RAVEN SOARS

The aspiring music teacher is inaugural Sloan Scholar. Not that she’d toot her own horn.

PG. 40
PICKING FLOWERS  First-year students started the year learning the campus’ oldest traditions. The campus Old Bell rang to welcome them, just as it has since the campus’ earliest days. They learned the lyrics to the school’s alma mater. And – in a socially distanced manner of course – each placed a fresh daisy in a modern-day daisy chain. We noticed a few were placed at the base of Minerva as well – another tradition. With everything that seemed so unusual this semester, these timeless nods to heritage were a thing of beauty.
Shield our Spartans

The three Ws — “Wear. Wait. Wash.” — As students returned to campus early August, safety was a priority. COVID-19 protocols were key.

Wear a face covering. Wash in line at least 6 feet from the next person. Wash your hands regularly.

Through social media, through signage in buildings and along sidewalks, via emails, through video, the campus community was reminded again and again.

As Chancellor Gilliam told the students as classes began, “More than ever our shared success this year depends on you, each and every one of you. And you have to do your part. Wear a face covering when you’re on campus in class and in the community. Wash your hands frequently. Keep your distance on campus and off campus. Your actions matter. We have to work together wherever we are to keep each other safe.”

As of the print deadline for this magazine, Sept. 25, the precautions have kept illness from spiking. No clusters of COVID-19 on the campus community have been detected. A COVID-19 online dashboard kept the community informed. The largest number of new positive COVID tests for students so far was reported the last week of August.

The chancellor continues to note that everyone needs to be flexible. We don’t know the future. But the actions of each member of the Spartan community brought the opening of the school year cause for hope — that this will remain an impactful, on-campus experience for our students.

PRIORITIES AND PROOF

UNCG’s priorities are built around excellence, opportunity, and impact. In 2017, Chancellor Gilliam signed off on strategic goals in these areas, as part of the UNC System goals. How are things going?

UNCG was recognized as the only System campus to exceed each of its five strategic plan metrics in the most recent year. Of all of the UNC System campuses, three — UNCG, UNC Charlotte, and NC State — met or exceeded their annual targets on all five of their priority metrics.

PRIORITY goals for the 2017-2022 plan for UNCG include enrolling a substantially higher number of low-income students, graduating about one-third more low-income students, greatly improving the five-year graduation rate, reducing by 50% the achievement gap among underrepresented minority students, and producing nearly 20% more critical workforce credentials.

“Ensuring our students succeed and helping meet the needs of our state, even during the most challenging times, are what we must do. Working together, we are making a huge impact,” said Chancellor Gilliam.
The semester would have no fall break, and exams would begin in November. Arts performances were canceled or postponed until later. In-person conferences and symposia were rescheduled. Fall sporting events would not be held.

Even move-in was radically different. And it worked.

Students had a two-stage approach in early August. In the drop-off stage, they unloaded their items in their rooms and returned home. They knew it as “Stop, drop, and roll.” And days before classes began, a final move-in stage. Still, the students had been told to bring only what was needed. The future wasn’t known.

The residence halls adjusted guest visitation policy to limit visitors. They increased cleaning in common areas.

Throughout campus, staff ensured everyone had personal protective equipment and could maintain social distancing by making modifications in classrooms, dining areas, residence halls, etc.

The number of students living in residence halls was about 70 percent of the usual number.

Many faculty wore clear faceguards as well. They managed traffic in hallways and staggered the way people enter and leave classrooms and buildings.

The biggest constant, everywhere you went? Face coverings. UNCG required all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to wear a face covering while indoors on campus and outdoors when social distancing could not be maintained. While they were provided to students and employees, many created their own.

For dining, capacity at dining venues was reduced by 50%, and new to-go dining locations were set up.

Even riding a bus was different. All occupants of buses wore face coverings, and bus capacity could not exceed 50%.

In-class, face coverings were essential. Between classes, students wore face coverings if they couldn’t ensure social distancing. And once the Kaplan Center for Wellness was open in September, the climbing wall required face coverings, as well.

Class sizes were also smaller. The average in-person class, as of the first of September, had fewer than 17 students. For students attending in person, social distancing was key – as was everyone wearing face coverings.

As for the large lecture-hall classes – and many other course offerings – they had been transformed into online classes, using video platforms such as Zoom.

HOW WERE CLASSES HELD?

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9,255 STUDENTS RECEIVED A TOTAL OF $8,727,400 THROUGH AUG. 4.

Beginning in March, many students’ lives were disrupted. The federal CARES Act Emergency Grants were released directly to students for expenses such as food, housing, technology needs, childcare expenses, and more resulting from the campus disruption. Some students applied; others automatically received assistance based on qualifying factors including those with lowest estimated family contribution (EFC).
I will never forget how you aided me in my time of need,” wrote one health and human sciences student to UNCG’s Division of Student Affairs. “I was going to be in way over my head this summer with bills and tuition.”

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this student – and others – found their university experience dramatically changed. They had to adapt to online classes at the end of March, and many were faced with new obstacles. Where should they live, how will they get there, where will they eat? Some struggled to support not only themselves but also loved ones they live with or care for.

UNCG stood ready to help. In April, faculty, staff, and alumni banded together to strengthen safety nets addressing immediate student needs. Among these is the Student Assistance Fund for Emergencies (SAFE). Established by the Class of 1967 and operated by the Division of Student Affairs, SAFE provides one-time assistance to matriculating students experiencing financial emergencies. These grants have covered sudden expenses for housing, traveling, and education throughout the pandemic.

“Our students need us now more than ever,” says Dr. Brett Carter, associate vice chancellor and dean of students. “We are creating a culture of care, which in turn motivates our students to become their best selves.”

As of September, the Office of Student Affairs had awarded $98,000 to 212 students through SAFE. The average award is $462. The office has been flooded with gratitude. “Thank you for providing this fund to students who are struggling,” said a Class of 2020 graduate. “I cried with gratitude when I learned I would get help. Because of this award, I was able to finish my master’s in human development and family studies and feel hope again.”

“Knowing that someone is growing those vegetables specifically for them helps reinforce that there is a Spartan community that cares about them. Each act of caring, be it growing vegetables in the UNCG Gardens or baking goods for weekly dinners, creates a network of support that many students need during this challenging time.”

Anthropology professor Susan Andreatta and student volunteers have managed the day-to-day of the gardens during the pandemic, and the result of their hard work shows. Dr. Corey Johnson (Geography, Environment, and Sustainability), Jarrod Pratt (Facilities Operations), and Guy Sanders (Housing & Residence Life) also work on upkeep of the site.

“Green thumbs up.”

“I tried with gratitude when I learned I would get help. Because of this award, I was able to finish my master’s in human development and family studies and feel hope again.”

“Spartans don’t let Spartans go hungry.”

Meals have not been a sure thing for a lot of students during this pandemic. Hardships such as job loss and family crises have exponentially increased student need. Founded, funded, and operated by Wesley-Luther campus ministry, Spartan Open Pantry (SOP) has been serving hungry UNCG students since 2009. With nearly one in three students reporting food insecurity over the last year, SOP provides a lifeline. Want to help? The Spartan Food Insecurity Fund works in conjunction with Spartan Open Pantry to provide access to snacks, light meals, and non-perishable pantry staples for students who need them. Some new SOP To-Go campus locations have opened this fall. Donations are accepted at giveto.uncg.edu.

For more information, go to giveto.uncg.edu/SOP-Spartan-Open-Pantry.

“‘It’s a way for students who are using the pantry to supplement their diet with healthy, fresh foods.’”

— SOP student director Kellie Thomas
Hagan and Richburg honored

UNCG’s Distinguished Service Awards represent the most prestigious public service honors conferred by the University. Named for UNCG’s founding president, the Charles Duncan McIver Award is the University’s highest public service honor and recognizes extraneous public service at the national or international level. The Holderness/Weaver Award is named for Adelaide Holderness ’30, the first woman to serve on the Board of Trustees, and H. Michael Weaver, a longtime UNCG supporter who has served the University in many capacities. The award recognizes exceptional service at the state and local level.

