Welcome to Campus Weekly

State Employees Combined Campaign is underway

Do you have a favorite organization or cause that you would like to support? Do you want to support communities by giving back? The State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC) is underway, and Spartans are invited to donate to one or more of their preferred charities.

In the first week, the campaign has already raised $30,800. The goal is $175,000.

Team Coordinator volunteers will be the primary point of contact for their respective departments and areas on campus, and they add a personal touch to the giving process. Coordinators will provide information, forms and giving guides – and will organize special events or activities related to the campaign.

This giving season, which runs through Nov. 20, marks the 34th year of the official statewide SECC. Last year, UNC Greensboro tied for the highest participation rate in the UNC System and generously donated $173,396 to 316 out of the almost 900 participating non-profit organizations.

Many hundreds of charitable organizations in our region and state are supported by the SECC. You may choose one or more to support, if you’d like. You’ll find them here.

If you don’t see your favorite charity listed, please ask them to apply to become an SECC charity. Details can be found on the official State Employees Combined Campaign website (http://www.ncsecc.org).

To donate securely online, access the Giving Guide, or see the real-time “Campaign Progress Thermometer,” visit https://secc.uncg.edu.
Faculty/staff discount for home opener - plus other deals

The men’s basketball season is opening soon, and with it a great opportunity for discounted tickets. For $75 you can purchase the Spartan 4-Game Mini Plan. The plan gives you one ticket for the game against NC State, one ticket for a non-conference game of your choice, and two tickets for SoCon games of your choice. To buy tickets, see the website here.

Faculty/staff can purchase season tickets for a discount price of $109 (regularly $139). Learn more here.

Want $5 tickets, for one of the biggest games of the year? It’ll be the home opener, and faculty/staff can purchase tickets for themselves and guests for $5 each.

Coinciding with “Storm The Streets” for the UNC Greensboro men’s basketball home opener against North Carolina A&T on Tuesday, Nov. 5, UNCG Athletics has set a goal of 10,000 fans at the game, which would be a new program record for a home opener. The current attendance record for a home opener was set on Nov. 8, 2013 against High Point (5,989).

For faculty/staff tickets for the home opener - $5 dollars per ticket for employees and their guests - use the following:

Promo Code: FACULTYSTAFF1
Click this link.
And to get in the basketball spirit here in the unseasonably warm days of early fall, come to LeBauer Park this Saturday. From 10 am to 6 pm, it’s “3 on 3 with the G” and a Fan Fest.

Questions about basketball tickets? Call Tyler Weedon, Director of Ticket Sales, at 336-334-3250 or email him at t_weedon@uncg.edu.

**Groundbreaking artist Mary Kelly, in exhibition and in person**

UNCG’s Weatherspoon Art Museum has opened an exhibition of selected works by world-renowned artist Mary Kelly.

Since the 1970s, Kelly has been creating influential and groundbreaking work that weaves art and politics together and reflects on historical and personal moments through innovative forms. Her work has appeared in a variety of cutting-edge galleries, including New York’s Whitney Museum, the Tate Modern, Musée National d’Art Moderne, and many others. She received a Guggenheim fellowship in 2015.

As Falk Visiting Artist, Kelly will speak Thursday, Oct. 10, at 6 p.m. at the Weatherspoon, with curator of the show and museum director Nancy Doll.

The current show considers military power in various manifestations. Central in one room of the exhibition is a mock bomb shelter that, through optical illusion, descends endlessly below the floor. “Habitus: Type II” simulates the type of shelter that was mass produced during The Blitz in World War II. The cage top is blanketed by a large-print narrative “…We used to talk about what would happen if they pushed the button, where we’d go. Some said Australia. Others began to make a list - flashlight, first aid kid, toilet paper, teddy bear…”

The story Kelly tells through her work is not only reflected literally within “Habitus: Type II” but thematically around the room. One wall holds printed diagrams with a domestic flavor, “How to build an outdoor bomb shelter” and “How to use a bomb shelter as a table.”

Adjacent are rubbings of shields, created by Kelly during the first Gulf War, and meant to contemplate excessive demonstrations of masculinity, says Doll. On another wall are uplifting lightbox prints, “Peace is the only shelter,” “End the arms race not the human race,” and
“We don’t want to set the world on fire.”

