Meet Keisha Brown, new principal of the Middle College at UNCG

Keisha Brown comes to the Middle College at UNCG with a broad knowledge of students’ developmental stages, from kindergarten through twelfth grade.

Previously, she served as principal of Swann Middle, as principal of Vandalia Elementary, and as Ben L. Smith High School assistant principal, as well as assistant principal at Summerfield Elementary and Burlington-Cummings High. The variety of experience helps her every day, because Brown believes developmental stages matter in every part of life to every part of life.

She chose the middle college at this time in her career because she wanted to become principal at a high school, and she believes this particular position will give her the greatest ability to directly and deeply influence the lives of students.

She also knows the bar is high. She admires the work of the previous and inaugural principal Angela Polk-Jones.

“I know how hard it is to work at school – blood, sweat, and tears – and then when you leave that school you want it to remain at the level it is and get higher,” she says. “I wanted to be a part of something that is already great and keep it growing.”

She plans to uphold the standard of making sure every student is college and career-ready, and to give them a health science focus. Middle College at UNCG students have the
opportunity to take college classes, but also to gain exposure to the professional world through off-campus professional internships.

At the same time, they receive an education that fits their needs. It’s important to Brown and the school’s faculty that students feel balanced.

“We need to make sure that alongside the academic achievement, the social-emotional piece is there. We’ll work on self-awareness and self-evaluation so students can make good decisions in planning their academic paths,” she says.

Hearing directly from the students, and from their parents, through conversations and surveys is also part of Brown’s plan to make sure she has a connection with every student at the Middle College at UNCG.

About the new experience of working on UNCG’s campus she says: “I love it. There’s resources everywhere you turn, and you see different people all the time.”

When Brown grabs a cup of coffee or lunch at the EUC, she enjoys running into UNCG faculty and staff who see her GCS badge and ask her about what she does. She’s looking forward to getting more acquainted with faculty and staff across campus, especially so she can be on the lookout for ways to collaborate with them.

“I’d like people to know: we’re here! Drop by,” she says. “Think about us when you’re planning – know that we’re here and we’d love to partner with you and your students. Think of our students for opportunities.”

By Susan Kirby-Smith
Photography by Martin W. Kane

Help a fellow Spartan in need - donate a meal swipe

Some of our Spartan students are in need, and here’s a simple way that we can help. As part of the Division of Student Affairs “Spartan Essentials” initiative to address food insecurity, Spartans – faculty, staff, and students – are encouraged to donate one of their dining plan meals to a student in need with a simple swipe of their SpartanCard on Wednesday, Sept. 11. Visit Fountain View dining hall between 7 a.m. and 8:30 p.m. to participate.
Food security among college students is a national issue – 36% of students were food insecure last year, as reported by the Wisconsin Hope Lab. According to a 2017 UNCG food insecurity survey, 35% of students skipped a meal because they did not have enough money to buy food.

“Food insecurity is an issue impacting college students nationally and on our own campus. We know it can impact a student’s ability to reach their goals. For a student who is struggling with resources, they may have to choose between buying a book for class, or having sufficient food. As the University continues to explore ways to address the issue, this event provides students the opportunity to contribute to our culture of care by supporting fellow Spartans,” says Cathy Akens, vice chancellor of student affairs.

The Spartan Open Pantry (SOP) serves the campus community as the primary food pantry for students in need. Visits by students to the SOP increased 28% between fall 2018 and spring semester 2019.

In addition to the SOP, the Dean of Students Office provides emergency meals for students. Meal donations on Sept. 11 will enable Spartan Dining to establish a donated meals bank from which the Dean of Students staff can distribute to students in need and further support our Culture of Care.

For more information on Spartan Open Pantry see https://sa.uncg.edu/sop-spartan-open-pantry/

Alianza’s fall socials – First is Sept. 13

Alianza is UNC Greensboro’s faculty, staff and student organization for the Latino/ Hispanic campus community. Since 2013, UNC Greensboro’s Alianza has been a gathering point that aims to collaborate and create initiatives that improve campus activities related to Hispanic / Latino cultures and communities as well as support and guide our students during their years as university students on campus.
Alianza invites the entire campus community to join us at our 2 Alianza Fall Socials on September 13 at 2:00 pm at MHRA Building Room 3501 and on December 6 at 4:00 pm at Pedro’s Taco Shop. 948 Walker Ave, Greensboro, NC 27403.