The late Honorable Kay Hagan will receive the Charles Duncan McIver Award. She served as United States senator from 2009 to 2013 and as NC state senator from 1998 to 2009. At UNCG she served on the Friends of the Library Advisory Board and the Excellence Foundation Board of Directors. Throughout her career, Senator Hagan advocated for the state of North Carolina and its citizens with dignity and determination. “Service” is our University motto, and Senator Hagan embodied distinguished service to the community, state, and nation. She was a devoted, inspirational woman whose life touched so many.

Dr. Antonia Monk Richburg ’87, ’00 MPA will receive the Holderness/Weaver Award. She serves as vice president and senior program officer for the Cone Health Foundation, as well as chair of the Greensboro Housing Coalition Board of Directors and vice chair of the North Carolina Network of Grantmakers. She is also a member of the United Way of Greater Greensboro Board of Directors. Her outstanding career and community work as an advocate for access to health care and support services for the disenfranchised align with the mission of both our University and the namesake of this award. A formal award presentation ceremony is planned for Spring 2021.

Both of our honorees set the standard for selfless service in our community, our state, and our nation.”

— Betsy Sull Oakley ’69, chair of UNCG Board of Trustees

100 YEARS AT SHAW

Shaw is the oldest residence hall in the Quad. Designed by notable architect Harry Barton – as were all the Quad halls – it opened for the 1919-20 academic year. During the Quad renovation 90 years later, Shaw was the most heavily redesigned building. The columns and portico were retained, and an opening was carved through the middle, presenting a grand entryway into the Quad. A new, large plaza was added, along with new dorm rooms and large seminar rooms.

This year the Shaw Residence Hall is celebrating its 100 years of history, as it moves into its second century. Alumni Engagement, University Events, and University Housing will host a reunion for all Shaw residents, past and present, during Homecoming on Saturday, Oct. 24, at 2 p.m.

The event, to be held online, will include stories from students, virtual tours, historical videos, and more. See details at homecoming.uncg.edu.

Have stories or photos to share from past years at Shaw, as this event approaches? Email alumni@uncg.edu.

All Things Academic

NEW UNCG PROVOST JIM COLEMAN views public higher education as “one of the most brilliant ideas that humans have ever created.” It’s challenging and political, yes. But the profound impact on people’s lives – through teaching, research, community engagement, and service – is second to none.

Coleman’s passion has propelled his 30-year career in higher education. He came to UNCG from the University of Arkansas, where he also served as provost. He succeeds Dana Dunn, who served as UNCG provost since 2014.

An accomplished plant physiological ecologist, Coleman received his PhD from Yale University. When he started his career as an assistant professor at Syracuse University, he never imagined working in administration. But after a yearlong stint at the National Science Foundation – in which he was responsible for managing $10 million in research funding – he realized he enjoyed facilitating the success of other people and of organizations.

As provost, Coleman oversees everything academic – students, faculty, research, and curriculum. He views his work as “effortless in nature.” He encourages faculty and staff to develop graduates who are propelled on to meaningful and successful lives; conduct research, scholarship, and creative activities that change fields of study and that matter to people; and improve the quality of life and well-being in our community and beyond.

This year, he is focused on navigating the University through the COVID-19 pandemic. More broadly, he shares Chancellor Gilliam’s vision of becoming the national model for how a university can blend excellence, opportunity, and impact. He’s passionate about student success – increasing retention and graduation rates – and equity and inclusion. His father was a professor and civil rights leader in Pittsburgh, and his mother was a special education teacher. Coleman has continued their legacies throughout his career.

“Higher education as a whole has started to become an enforcer of social inequality as opposed to the great equalizer. It’s schools like UNCG that are still committed to that original mission,” he says. “We also have high-quality research, and a deep commitment to the city and the region. I came to UNCG because it checks all of those boxes that I’m passionate about.”
Equal Pay for Equal Work?
(in June and November 1918 Alumnae News issues)

The magazine asked prominent people in the state about the equal pay question. Among the printed responses, some excerpts:

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— Minnie McIver Broy, 1899, director of State Normal College

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— T. W. Bickett, governor

If a woman does as good work as a man and does as much of it, then she should be paid as much. If she does not do so much or does not do it so well, she should be paid less.

If she does better or does more, then she should be paid more. This principle, I think, applies to all work of whatever kind. When we understand fully that money is paid for work and not on the basis of any commodity, then we will act on this subject just as we do when we buy cloth or food or land or any other commodity.

— P. Claxton, U.S. commissioner of education

**Patriotism Perspective**

Is it a mere theory that, if women are granted suffrage, they will help to end the war? Perhaps. But have not the majority of ideas been “mere theories” before they were proved to be facts? And there is no way to prove a theory except by trial. Is it illogical? Possibly. But certainly not more illogical than that one-half of the world should make laws which the other half must obey, and decisions in the consequences of which the other half must share.

...It is entirely conceivable that, after this war is over, the mothers of the world, if they are granted suffrage, will find some way whereby their sons may be allowed to live for their country instead of die for it.

— Clara Booth Byrd ’13, co-editor, June, 1917 (excerpt)
COVID-19 is not the first pandemic our campus has faced. In 1918, influenza hit what was then called State Normal and Industrial College. That was just months after the campus was quarantined for a measles and diphtheria outbreak.

Sophomore Abigail Knight began researching the flu pandemic’s effects on the campus in an “Interrogating UNCG’s History” Lloyd International Honors College seminar last fall. She had no idea how relevant her research would become.

One of her most interesting findings was how President Foust handled the pandemic.

“I feel like I became close to President Foust in a way,” said Abigail. “Most of my research involved reading his letters from the time of the pandemic.”

Most of them were to families of students who’d fallen ill and were in the campus infirmary. The campus was quarantined for months, and families could not visit. For every day a student was in the infirmary, President Foust would send her family a letter updating them on her condition.

“That was a personal touch I wouldn’t have expected.”

Perhaps what stood out most to Abigail was not only how Foust handled the pandemic, but also how the campus community as a whole handled this difficult time— with resilience, positivity, and care.

“It is encouraging to consider how resilient State Normal and Industrial College was. Records of students and accounts of faculty members hardly dwell on the difficult times.” — Abigail Knight

WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA, was once home to a vital tobacco industry and the largest population of working-class African Americans in the state. Many resided in one of 301 “shotgun” houses in the area until the tobacco industry moved overseas in the ’80s, resulting in many of these homes becoming abandoned and eventually demolished.

Eighty-eight shotgun houses remain today, and the majority of them have been re-occupied for decades, leaving many residents of the historic district without the opportunity to own a home.

When interior architecture master’s student Monica T. Davis was deciding on the focus of her thesis, she felt compelled to help her hometown.

After learning about the cultural significance of the East Wilson shotgun houses, she seized the opportunity to turn the abandoned, historic dwellings into tiny homes that could bring back life and culture to the area.

“I am passionate about preservation, and a lot of times, preservation isn’t prevalent in African American culture. To be able to preserve the culture and historic character of these homes while educating the people of my hometown is very rewarding.”

The project began last spring, at 132 Ash St. East, with the goal of rebuilding four more houses by the end of the year. Monica is the architect behind all of the floorplans and renovations. Her vision is to preserve the historic character of the homes, but with a modern twist.

“My goal is for the people of East Wilson to have a beautiful home to go back to after work.”

In addition to bringing work back into the area, she employs members of the community to help restore the houses, she teaches community members about architecture and craftsmanship.

“The cultural heritage of this neighborhood is very significant, so we are reworking what has been lost for so long.”

Monica T. Davis, MFA, candidate in the Department of Interior Architecture

“Over the past six years we have invested in attracting talented new faculty and in increasing infrastructure and support— from instrumentation to internal grants— for our existing faculty,” said Vice Chancellor for Research Lori L. Shelton. “Meanwhile, our research networks and coalitions have created hotbeds of interdisciplinary inquiry, spurring a diverse range of groundbreaking discoveries and scholarly products. These activities are also producing larger, multi-year, federal grants.”

The University’s largest new awards in financial year 2020? $15.6M and $6.1M projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education to improve educational opportunities and academic outcomes for disadvantaged and low-income students across North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia and to partner with Piedmont school districts on teacher training.

