraus as Chorus Two, Dedra Shuman as Chorus Three and Steve Lavender as Chorus Four.

Disc Golf Open held as qualifier for National Tourney
On October 1 and 2, 2016, East Georgia State College hosted the 11th Annual Georgia Collegiate Disc Golf Open at the Piney Woods Disc Golf Course on the Swainsboro campus. Teams from Kennesaw State University, Georgia Southern University and East Georgia State College competed for a slot at the National Disc Golf Tournament. The tournament was a close contest between Kennesaw and Georgia Southern, with GSU leading by five throws after round one, two after round two, and KSU edging GSU by two after the doubles round, carding a 48 to GSU’s 52. The Georgia Collegiate Disc Golf Open was sponsored by EGSC, Innova and Zanfel.
**EGSC Library hosts NEA Big Read**

During the month of September 2016, EGSC and its community partners celebrated the Big Read, a program of the National Endowment for the Arts. The grant was awarded in May 2016, and free events open to the public were scheduled throughout the month. The selected book for the local Big Read was *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest J. Gaines. Each event was thematically tied to the novel, which is set in 1940s Louisiana. The kickoff event featured children's story time activities and a free Cajun meal. There were also community and EGSC-based book discussions of the novel and an art show Stand Tall: Art of Strength, which explored the themes discussed in the book. A lecture series also brought forth discussions on several aspects of the novel, and the annual EGSC Convocation featured Dr. Marcia Gaudet, former Director of the Ernest J. Gaines Center. The month of events ended on a high note with a performance by the Fabulous Equinox Jazz Orchestra Quintet of Savannah.

**First Alumni Gala held and a tradition begun!**

The inaugural Alumni and Friends Gala was held Sept. 24, 2016 at the Sudie A. Fulford Community Learning Center. Sponsored by the EGSC Alumni Association, this event celebrated the college’s past friends, attendees and graduates, whether from Emanuel County Junior College, East Georgia College, or East Georgia State College. The event featured food, fellowship and a silent auction. Attire for the evening was semi-formal, giving attendees the chance to dress up and visit, reminiscing about their time at EGSC, EGC or ECJC and comparing stories of how the campus has changed over the years. The event was a huge success, leading to requests for future events for alumni and friends of the college.

**Annual PFFA Day celebration sees great turnout**

September of 2016 saw EGSC end their annual week of events with Parents, Family, Friends and Alumni Day on Saturday, Sept. 24. The day began with the annual Dash With a Splash 5K, followed by the annual Bobcat Regatta duct tape boat race. A free homemade pizza lunch with cookies and soda was served to attendees, who were also able to enjoy booths around campus such as the always-popular liquid nitrogen booth, a display of bees from Bobcat Apiary, a plant sale, art activities and more. There were carnival rides and guests could also tour the Nature Trail on campus.

**Vision Series brings music, words to campus**

As part of the Vision Series, EGSC enjoyed several events throughout the year, including an October visit from popular author Charles Martin. His novel, *The Mountain Between Us*, was made into a movie that hit theatres in 2017. The college also enjoyed the annual Patriotic Concert featuring the Columbia County Orchestra in June of 2017. The NEA Big Read performance by the Fabulous Equinox Jazz Orchestra Quintet was also part of this year’s Vision Series.

**Annual Economic Outlook Luncheon held**

On January 20, 2017, EGSC hosted the 19th annual Georgia Economic Outlook Luncheon. Presented by the University of Georgia Terry College of Business and Selig Center for Economic Growth, the luncheon was a chance for local businesspeople to hear the economic projections for Georgia and our region, as well as economic trends over the past years. Speaking during the luncheon was Dr. Benjamin C. Ayers, Dean of the UGA Terry College of Business and Earl Davis Chair in Taxation. He indicated that employment is expected to rise by 2.1% in Georgia. In the nation, it is expected to rise by 1.5%. The average unemployment rate in Georgia for 2017 is expected to be 4.8%. Door prizes were also drawn at the close of the program. Winners were Elizabeth Hodges, Jimmy Wedincamp, Kenny Griffin, Clare Ursillo, Mady Bearden and Loy D. Cowart.
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