For questions please contact Estela Ratliff, Alianza board chair, by phone at 336-334-5427 or email at eyratlif@uncg.edu

First EUC blood drive for 2019-20 (with a little ‘Game of Thrones’ swag)

Roll up your sleeves and get ready for the first blood drive of 2019-2020 school year. The first drive will take place on Tuesday, Sept. 10, from 8:30 am to 6:30 pm in the Cone Ballroom of the Elliott University Center. Due to the popularity of Game of Thrones blood drive in April, the organizers were able to get Game of Thrones posters to give out to presenting donors (while supplies last). Click on this link https://euc.uncg.edu/blood-drive/ to sign up for an appointment.

Newsmakers: Mansfield, Yourkavitch and Chetwynd, Sills, Kauzlarich, Jensen

Whether researchers with timely insights or students with outstanding stories, members of the UNCG community appear in print, web and broadcast media every day. Here is a sampling of UNCG-related stories in the news and media over the week:

- Dr. Katherine Cumings Mansfield was on Inside Higher Ed’s “The Academic Minute” podcast to discuss the need to keep student voices in the discussion of how to improve schools. Listen here.
- Dr. Jennifer Yourkavitch and Dr. Ellen Chetwynd were guest bloggers at Public Health
Newswire, discussing empowering women to achieve breastfeeding. The feature.
- MyFox8 featured Stephen Sills and the UNCG Center for Housing and Community Studies’ efforts to improve water quality in High Point communities. The article.
- The News & Record spoke to Dr. David Kauzlarich about retooling law enforcement training for the modern world. The piece.
- The News & Record, on Sunday’s front page, interviewed Doryl Jensen, who works with UNCG’s International Programs Center, and her work in arranging the visit of an opera troupe from Asia. The article.

Charles Leffler will be Interim Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs

Chancellor Franklin D. Gilliam, Jr. has named Charles Leffler as Interim Vice Chancellor for Business Affairs.

Leffler will replace outgoing Vice Chancellor of Business Affairs Charlie Maimone (see earlier post), while the University conducts a national search for a permanent replacement. Leffler will begin his appointment on October 1, 2019.

“Charles brings tremendous expertise and experience to this role, and I am pleased that he will help us navigate this transition,” Gilliam said. “He has a proven track record at his previous institutions, a rock-solid understanding of how we operate as a public university within the UNC System, and a great reputation across the state. I look forward to working with him.”

Leffler served for more than 30 years at NC State (11 of those years as Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration) before retiring in 2015. There, he was responsible for an extensive portfolio of financial and operational functions. Leffler was also instrumental in leading the development of the Centennial Campus, a 1,300-acre research campus at NC State.

Most recently, he served as Interim Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration for the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and served on UNC Interim President Bill Roper’s transition team.

Photo courtesy UNC School of the Arts.
Dr. Terri Shelton (Office of Research and Engagement) received new funding from the NC DHHS Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services for the project NC “Preventing Underage Drinking Initiative.”

This contract will support the North Carolina Preventing Underage Drinking Initiative (NC-PUDI) in its continuing efforts to prevent underage alcohol consumption and the resulting social, health and economic consequences in the state of North Carolina. The contract will support continued utilization and further development of innovative strategies to help achieve the long term goals of preventing underage drinking by building upon NC-PUDI activities. This continuing effort is designed to further support and develop Community Collaboratives working to implement environmental management strategies to prevent underage drinking. Activities will include, but not be limited to, community mobilization and law enforcement partnership efforts such as: alcohol purchase surveys, sobriety checkpoints, responsible seller/server training, media advocacy, youth empowerment and policy advocacy. Short term outcomes include increasing quality youth participation, enhancing community mobilization efforts and community/law enforcement partnerships. These short-term outcomes will be measured by collecting performance measure data from grant recipients. Long-term outcomes include reductions in youth alcohol consumption (current use, binge drinking, age of onset) and will be tracked using the North Carolina YRBS and local data, if available.

Dr. Julie Edmunds (SERVE Center) received new funding from the UNC System Office for the project “Evaluation of the Aggie Success Academy at North Carolina A&T State University.”

This will be an evaluation of the impact of the Aggie Success Academy on: 1) the number of credits earned in freshman year; 2) students’ freshman GPA; 3) students’ confidence and perceptions of belonging and community; and 4) students’ persistence to sophomore year.

The study uses a randomized controlled trial in which all students who meet the eligibility criteria are invited to participate in the Aggie Success Academy.
The study design and the outcomes examined will give an unbiased estimate of the impact of the program on core outcomes that are associated with long-term success in college.