RESEARCH FUNDS RISE 40% SINCE 2015
Alumni honored at virtual Homecoming

Carole Boston Weatherford ’92 MFA has helped generations explore and honor the achievements and contributions of the African American community, from Harriet Tubman to John Coltrane to the Greensboro sit-ins and beyond. She will receive UNCG’s McIver Lifetime Achievement Award during Homecoming Week. This award is the highest honor bestowed upon an alumnus of UNCG.

The professor of English at Fayetteville State University is the recipient of three Caldecott Honors, multiple Coretta Scott King Awards, honors from the American Library Association, the North Carolina Award for Literature, the Ragam-Rubin Award, and the Nonfiction Award from the Children’s Book Guild.

ExTRA

UNCG will partner with five Native American tribes plus Head Start and Little Free Library, using a $1.4 million grant, to boost literary resources for Native American youth.

UNCG’s UCLS season is postponed, but the line-up is not canceled. Oscar winner Geena Davis has already rescheduled for next year.

Xhenet Aliu’s debut novel, “Brass,” is the winner of the 2020 Townsend Prize for Fiction, an award for first-time novels. Aliu joined the faculty last year.

The Brubeck Centennial Symposium is canceled because of the pandemic. A re-scheduling is being discussed.

Once again, US News and World Report has ranked UNCG no. 1 in the state for social mobility. For the first time, UNCG is in the top 25 nationally in this category.

SEE MORE INFORMATION ABOUT HOMECOMING AND THESE AWARDS AT ALUMNI.UNCG.EDU.
WES MILLER AND TRINA PATTERSON have adapted their leadership strategies during these unusual times.

“The key is in life, like basketball, you have to be flexible and prepared for the unknown,” said Patterson, head coach of UNCG Women’s Basketball. “During these times, you have to prepare your players somewhat differently in your system and make sure that everyone can contribute to the organization.”

Some of the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic have included plenty of Zoom calls, lots of schedule changes, practicing social distancing, and wearing face coverings, including when they are coaching their student-athletes.

“There’s no one specific thing that speaks to how you lead during this time,” said Miller, who’s entering his ninth year as the men’s head coach. “It’s a multitude of things every day, which is what leadership is anyway. Leadership doesn’t change because the goals are still the same. We’ve had to become more creative in the manner in how we lead – from meeting in smaller groups, finding ways to interact on the court, and sharing team meals. That’s been the challenge.”

Last season, both basketball programs won at least 20 games. Patterson won her second Southern Conference (SoCon) Coach of the Year honor in four years after leading the Spartans to a Division I-era record 23 victories and the SoCon regular-season championship.

The men have won at least 20 games in four consecutive years and compiled 104 victories during that run of excellence, the second most of any North Carolina Division I men’s basketball program in the state.

“A good leader will make the priorities, the priorities,” Patterson said. “Every day when I wake up, I have a discipline of my daily life. I wake up early and I hear the birds chirping. I tend to be disciplined with my meditation. As a leader, you know that there’s going to be some challenges. You have to be able to handle things and attack them. You can’t be afraid. You can’t lead by fear. Having internal and spiritual strength helps.”

These were lessons Patterson learned during her playing career at the University of Virginia under head coach Debbie Ryan and as a member of Tara VanDerveer’s staff at Stanford. Ryan and VanDerveer are members of the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame.

Miller’s journey took him to UNC Chapel Hill, led by coaching legend Roy Williams.

A member of their 2005 national championship team, Miller says he learned two keys: a relentless work ethic and an emphasis every day on doing the right things.

Miller also believes in overcoming adversity.

“Embracing failure is a key trait of a leader,” he said. “I realize there is going to be failure within everything that we do. That’s just the nature of it. Failure is an opportunity to learn and grow, especially for our program. The people that succeed the most, fail the most.”

Patterson took her team all the way to the Women’s Basketball Invitational championship game during her first year at UNCG. The next two years, the program faltered. That’s when Patterson developed five core values for her program: gratitude, unity, integrity, servitude, and humility.

“Ultimately, I knew it was time to develop the culture and prioritize what’s important to our program. How am I going to make this last? How can the impact of this program continue to have growth?” They’ve since had a remarkable turnaround.

For the men’s team, Miller knows that being a “growth program,” the next play and moment are the most important ones.

“Leadership has been this continuous growth process for me, and I hope it never stops,” Miller said. “I think the day I stop learning and growing – as far as trying to lead better – should be the day I do something else.”

GAME PLAN

KNOWING HOW TO LEAD WHEN THE FUTURE IS UNKNOWABLE

By Rob Knox

A good leader will make the priorities, the priorities.

— TRINA PATTERSON

Wes Miller, UNCG’s head men’s basketball coach

Trina Patterson, UNCG’s head women’s basketball coach
STANDING ON CEREMONY
Faculty Convocation is held every September. This year’s was held with social distancing protocols, with Spartan-spirited face coverings, and with most faculty participating remotely via Zoom video conferencing. Dr. Anthony Chow, joined by Dr. Laurie Kennedy-Malone and Dr. Michael A. Hemphill, made a very thoughtful gesture. They knew many students start their year by placing a coin, a flower, or an apple at the base of the Minerva statue, which represents wisdom. It’s said to bring good luck. This fall, relatively few students could do that. So in the Sept. 9 ceremony, they each set beautiful, large sunflowers at the base. It’s not known how many actually believe in the good luck tradition. But this feeling of care for our students is something to believe in with all our hearts.

PHOTOGRAPH BY
MARTIN W. KANE

“The real ceremony begins where the formal one ends ...”
— Linda K. Hogan
THE WEATHERSPOON ART MUSEUM always has something new: new exhibitions, programs, and opportunities for teaching and learning. This fall, a new director joins the Greensboro art community. Juliette Bianco succeeds Nancy Doll, who retired after leading the museum for 22 years. Bianco comes to UNCG from Dartmouth, where she worked at the Hood Museum of Art, most recently as deputy director.

Campus and community impact through meaningful engagement with diverse works of art is a value that Bianco holds closely. She’s partnered with museums on exhibitions related to civil rights and social justice, including the Brooklyn Museum, the San Diego Museum of Art, and the International Center of Photography.

WHAT’S EXCITING ABOUT LEADING AN ART MUSEUM?

Art museums are places where we can encounter objects that resonate with us and ways of seeing the world that perhaps we’ve never considered, and also experience a deepening of our existing thoughts or beliefs. Having a “conversation” with a work of art means truly engaging with another person’s creative expression of their perspective. I want to make that experience accessible to everyone.

HOW CAN EXHIBITIONS BE RELEVANT AND ACCESSIBLE TO A COMMUNITY?

A museum should be a center for generative and inclusive dialogue and collaboration. Museums are sometimes thought of as places where art is merely deposited and displayed. University museums are all about turning that notion upside down: each object’s impact grows and changes through active and engaged teaching, learning, and creating with people on campus and in the community. We’re all part of the same art-driven ecosystem!

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE STUDENTS AND ALUMNI TO SEE THE WEATHERSPOON?

I want students to feel that the Weatherspoon is their museum — that they’ve contributed to making it a place that reflects their values and shares something with them and their peers. I hope alums continue to visit and participate in making the museum exciting and relevant for the next generation of students.

NEW ANNE AND BEN CONE MEMORIAL DIRECTORSHIP

THE CONES were deeply devoted supporters of the Weatherspoon. Honoring their memory, a gift from an anonymous donor recently established the Anne and Ben Cone Memorial Endowed Directorship Fund — the first of its kind for the University’s museum.

Juliette Bianco is the first Anne and Ben Cone Memorial Endowed Director.

Anne and Ben Cone became prolific patrons of the arts in Greensboro, particularly at Woman’s College (UNCG), where she graduated in 1935. In addition to supporting and financing the acquisition of numerous pieces to the Weatherspoon’s collection — the core of which was started by Ben’s aunts, Claribel and Etta Cone — they also donated $2 million to finance the building, which now houses the museum and bears their name. Throughout their lives, they remained loyal supporters of the museum and UNCG.

After spending months in jail and on probation, he ultimately received a bill of innocence. He turned his experience into art. Sherrill Roland ’09, ’17 MFA is the founder of the Jumpsuit Project, which raises awareness around issues related to incarceration.

This year, he won the prestigious Southern Prize from South Arts. Roland created the Jumpsuit Project after a wrongful conviction just as he had started the final year of his master’s program. He spent 10 months in jail. He was exonerated of all charges in 2015 and returned to UNCG to complete his degree. For his MFA thesis project, Roland wore an orange jumpsuit every day on campus, a performance art project supported by UNCG art faculty such as Sherryl Ortin. He documented his campus interactions.

Since graduating, he has held many fellowships and residencies, such as the Center for Documentary Studies’ 2018-19 Post-MFA Fellowship in the Documentary Arts. He has exhibited his work at museums ranging from the Studio Museum in Harlem to Georgetown University’s de la Cruz Art Gallery.

The project helps viewers understand the social and political issues surrounding the United States justice and prison system. “We have so much trust in the system,” he says. “As a society, we are naive about how the criminal justice system really works.”

MAKING WAVES ON ‘OUTER BANKS’

One of the most popular series binge-watched around the globe during the pandemic quarantine was “Outer Banks,” the hit Netflix television series that premiered last spring.

The show is about a group of teenagers hunting for treasure on a picturesque island called the Outer Banks. The cinematographer behind all of those beautiful sunset scenes is former UNCG student Brad Smith, who studied in what is now the Department of Media Studies. Smith credits professor Frank Donaldson’s class on Charlie Chaplin with helping him understand how to become a better filmmaker.

When creating the look for “Outer Banks,” Smith’s goal was to make the environment just as much of a character as the main characters were.

“The show creators wanted the environment to pull you in no matter what was happening with the actors or the plot. They wanted you to almost be able to pause it at any second, and the photography would captivate you and make you want to visit. And I think we accomplished that.”

Spotlight on incarceration

Sherrill Roland at 2017 UNCG Research & Creativity Expo

LEARN MORE AT WWW.JUMPSUITPROJECT.COM.

Making waves on ‘Outer Banks’

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Fall 2020  °    UNCG magazine      23

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has created unprecedented challenges for the world. But for some, it has presented unique opportunities. Equipped with the right mix of experience, knowledge, and tools, those with a vision and willingness to take risks have embarked on journeys into uncharted waters in the hope of finding better solutions.

Two UNC Greensboro alumni – Keivan Ettefagh ’13 PhD and James Patrick Healy ’14 PhD – have taken the leap, and they are moving full-sail ahead on mass-producing an innovative technique for collecting and testing samples for COVID-19.

As vice president of technical innovation and lab manager, respectively, they are part of Greensboro’s Select Laboratory Partners (SLP), a local company that specializes in laboratory implementation, management, and support for healthcare practitioners.

Their mission? Create an easy-to-use testing kit – using saliva instead of a nasal swab – and a lab process that can turn results around in 24 hours. They not only accepted the challenge, but as of this printing, they are sending out 20,000 test kits per month and running close to 3,000 tests per week. They are on track to reach 50,000 test kits per month and 10,000 tests per week.

The two met during teaching assistant training for the inaugural year of UNCG’s PhD in Medicinal Biochemistry program. Ettefagh went on to be a member of the Cech Lab; Healy studied under biology professor Vincent Henrich.

Their lab process is based on a newer type of molecular nucleic acid testing, which they have meshed with their existing expertise on the regulation, management, compliance, and reporting of data obtained during testing. That was the first step of their challenge.

The second was to then scale up. It is one thing to figure out a better testing method. It is quite another to produce it at a quantity and quality that is high enough to meet the extreme demands that COVID-19 has wrought.

And how does a small operation like SLP compete with bigger companies who are racing to do something similar? Ettefagh and Healy indicate that part of their advantage is their size, which makes them nimble. SLP was able to quickly pivot and retool for COVID-19 testing based on existing knowledge, processes, and industry connections.

“What’s wonderful about our company is it’s very science-driven,” says Ettefagh. “Our chief operating officer has a PhD in chemistry, and that helps direct us. Our CEO is trained as a molecular technologist instead of having a business degree. It’s a constant responding to what is out there as scientists and improving upon those things.”

“What I learned in manufacturing is the idea of continuous improvement,” says Healy. “You’re watching every step and asking, ‘What can we do better?’ It could be as simple as ‘Move this or that to a different location’ or as complex as ‘Let’s change the whole way we do this thing.’”

What will they do when a vaccine is finally found? Ettefagh says their long-term goal is to convert their process into other diagnostic molecular testing – focusing on other viral diseases, cancer, and genetic mutations that lead to a higher risk for cardiovascular diseases.

Any members of the larger Spartan community are playing big roles in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are some highlights.

QUICK AND NIMBLE SETS THE PACE

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC has created unprecedented challenges for the world. But for some, it has presented unique opportunities. Equipped with the right mix of experience, knowledge, and tools, those with a vision and willingness to take risks have embarked on journeys into uncharted waters in the hope of finding better solutions.

Two UNC Greensboro alumni – Keivan Ettefagh ’13 PhD and James Patrick Healy ’14 PhD – have taken the leap, and they are moving full-sail ahead on mass-producing an innovative technique for collecting and testing samples for COVID-19.

As vice president of technical innovation and lab manager, respectively, they are part of Greensboro’s Select Laboratory Partners (SLP), a local company that specializes in laboratory implementation, management, and support for healthcare practitioners.

Their mission? Create an easy-to-use testing kit – using saliva instead of a nasal swab – and a lab process that can turn results around in 24 hours. They not only accepted the challenge, but as of this printing, they are sending out 20,000 test kits per month and running close to 3,000 tests per week. They are on track to reach 50,000 test kits per month and 10,000 tests per week.

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**ENVISION A HIGHER-TECH MASK**

**KEPLEY BIOSYSTEMS**, led by Dr. Anthony Dellinger ’15 PhD and co-founded by UNCG nanoscience professor Dr. Christopher Kepley, is a North Carolina life sciences startup that looks for sustainable solutions to environmental problems through invention.

Their projects run the gamut – from a synthetic and sustainable fishing bait, to odor technology to help train newly adopted dogs, to microbial-resistant technology initially created for the management of horseshoe crab blood.

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, the bioscience team realized they had an impetus to develop something to help the medical community, as well as patients and potentially others.

Their thoughts turned towards masks – the crucial piece in any realm, we’re looking to make lives easier and environmentally better.

“All of a lack of comfort related to oxygen exchange capabilities. Masks – if it was just purely filtration, or if it was because of a lack of comfort related to oxygen exchange capabilities. That’s Bryan’s motto. I absolutely love that,” she said. “My MBA projects, they were practicing what they were preaching. Those things helped me a lot!”

And it’s a good thing they did — there wasn’t much time between her last day at UNCG and her first day at Hanesbrands, Inc.

“Actually, the day of my final exams, I was walking to the parking deck and I got my Hanesbrands email that day. They were interested in an interview, it was pretty amazing,” she said.

“Here’s Bryan problem solving, right,” said Farzana. “What do you do with supply chain operations by managing direct and indirect materials for Hanesbrands’ apparel, fabric, elastics, and so on. What made this project difficult was timing.

“Usually you place the order to the supplier, but we didn’t even have six weeks. So if the gown delivery is due within a month you need everything the next day, right? So it’s not like suppliers are sitting on it for us when we place an order,” she said. “Having never managed this category I had to establish relationships with multiple global suppliers and allocate inventory immediately.”

Farzana said another challenge was navigating things like airport closures amid the spread of COVID-19. One day they’d be tracking materials on time, and the next they would be stuck in Miami.

“No one had ever worked in that type of category before, and we’re saying ‘Okay, we’re going to need a million pieces. How do you do that? And what if, through a secondary mechanism, we could expedite sterile air into the environment? Fully bioactive masks.

“We wanted to introduce something that would comprehensively solve all of the problems associated with masks — if it was just purely filtration, or if it was because of a lack of comfort related to oxygen exchange capabilities. But most importantly, we wanted to make something that we could confidently say is killing the microbes that come in,” says Dellinger.

In July, Kepley Biosystems filed an accelerated patent for a non-woven protective anti-odor air filtration technology.

The proposed mask’s rate of efficacy against COVID-19 or other pathogens has of course not been tested. There is no prototype yet.

“We thought that obviously had advantages for the medical world but also for a lot of other industries. In any realm, we’re looking to make lives easier and environmentally better.”

**PPE GOWNS REBUFF MOISTURE**

**TASMIN FARZANA ’14 MBA** has learned plenty of new things while working from home during quarantine. For one, there’s chess, a game she admits she hasn’t quite mastered. Another is chemistry.