**Dr. Ayesha Boyce**

Dr. Ayesha Boyce (Educational Research Methodology) received a continuation of funding from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign for the project “Network for Computational Nanotechnology – Hierarchical nanoMFG Node.”

The evaluation team, led by external program evaluator Assistant Professor Ayesha Boyce and associates from the School of Education at UNC Greensboro, will work closely with nanoMFG Node leadership to integrate formative and summative evaluation into the general operation of the program. The evaluation will use a value-engaged, educative approach (VEE). The VEE approach, developed with NSF-EHR support, defines high-quality STEM educational programming as that which effectively incorporates cutting edge scientific content, strong instructional pedagogy and sensitivity to diversity and equity issues. A key role of the evaluator is to work closely with program implementers to promote understanding of program theory, implementation and impact.

**Dr. Noah Lenstra**

Dr. Noah Lenstra (Library & Information Science) received new funding from the University of Oklahoma, Prime: Institute of Museum and Library Services for the project “Community Health and Wellness: Small and Rural Library Practices, Perspectives, and Programs.”

This work will be focused on assessing and understanding how small and rural public libraries design, implement, and assess health and wellness programs. During the three-year period of this National Leadership Grant program, Dr. Noah Lenstra will fulfill the North Carolina components of this four-state project. Dr. Lenstra will perform field research/data collection at public libraries in Farmville, Elkin, and West Jefferson, North Carolina. He will collaborate on data analyses and dissemination so that the research is impactful both in the scholarly and in the practitioner communities.

**Dr. Matthew Hughes**
Dr. Matthew Hughes (Psychology) received new funding from the National Institutes of Health - National Institute on Aging for the project “The Experience of Subjective Age during Everyday Life.” Dr. Dayna Touron is co-principal investigator on the project.

The age someone feels predicts important outcomes in health, cognition, and general well-being, such as depressive symptoms and chronic illness, above their actual chronological age. Thus, determining the daily contexts associated with changes in subjective age may help us find ways to promote younger subjective ages and better health. The proposed study will use ESM (experience sampling methodology) to capture fluctuations in subjective age during daily life and connect these fluctuations to their specific contexts.

Dr. Jianjun Wei

Dr. Jianjun Wei (Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering) received new funding from 3iNanotech, Inc. for the project “SBIR: A Chip Based Nanosensor for Troponin T Detection in Human Blood.”

There is an unmet need of point-of-care (POC) biosensor technology for decentralized laboratory testing, especially for protein biomarker measurements in human blood. The challenge of whole blood assay is the complexity, such as with cell interference. The researchers have made some progress on a chip-based biosensor that incorporates an optical transmission sensing scheme with an automated size-dependent sample delivery function in a single nanoscale unit.

This proposal describes further development of the biosensor technology for a rapid early diagnosis of heart failure, especially myocardial infarction, by monitoring cardiac biomarkers. The researchers account a device with a microstructured fluidic, flow-over dam with the nanoledge array (stair-step) features milled into the top of the dam. The device will realize the cell flow-over dams with undercut sidewall angles and pass over top of the dams with overcut sidewall angles. Arrays of nanoledge structures milled in the dam are functionalized specific ligand (e.g. a DNA aptamer) and used in the detection of Troponin T, one of the biomarkers for acute myocardial infarction (MI) or a heart attack.

This research offer promise for a complete lab-on-chip biosensor combining on-chip/in-line blood sample handling integrated with a simple, label-free, optical detection system. UNCG will act as a subcontractor working with 3iNanotech, Inc. to engage in the device design,
surface functionalization, and the protein biomarker detection.

Christopher Jasso

Christopher Jasso (Public Safety and Police) received new funding from the Governor’s Crime Commission for the project “UNC Greensboro Police Department – Mobile Data Terminals.”

As with most pieces of technology, there is a shelf life in which an item becomes outdated. Laptops are no exception to this, especially ones that are used inside of police patrol vehicles. The amount of wear and tear that gets placed on them paired with the aging of the machine causes a need for replacement. The UNC Greensboro Police Department purchased the current laptops in 2012 and since then they have gone through many repairs and updates. In 2017 alone, there have been approximately 130 service tickets submitted by UNC Greensboro Police employees that range in nature of repair needs. This number is likely to be doubled or tripled if we took into account the requests that are taken directly to our Technical Services Unit without submitting a ticket. With new laptops in our patrol vehicles, our patrol officers will have the assurance and reliability that is necessary to perform their jobs effectively. The replacement of our laptops will also affect our Technical Services Unit as there will be fewer service tickets and more time can be spent working on other tasks.