Farzana, senior procurement manager of Global Operations at Hanesbrands Inc., oversaw the chemical component of the company’s agreement to supply the U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency with more than 20 million medical gowns.

The water repellent gowns needed to be tested before use by medical professionals.

“I had to rely on my high school chemistry,” Farzana joked. “Before the agreement, we had never made gowns. The part I did was the chemical, which I’d never managed before. I had to learn quickly.”

Under normal circumstances, Farzana leads a global team and supports supply chain operations by managing direct and indirect materials for Hanesbrands’ apparel, fabric, elastics, and so on.

When I hire people, I ask, ‘How good are you at problem-solving?’ And that’s Bryan’s motto. I absolutely love that,” she said. “My MBA projects, they were practicing what they were preaching. Those things helped me a lot!”

That project even without certain experience. I’m grateful to experience it during that pandemic, and I’m thankful to the Hanes leadership that they thought I’m able to lead this part of a project even without certain experience. I’m grateful to experience it during that time. My focus during that time was — this is going to help millions of people,” she said.

“Having never managed this category I had to establish relationships with multiple global suppliers and allocate inventory immediately.”

Farzana said another challenge was navigating things like airport closures amid the spread of COVID-19. One day they’d be tracking materials on time, and the next they would be stuck in Miami.

“We were inspired to get this patent and get the word out there, to stimulate communication in the community, and to share that we have a fundamental proof of concept for an actual device,” says Dellinger.

“We thought that obviously had advantages for the medical world but also for a lot of other industries. In any realm, we’re looking to make lives easier and environmentally better.”

**When I hire people, I ask, ‘How good are you at problem-solving?’ And that’s Bryan’s motto. I absolutely love that.”**

—Tasmin Farzana ’14 MBA
We hypothesized that selenium status might be a factor.

—Ethan W. Taylor

**WHAT ROLE Selenium PLAYS?**

**STUDYING THE DATA IN ASIA**

**AN INTERNATIONAL TEAM OF RESEARCHERS**, including UNCG Biochemistry professor Ethan W. Taylor, has identified a significant association between COVID-19 prognosis and regional selenium status in China. Selenium is an essential dietary trace element that over the last 40 years has been found to be a significant factor affecting the incidence, severity, or mortality of various viral diseases, in animals and humans. This has been studied most extensively in the case of HIV and AIDS, where selenium status has proven to be an important determinant of disease progression and mortality. As China has geographical regions known to have extremely high or low soil selenium levels, one of the first human diseases associated with selenium deficiency was identified there, in a region of Heilongjiang province named Keshan. Keshan disease, involving a potentially fatal weakening of the heart, eventually proved to have a viral cofactor (Coxsackievirus), but its incidence and severity were greatly reduced through dietary selenium supplementation. Other diseases associated with viral infections that had been endemic in these low selenium regions of China have been at least partially controlled or treated by selenium supplementation. These include liver cancer associated with hepatitis viruses and “epidemic hemorrhagic fever” associated with hantavirus infections.

“Considering this history of viral infections that can be exacerbated by selenium deficiency, we hypothesized that selenium status might be a factor in the outcome of COVID-19,” Taylor said. “The study was made possible by the fact that for many cities in China there is accurate published data on the average level of selenium in human hair, which is highly correlated to dietary intake.”

For 17 cities outside Hubei, the researchers were able to show a significant positive relationship between the reported COVID-19 cure rate and selenium status, although they emphasize that this is not proof by selenium deficiency, we hypothesized that selenium status might be a factor in the outcome of COVID-19.

**UNCG NURSES ON NATIONAL STAGE**

**EMERGENCY WARD IN NYC HOT SPOT**

BEVIN STRICKLAND ’20 DNP, who graduated this August from UNCG’s Nurse Anesthesia Program, worked last spring in the emergency department of Mount Sinai Queens in New York City. The city was the nation’s hot spot for the virus, and she was compelled to help.

She cared for the critically ill by using ultrasound technology to get IV access for patients, managing critical cardiac drips, and even intubating patients. Her creativity and critical thinking were skills developed during coursework and experiential learning at UNCG. “My ICU and CRNA training prepared me to care for patients with knowledge and skills that the other emergency department nurses didn’t have. The didactic education and clinical rotations I had gave me the confidence to support the Mount Sinai staff.”

After her summer clinical in High Point, she has been home studying for her anesthesia boards—which she passed in late September. “I definitely needed some decompression time after New York City.”

She laments that wearing face coverings became politically divisive. “In New York City, wearing masks was a given and there wasn’t a single public business that you could go into without having a mask on,” she says. Returning to Guilford County was bracing. “I was shocked and disappointed to see how slack it was here. That improved a little in August, but there are still so many people that seem not only noncompliant, but defensive about not wearing masks.”

A single mother with two sons, Strickland entered the nursing field after 15 years in a high-paying corporate career. “I realized that the world I was leaving wasn’t the world I wanted to return to. Nursing didn’t feel like that. It is helping people.”

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**EXPLORING ITS IMPACT ON COVID-19 IN NORTH CAROLINANS**

**DR. SETH ARMAH**, assistant professor of nutrition, has received new funding from the NC Policy Collaboratory to research nutrition as it relates to COVID-19 in North Carolina.

“The impact of nutrition on health outcomes in individuals infected with COVID-19 virus remains largely unknown. Micronutrients such as selenium and zinc influence immune function and inflammatory status. In the project Armaah will lead, researchers will examine how dietary intake and status of these two micronutrients affect the severity of COVID-19 illness in a population of North Carolinians. They anticipate that frequent consumption and adequate status of selenium and zinc will be associated with lower severity of symptoms during COVID-19 infection.”

**UNCG NURSING’S EVER-WIDENING IMPACT**

**DR. ERNEST GRANT ’93 MSN, ’16 PhD** was invited to the White House in May. He presented his views to Dr. Birx, the White House coronavirus response coordinator, about the challenges nurses are facing. He also spoke with Vice President Pence. “I asked him to strongly suggest to the governors of the 50 states that, as they implement their reopening plans, they add a nurse – particularly a community or public health nurse – to their task force. Nurses should be at the table to discuss best practices so that the reopening process can be done in a safe and effective manner.”

As president of the American Nurses Association, Grant represented the nation’s nurses in a ceremony in the Oval Office with President Trump that day. Later in the summer, he appeared before the U.S. Senate’s Finance Committee via videoconference, as he provided the nurses’ perspective about supplies and supply chains during the pandemic.

**SCHOOL OF NURSING FACULTY**

have held large online meetings with health care officials in the Eastern European nation of Moldova to help the country manage COVID-19. UNCG Nursing has developed a relationship with Moldovan nurses in recent years.

**“My ICU and CRNA training prepared me to care for patients with knowledge and skills that the other emergency department nurses didn’t have.”**

—Bevin Strickland ’20 DNP

**SEE RELATED STORIES AT ALUMNIMAGAZINE.UNCG.EDU**
With the horrifying video from Minneapolis of police choking George Floyd, pinning the man’s neck to the street for 8 minutes, the world could no longer look away. The deaths of Black men and women at the hand of police or self-appointed vigilantes have filled the headlines, one after another.

The summer of 2020 seemed to mark a societal shift. People marched down streets and barged through big-box stores. They blogged and tweeted. They read and listened, while others shouted. Black artists and allies — including many Spartans — created very public art to amplify the issues and to represent what they knew deep inside: pain, hope, and constant struggle.

**ART AS ACTION**

“One love.” It’s a radical lyric. Phillip Marsh grew up as

SAY THEIR NAMES.

Essence Foster’s mural depicts a Black woman, her face a swirl of emotions

Phillip Marsh was an organizer for BLM artwork efforts on S. Elm Street.
CLASS IN SESSION: BLACK LIVES MATTER

DR. TARA T. GREEN’s Black Lives Matter course, introduced in Spring 2015, was apparently the first in the nation.

The students, mostly juniors and seniors, are eager to learn, discuss, read, and delve into the impact of racism and other essential topics facing African Americans. The Linda Carlisle Excellence Professor of Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies and former director of the African American and African Diaspora Studies Program, Green is offering it again this semester. She was compelled to create it in 2015 after hearing about Michael Brown being killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri, in August 2014. She notes that Brown had planned to attend college that fall.

“The course offers a safe space for students to analyze what is going on – the power and politics. And where they can consider solutions to certain problems.”

One topic the students want to examine: the fear. “It’s a deeply entrenched emotion. It’s the fear of death at any moment.”

You can be asleep in your home as Breonna Taylor was, or jogging on the street near your house as Ahmad Arbury was, and shot dead, she explains. Her most recent book is “Reimagining the Middle Passage: Black Resistance in Literature, Television, and Song.”

In the horrific middle passage of the Transatlantic slave trade, Black lives were valued – as a commodity. “The bodies would be recorded, those bodies were insured. The cargo was insured,” she notes. She has a recent history to earlier decades and centuries.

She is now working with University Archives to preserve images and voices of the Greensboro protests and BLM-related art from last summer.

It’s part of history. Just as in the recent shooting of Jacob Blake in Wisconsin, shot seven times in the back – as Green held the first week of the class online, due to the pandemic. She says, at times, teaching the class is an emotional experience as well.

“It’s a shared moment,” she says about teaching this semester. The news each week informs the class readings and discussions. “There is no training for teaching in the middle of a movement.”

LEARN ABOUT UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: TRIAD BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST COLLECTION AT ALUMNIMAGAZINE.UNCG.EDU.

Hands Up, Don’t Shoot.

Kidd Graves ’20 arrives for the planning meeting for the large plywood storefront at Elsewhere Museum. What’s the message, the tale to tell?

The artists gather round, wearing masks or social distancing. They build on their discussions from the weekend before: It’ll be the narrative of a Black girl, developing her voice. Before: it’ll be the narrative of a Black boy, developing his voice.

The center will be a butterfly. In the horrific middle passage of the Transatlantic slave trade, Black lives were valued – as a commodity. “The bodies would be recorded, those bodies were insured. The cargo was insured,” she notes. She values how she learned to create not just sculpture, but various media, including painting.

Kidd Graves ’20 interacts with artwork she helped create at Elsewhere Museum.

She values how she learned to create not just art, but various media, including painting. An undergraduate research grant last summer allowed her to study with fellow Spartans in Italy. And she likes how artists at UNCG have been open to discussion and hearing others’ differing views. Is destruction of art, such as statues, ever appropriate? Should White artists create art about George Floyd or Emmett Till? The students talk through these topics and more, in a civil, lively way. UNSG is a safe space to express yourself and learn. And it has readied her for her future work. “I want to find a way to make the audience comprehend in a different way.”

Paint it Loud

Near the Lewis St. corner, Essence Foster has completed her work, an image of a woman created with, to explore, through her art, “my Blackness, my queerness.” She has gained a great foundation. “The School of Art was awesome.”

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POLICING MENTAL HEALTH

THE VIOLENCE OF GEORGE FLOYD’S final moments, witnessed through social media by millions, was revelatory for many Americans. Dr. Jocelyn R. Smith Lee has been focused on the relationship between law enforcement and Black males for years.


The assistant professor in UNCG’s School of Human Development and Family Studies interviewed 40 Black males (aged 18 to 24) in Baltimore, Maryland, for the study. The participants were recruited through a GED and job readiness center and were initially slated to discuss “homicide survivorship” — a term used to describe the task of living on after a loved one is murdered. None of the original interview questions specifically inquired about police interactions – aside from those asking about police investigations of loved ones – but this quickly became a reoccurring discussion topic. Unprompted, many of the young men spoke at length about witnessing police violence as well as personal accounts of harassment, racial profiling, threats, and physical injury at the hands of law enforcement.

One interviewee recalled being stopped by cops while riding his scooter, at age 15. After offering a flippant remark to the officers, he was assaulted: “So then he struck me in my face and blacked out my eye... [they] started to beat me in my chest and my stomach and, once, once I hit the ground, they just picked me up and pushed me, told me ‘walk home, go home,’ took my scooter, and pulled off.” ~ Wayne, 19

His story, one of several captured in the qualitative study, is tragically not the most harrowing. Combining the interviews with her knowledge of mental health, Dr. Smith Lee starkly points out the pervasive grief, fear, anxiety, and hypervigilance these encounters impose on young Black men and their families. Her paper concludes with a call to action to improve the assessment of trauma resulting from police encounters and a reimagining of policing to prevent police violence and killing.

Several news outlets have interviewed Smith Lee in recent months, for her academic perspective on this wrenching topic.

“Comprehensively, as researchers, as practitioners, as legislators, we have not done a good job of addressing the issue of police violence,” Dr. Smith Lee said. “These exposures to trauma perpetrated with impunity by these really important actors [police officers] in our community largely go unaddressed.”

charcoal, spray paint, and a collage of magazine clippings. Through a mask, Essence speaks with the other artists, as dark approaches. Essence, who already holds a bachelor’s degree, is on the pre-med track at UNCG. With an innate need to help people and a sweet spot for children, she plans to be a pediatrician.

This past summer, though, her empathy and connectedness led her to Elm St. paintbrush in tow. “Social media turned [BLM] into a competition. It was like, if you weren’t posting, you were part of the problem,” Essence points out. “And I take everything personal... but I wanted to say something that was bigger than a couple of likes.” So when she got the call from Phillip, it seemed to be divine intervention.

“I just wanted to scream as loud as I could on this project.”

And she did. She vented her frustration through her artwork, which she fittingly named “State of Emergency.” With the pain of the Black community racing through her mind, she beat her mural with charcoal, burnt it with a blowtorch, threw things at it, and pummeled it with her shoe.

Speaking out through art is not new to Essence. As she majored in painting at East Carolina University, she used her senior project to share her perception that the “White expectations” of the curriculum were stifling to Black artists. And she earned praise for it. It’s important to speak up when something is wrong, she believes.

There are many ways to do it. Art is one.

“Find what works for you.”

BLACK HISTORY, BLACK ART

Across the street, Nejla Harris is putting final touches on her work. “Breathe for those who don’t get a chance to.” ~ Louisville

“Black love, Brown pride.” ~ Nipsey Hussle

These quotes set the tone for Nejla’s mural: the first referencing the horrific murder of George Floyd and the second sending a message of unity.

When the protests ended, Nejla didn’t wait for an invitation.

After seeing artists downtown, she called her friend Ryan Oakley – a Wake Forest University alumnus who’d taken UNCG summer courses. They picked a plywood wall, and went to work. They composed separate pieces, which together formed “To Be Black Is: Black Men & Black Women.

People of color are a common theme of Nejla’s art. She’s always taken an interest in Black history, and at UNCG she’s pursuing a minor in African diaspora studies to complement her degree in interior architecture – noting she didn’t want to study art because it’s too personal to her.

“I used to do a lot of art with Caucasian and light-skinned people because that’s who I was around more when I grew up. But as I started studying African American history on my own time, I realized this is a very big part of me,” she explains.

When Trayvon Martin was killed, she was young, but she started taking note of the movement that was brewing, as Black men and boys continued to be gunned down by police and self-styled vigilantes. And as she got older, she saw many of her childhood friends – who lived in less affluent neighborhoods than she did – deal with drugs, gangs, gun violence, and even police brutality.

“Seeing how society affects Black kids, especially, at such a young age, is what hit home for me. Always wanted to do something, and now it’s more clear to me how I can help,” says Nejla.

“I think I’ve earned the title of an activist now, which is something I feel good about.”

PHOTO COURTESY OF NEJLA HARRIS

I CAN’T BREATHE.
Off a busy, rural road in Gibsonville, North Carolina, stands the one state historic site in North Carolina focusing on African American history—and the only one honoring a woman. Brick dormitories, pastel teachers’ cottages, and a school bell mark what was once the Palmer Memorial Institute, a 20th-century boarding school where more than 2,000 African American high schoolers had the rare opportunity to earn a “New England education” in the heart of the South.

The boarding school was opened in 1902 by a headstrong young educator, Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, when she was only 19 years old. From its humble beginnings in a blacksmith’s cabin, it grew to include 200 acres and to produce professors, lawyers, and politicians who would go on to change history in their own ways. This school was Dr. Brown’s life’s mission.