Dr. Jeffrey Milroy

Dr. Jeffrey Milroy (School of Health and Human Sciences - Institute for Promotion of Athlete Health and Wellness) received new funding from Prevention Strategies for the project “SBIR: APC: A collaborative approach to reduce time between concussion symptom onset and treatment.”

The goal of the proposed research is to translate empirical evidence into a web-based segmented behavioral intervention targeting Athletes, Parents, and Coaches (APC) to decrease the time between concussion injury, onset of symptoms, and treatment among high school and youth sport athletes.

Nearly 4 million sport-related concussions (SRC) are reported annually in the US, and this number has been steadily increasing, in part due to greater awareness about the nature of the injury. Although concussions do occur outside of sport, student-athletes competing in contact or collision sports are at greater risk for multiple head injuries. These injuries can result in significant short-term deficits, including diminished neurocognitive function (e.g., attention, learning and memory, complex problem solving, processing speed/efficiency, and reaction time), postural control and self-reported symptoms. Consistently, findings indicate
rates of depression and diminished quality of life are likely to occur in weeks to months post-concussion.

Consequently, declines in academic performance for student-athletes are also linked to SRCs. The post-injury recovery period is a particularly vulnerable time as sustaining additional head trauma has been linked to a myriad of serious long-term neurological deficits. Therefore, immediate removal from play of a student-athlete who has sustained a potentially concussive impact is a critical strategy for risk reduction. Alarmingly, recent studies suggest that among high school student-athletes, more than 50% of potential SRCs go unreported.

As such, the specific aims of this Phase I SBIR project are to 1) create a detailed outline of the first 4 digital media intervention component prototypes for athletes, coaches, and parents (12 total), 2) develop one fully functional digital media intervention component prototype for parents and coaches and develop 2 fully functional digital media intervention component prototypes for athletes (4 total), and 3) pilot test the scientific and technical merit (feasibility) of each (4) of the fully developed digital media intervention component prototypes. The objective of each fully completed digital media intervention component prototype is to target known individual and environmental risk and protective factors related to concussion reporting by athletes. We will conduct a feasibility study to examine both the commercial feasibility and potential program effect of the prototype modules. A phase II proposal will be dedicated to fully developing and testing the completed intervention.

Dr. Melissa R. Floyd-Pickard

Dr. Melissa R. Floyd-Pickard (Social Work) received new funding from the Guilford County Department of Public Health for the project “Proposal for Health Department Hepatitis C Bridge Counselor/Care and Linkage Coordinator.”

UNCG will enter into a contract with Guilford County EMS and the Department of Public Health to hire and supervise a Licensed Clinical Social Work Associate to provide care and linkage/coordination of services for those affected by or at risk of contracting hepatitis C. This social worker and the programming provided will be supervised by a part-time (15-20 hour per week) fully Licensed Clinical Social Worker, who will provide clinical supervision and oversight. Additionally, social work faculty will oversee the project and will help with clinical and administrative supervision.
Dr. Ana Paula Höfling

Dr. Ana Paula Höfling (Dance) will have a launch for her new book “Staging Brazil: Choreographies of Capoeira,” Friday, Sept. 6, at Scuppernong Books, at 6 p.m. The book is described as “the first in-depth study of the processes of legitimization and globalization of capoeira, the Afro-Brazilian combat game practiced today throughout the world.” The event is free and open to the public.

Dr. John Willse

Dr. John Willse (Educational Research Methodology) received new funding from the American Board of Pediatrics for the project “Experiential Measurement Training with American Board of Pediatrics (2019-2020).”

This assistantship is an appointment at the American Board of Pediatrics’ (ABP) office in Chapel Hill, NC. The primary role of the graduate assistant will be to assist ABP psychometric staff with both operational psychometric work (e.g., standard setting, statistical analysis, technical report writing, practice analysis) and applied research projects (e.g., conducting literature reviews, designing research studies, analyzing data, preparing manuscripts and presentations).

Willse also received new funding from Scantron Corporation/Castle Worldwide for the project “Experiential Measurement Training with Castle Worldwide, Inc. (2019-2020).”

OAERS will provide research services pertaining to data management, data analysis, data documentation, report writing, general assessment activities, and other duties associated with the functions of Scantron Corporation, formerly known as Castle Worldwide, Inc.