Today, three young women—all graduates of UNC Greensboro’s museum studies master’s program—are continuing that mission in their own way. As the small but mighty staff of what is now the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum, these alumni are dedicated to sharing a piece of history that is often overlooked—or in this case, driven past. Yet for those who take the time to stop, to walk the museum’s peaceful acres and listen to the story of Dr. Brown and her school, what they will find is a history that resonates with startling relevance today.

A new model of education

Agriculture or manual labor training? As an African American at the turn of the 20th century, these were your typical options if you wanted to continue your education. “Segregated schools in the South were also in horrible condition at the time,” said Leslie Leonard ’17 MA, the museum’s assistant site manager. Yet having earned an integrated education in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Brown—the granddaughter of slaves—was insistent on offering a liberal arts education to African Americans in rural North Carolina. “Her education model was really unique,” Leonard said. “You could concentrate in areas like visual arts or dance which, for African Americans in the early 1900s, was pretty much unheard of.”

The school was also the first in Guilford County to teach African American history and sexual education. Lured by this new model, Palmer Memorial Institute attracted some notable names. Poet Langston Hughes guest-lectured in the English department. Lula Martin McIver, widow of Woman’s College (now UNCG) founding president Charles Duncan McIver, was active on the board and a frequent donor. Some Woman’s College alumni may even recall the Sedalia Singers, the institute’s traveling choir, singing at chapel sessions. Music was important at the institute, and the ensemble would tour to help Dr. Brown in fundraising.

By all accounts, Brown’s new education model was a success. A 1960s stat showed 98% of Palmer’s graduates went on to receive bachelor’s degrees, and 64% of them pursued their education to at least one graduate degree.

Rules to live by

The school’s success can be pinned almost entirely on one person: the museum’s namesake. Though small in stature, Charlotte Hawkins Brown, founder and principal of the Palmer Memorial Institute

I know that nobody can segregate my soul … We are going to listen to the music, feed our souls and then walk out of the auditorium just as fine in body and soul as we would have had not the laws of North Carolina segregated us.

—A 1937 LETTER EXCERPT FROM DR. CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN TO DR. W.C. JACKSON, PRESIDENT OF WOMAN’S COLLEGE (NOW UNCG), AFTER HE STATED HE COULD PROVIDE ONLY SEGREGATED SEATING TO HER STUDENTS AT AYCOCK AUDITORIUM

By Elizabeth Keri

Photography by Martin W. Kane

Archival photos and letter courtesy of Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum

Top: the graduating class of 1943 stands in the school’s traditional “Triangle of Achievement,” a formation used for decades to symbolize Dr. Brown’s insistence that her students be “academically efficient, religiously sincere, and culturally secure.” Above: Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown (center) is photographed in 1927 with four of Palmer Memorial Institute’s first teachers. Above right: Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown with a student. Below: An excerpt from Brown’s 1943 speech, “The Importance of Overcoming Discrimination.”
Charlotte was all about showing how to succeed in this world, while fighting back against the things you don’t like about it.

– LACEY WILSON ’18 MA, SITE MANAGER

Greensboro’s ‘Green Book’ history

THE MAGNOLIA HOUSE is entering its second act! And a class of Spartans are determined that its first is well-documented.

In the Jim Crow era, hotels in the South were segregated. African American travelers relied on the Green Book Motorist Guide for listings of hotels.

Greensboro’s The Magnolia House is one of only four buildings still standing in North Carolina that were “Green Book” hotels.

Situated between downtown and Bannett College, its guests included James Brown, Jackie Robinson, James Baldwin, Ike and Tina Turner, and thousands of other travelers. It was a center of its community.

A class of UNCG museum studies master’s students have comb ed archives, scanned old photos, and interviewed community members and the current owners, the Pass family. The students are creating lesson plans for teachers and planning programming.

They’re helping create an exhibition space in the house, to tell an important story – of the community, of past racial restrictions and racial mores, of some figures in its history.

The owners are not just restoring the building. They are reestablishing its place at the center of the neighborhood – a restaurant, a meeting spot, a vital piece of history.

Dr. Torran Gatson, assistant professor of history, says, “The people of Greensboro are poised to learn that this site played a major role in the music scene as well as the fight for civil rights in Greensboro. Often times, historic places are seen through only one lens. But when we unpack those rich histories, other stories emerge.”

The new site manager, Melissa Knapp ’20 MA, relishes being able to promote the history, as she builds on her UNCG training. “I loved my hands-on experience at UNCG. It’s not just theoretical!”

– MIKE HARRIS ’13 MA

SEE MORE AT ALUMNIMAGAZINE.UNCG.EDU.

Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown was a force to reckon with.

“I would have been terrified of her, while also wanting to be around her all the time,” said Sonya Laney ’17 MA, the museum’s education coordinator.

Dr. Brown was also notoriously strict. Her book on etiquette is 148 pages long and very specific. She once kicked A.D. King – the younger brother of Martin Luther King Jr. – out of her school because a photograph showed him with his eyes open during prayer.

That’s because she knew that etiquette, for African Americans, wasn’t just about plates and knowing how to dress. It was about survival.

“Being Black in the South, you could get lynched for anything at that time,” said Lacey Wilson ’18 MA, the museum’s site manager.

Knowing proper etiquette also allowed you to be in rooms where important decisions were made. Brown was fiercely devoted to political advocacy. She served on women’s voting groups and regularly spoke out against racial and social inequities.

She adamantly opposed segregation, which caused conflict with Woman’s College chancellor Walter Clinton Jackson. In 1935, she wrote to Jackson requesting to purchase 50 tickets for her students to attend a musical performance at Aycock Auditorium (now UNCG Auditorium). However, citing the state’s political and social pressures of the time, Jackson stated he could only offer her students segregated upper-balcony seating.

Initially Brown declined the offer, but two years later, requested the seats again. She wanted her students to experience fine music, declaring in her letter to Jackson, “We are going to listen to the music, feed our souls and then walk out of the auditorium just as fine in body and soul as we would have had not the laws of North Carolina segregated us.”

Brown expected her students to carry this same passion for change.

“Charlotte was all about showing her students how to succeed in this world, while fighting back against the things you don’t like,” Wilson said. “When they finished their education, it was their time to go and uplift other members of society.”

History made relevant

The Palmer Memorial Institute closed its doors in 1973. Its end was brought on by a combination of factors: a building burned down, public schools desegregated, and boarding schools were no longer in fashion. Perhaps most critically, Brown died.

Yet her passion for the school continues today, now in the hands of three young UNCG alumni. Together they give tours, organize educational events, and maintain the archives.

More than preserving Dr. Brown’s legacy, however, they’ve taken on a new mission: to make the museum’s history unequivocally relevant to the issues and audiences of today. Wilson, the new site manager, has added fervor to this mission. She joins the museum after working as a historic interpreter at the Overson-Thomas House and Slave Quarters in Savannah, Georgia.

“Yes, we are a museum,” Wilson said. “Yes, we are a historic site. But we also want to be more of a community center, a place where people can come for events that fit what the community needs as well.”

They plan to turn the museum into an early voting site, create a Black businesses market, and schedule pop-op exhibits around topical events – all of which can be connected to Dr. Brown’s extensive social activism.

This year has given them plenty of practice making history fit the contemporary climate. Especially during COVID-19, they have been utilizing social media in creative ways, both to offer virtual tours and connect with new generations. When George Floyd was killed by Minneapolis police, they turned to Dr. Brown’s speeches against police bias as a teaching tool.

They say UNCG’s museum studies program, with its many hands-on projects and field trips, is where they really honed their ability to help visitors connect with history in meaningful ways.

“We’re lucky enough to be at a place where we can talk about relevant issues that speak to what’s going on in society, where we can dissect history and give it to people in a really relevant way,” said Leonard. “It makes the work we’re doing even more meaningful.”

SEE MORE AT ALUMNIMAGAZINE.UNCG.EDU.

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Yet her passion for the school continues today, now in the hands of three young UNCG alumni. Together they give...
WHO REMEMBERS FALDERAL, OR THE FALL CHARLIES?

The five-day fall celebration took place on UNCG’s campus beginning in the late 60s and continuing through the 70s, with many concerts, dances, performances, speakers, crafts, fireworks, and even a mime troupe. “A bit of finery, a bit of nonsense,” the festival served up apple cider and doughnuts, pizza for a pizza-eating contest, as well as beer at “Suds and Sounds” for those of-age.

**FALDERAL ’74**

At the 1974 Falderal, according to a Carolinian article, “an airplane bearing 1000 numbered ping pong balls circled the Quad before dropping its cargo on Peabody Park where diligent scavengers gathered the balls up in hopes of winning a bicycle given by the Alumni Association and the A&S Cycle Shop.”

**FALDERAL ’79**

The Bee Gees and the Doobie Brothers played at the Greensboro Coliseum for Falderal in 1979. There was a 500-pound cake (a close rival to the 125-foot cake UNCG served up for the 125th Anniversary celebration in 2018).

**FALDERAL ’82**

When Falderal turned to Homecoming, in 1982, the celebration expanded, with even more activities and Spartan athletic games. Elizabeth “Skoal” Ford was crowned UNCG’s first Homecoming queen.

**FALDERAL ’83**

Crowning of the first African American Homecoming queen, Cynthia Moore.

**FALDERAL ’86**

The Bangles played the UNCG Auditorium. Over 1600 attended.

**FALDERAL ’89**

Barbecues in Faust Park, a Night Owl Talent Show, the Swamp Cats, the UNCG Jazz Band, masquerade balls, pony rides, and alumni rugby matches.

**FALDERAL ’92**

UNCG crowned the first Homecoming King, Patrick Scales. A parade down College Avenue.

**FALDERAL ’96**

The Homecoming parade gave way to an annual festive bonfire, other elements joined the mix, such as the Block Party at Kaplan Commons, a School of Education Maker Space, and more student-led and family-inclusive events.

This month, 2020 UNCG Homecoming goes online, with virtual events and activities, including a concert by Rhiannon Giddens. Spartans may miss the bonfires and fireworks, but one thing’s for sure: the Spartan spirit burns bright in October.

**ENJOY HOMECOMING ONLINE OCT. 19-24. HOMECOMING. UNCG.EDU**

**1980s**

Soccer games, formal dances in Cone Ballroom, DJ ‘Goodnight Charlie,’ U.S. Open Martial Arts Championships, the London bureau chief for Time magazine, and folk legend Pete Seeger at UNCG Auditorium in 1983.

**1990s**

Barbecues in Foust Park, a Night Owl Talent Show, the Swamp Cats, the UNCG Jazz Band, masquerade balls, pony rides, and alumni rugby matches.

**2000s**

As the Homecoming parade gave way to an annual festive bonfire, other elements joined the mix, such as the Block Party at Kaplan Commons, a School of Education Maker Space, and more student-led and family-inclusive events.

**2020**

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“You don’t have to get hit in the face with a pie to enjoy Falderal. But just come out to the Quad to watch.”

– Spartan student, 1976

MEMORIES

1970

1980

1990

2000

2020
Sloans endow merit scholarships, with $2 million commitment

“This scholarship means so much to me,” said Raven Sizemore. “It’s the difference between going to UNCG or not going at all.” Raven, a first-year UNCG undergraduate from Randleman, North Carolina, is the inaugural recipient of the Sloan Endowed Scholarship. The new scholarship program at UNCG provides full support for students who demonstrate outstanding academic achievement and financial need.

“What this scholarship will do is let me graduate from UNCG without any significant debt,” Raven said. “When I was looking at graduate school, I felt an obligation to give back to the institution that had given him so much. I am so excited now to pursue this thrilling.”

Endowed by Linda Fisher Sloan ’82 MFA and Thomas R. Sloan, the $2 million commitment will eventually sustain two Sloan Scholars per class for study at the University. The Sloan Scholarships will cover tuition and all the costs of attendance at UNCG for these students, as well as provide support for high-impact opportunities such as a study-abroad experience, service learning, or internships. Students receiving the scholarship are free to pursue any field of study offered at UNCG.

The Sloan Scholarships are part of UNCG’s Minerva Scholars program and are administered through the University’s Lloyd International Honors College.

“Linda and I feel very fortunate to be able to make this scholarship gift,” said Tom Sloan. “It is recipients like Raven who have the potential to make an impact in this life. We are honored to be a part of encouraging her success.”

The Sloans are longtime supporters of UNCG. In addition to the many awards they have received for their work in the community, they recently received the Outstanding Philanthropist Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals Triad Chapter. Linda Sloan is a current UNCG Board of Trustees member, a member of UNCG’s College of Visual and Performing Arts Board of Visitors, and a former adjunct lecturer in the Bryan School of Business and Economics. Tom Sloan served as a member of UNCG’s Board of Trustees for nine years, including a stint as its chair, and has served on the University Investment Fund Board.

For Raven, the first semester as a Spartan is thrilling. “I have worked so hard to get here,” she said. “I am so excited to pursue this dream, and so grateful this scholarship gives me that opportunity. It has made all the difference for me.”

George Hoyle ’90 believes that one should leave the world better than you found it. Thanks to his memorable time at UNCG as a student and member of the 1987 Men’s Soccer National Championship team, Hoyle is doing exactly that by making an impact on the lives of Spartan student-athletes through his dedicated philanthropy and service to his alma mater.

Recently appointed to UNCG’s Board of Trustees, Hoyle, along with his wife, Kathleen Kelly, and Vanessa Carroll ’83, co-chairs Campaign for Champions, a fundraising initiative that commemorates five championships won by UNCG athletic programs during the 2017-18 season. The goal is to raise $5 million to invest in Spartan Athletics and build a lasting, winning tradition.

“I am very passionate about helping to build a championship brand for Spartan Athletics, which not only benefits the student-athletes at UNCG, but impacts positively our broader UNCG community and Greater Greensboro,” Hoyle said. The campaign has raised $2.8 million toward its goal, earmarked to transform student-athlete academic and support facilities and to recruit and retain top coaches to lead UNCG’s 17 Division I athletic teams. Student-athletes are already enjoying the new Academic Success Center and Bedford Family Speed, Strength & Conditioning Center. The Hoyle Family Men’s Basketball Recruiting Lounge, made possible by the couple’s leadership gift to the campaign, will be completed later this year.

Hoyle began giving soon after graduation. He believes that one should leave the world better than you found it. Thanks to the knowledge that you are helping others is hugely empowering and fulfilling.

George Hoyle ’90
During these extraordinary times, we send our best wishes to each of you. Reach out, and share your news.

Visit us at alumnimagazine.uncg.edu and click on "Submit a class note." You can also mail your information to Gradtidings, PO Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170.
GARBIE G. SMITH ’62, a clerk of Elizabeth City State University, was awarded the platinum Best Leadership Award by the 2020 HBCU Grows LEAD Conference. She was also named one of the Remarkable Women of the Piedmont in 2020. She is a professional actor and an instructor, who is a professional actor and an instructor, who

JACQUELINE HOLMES SPRINGFIELD ’02 MFA has recently published in the journal Voice and Speech Review with her co-written article “Strategies for Guiding Voice and Speech Review with her co-written article “Strategies for Guiding Voice and Speech Review with her co-written article “Strategies for Guiding Voice and Speech Review with her co-written article “Strategies for Guiding Voice and Speech Review with her co-written article “Strategies for Guiding

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LIVE FROM NEW YORK...
began July 25, 2019, and will end on July 24, 2020. The UNC Greensboro athletic department is removing the UNC Greensboro alumni magazine from the mailing list, please contact http://alumnimagazine.uncg.edu. If you want to continue receiving the alumni magazine, it will cost $34,000 or $.50 per copy. If you want to continue receiving the alumni magazine, it will cost $34,000 or $.50 per copy. If you want to continue receiving the alumni magazine, it will cost $34,000 or $.50 per copy. If you want to continue receiving the alumni magazine, it will cost $34,000 or $.50 per copy. If you want to continue receiving the alumni magazine, it will cost $34,000 or $.50 per copy.
HOMECOMING HAS GONE VIRTUAL!
Please join us for an amazing week of Alumni and Faculty Musical performances, Zoom Happy Hours, Alumni and Faculty led Webinars, a virtual Children’s Festival, UNCG Alumni Awards, and more. No hotels, no ride sharing, no parking meters — just a Spartan love fest from the comfort of your home!

OCT. 19-24
homecoming.uncg.edu