The next room holds pieces from the “News from home” series – large prints of handwritten letters on sheets of colorful compressed laundry lint, another link to domestic life. One oversized lint letter comes from London around the time of the 1974 bombing of the Tower of London, and another comes from Beirut just prior to the Lebanese Civil War. Both are places that Kelly has lived and absorbed history firsthand, and the letters contain both personal and political sentiment of the time when they were written, such as “Americans are too angry to handle political responsibility. It’s hard enough to survive and just keep your head.”

On the opposite wall are prints of “Seven Days,” a short-lived but influential publication born of the New Left and the Women’s Liberation Movement in the 1970s.

Doll predicts Kelly’s passion for social and political events, as well as her artistry, will be of interest to students and the community who come to see her speak at the Weatherspoon on Oct. 10.

By Susan Kirby-Smith

Public talk by Honorary Consul of Germany Oct. 2

Klaus Becker, honorary consul of Germany, will give a talk on cultural images of Germany, the value of Americans learning German, and business matters pertaining to the German-American relationship. The talk takes place Wednesday, Oct. 2, from 10 to 11 a.m. in Petty Building 136.

Each year, the German Information Center of the Embassy of the Republic of Germany in Washington, D.C., sponsors a “Campus Weeks” series at numerous U.S. universities and colleges. Participating schools organize a variety of events, guest speakers, symposia, and competitions that are centered on a yearly theme. The embassy has awarded the UNCG German Program with funding for the “Campus Weeks” series since 2012.

This fall’s theme of “Wunderbar Together” highlights how Germany and the U.S. are intertwined. Through the partnership with the German Embassy, the UNCG German program will focus on the significance of the transatlantic relationship, the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, and the anniversary of women’s suffrage in Germany and the U.S.

Other upcoming events include:

Monday, Nov. 4, at 7 p.m., MHRA 1214: Screening of the film “Balloon” (2018, Michael Bully Herbig), based on the true story of two families who attempted to escape East Germany by
balloon in order to explore everyday life in East Germany and forms of resistance.

Friday, Nov. 22, from 10 to 10:50 a.m., SOEB 222: Former UNCG professor and artist Sheryl Oring will give a talk titled “Berlin Berlin: The City as Muse” on her art projects related to censorship and the Berlin Wall.

A poetry competition open to all UNCG students will allow students to share German poetry and their own original poetry at the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures “Poetry Jam” event on Nov. 6 as well as at a prize ceremony on Monday, Nov. 25 at 5 p.m.

For further information, visit https://llc.uncg.edu/german/ or contact Dr. Brooke Kreitinger at bdkreiti@uncg.edu.

Dr. E. Patrick Johnson presents ‘Black. Queer. Southern. Women.: An Oral History’

Dr. E. Patrick Johnson will present the talk “Black. Queer. Southern. Women.: An Oral History” Oct. 8, at 5:30 p.m. in the Virginia Dare Room, Alumni House.

It will be followed by a Q and A session, moderated by Dr. Tara T. Green (Linda Carlisle Excellence Professor, UNCG) and Dr. Valerie Johnson (Mott Professor of Africana Women’s Studies, Bennett College).

Drawn from the life narratives of more than seventy African American queer women who were born, raised, and continue to reside in the American South, Johnson’s book, published in 2018 by UNC Press, powerfully reveals the way these women experience and express racial, sexual, gender, and class identities – all linked by a place where such identities have generally placed them on the margins of society. Using methods of oral history and performance ethnography, the work vividly enriches the historical record of racialized sexual minorities in the South and brings to light the realities of the region’s thriving black lesbian communities.

A native of North Carolina, E. Patrick Johnson is the Carlos Montezuma Professor of Performance Studies and African American Studies at Northwestern University and author of
“Sweet Tea: Black Gay Men of the South.”

The talk is hosted by the UNCG Women and Gender Studies program, and co-sponsored by the UNCG English Department and the UNCG Humanities Network and Consortium (HNAC).

It will be followed by book signing.

Editor’s note: An early calendar listing included a different date. This event is confirmed for Oct. 8.

Collaborative anti-abuse campaign launches

The Abuse is Never Okay Campaign is a collaboration between organizations across Guilford County focused on educating the community about abuse, promoting healthy relationships, and connecting victims to local resources and support. UNCG and the Healthy Relationship Initiative are primary collaborators.

The campaign launches Oct. 1 with the Greensboro Purple Tree Lighting, where Dr. Christine Murray will be the keynote speaker. There will be more events through October, including film viewings and panel discussions, and a number of events as part of the YWCA’s Week Without Violence. Beyond October, the campaign will continue to provide education about and support for sufferers of abuse in all its forms.

For more details and a full schedule, see www.neverokayguilford.org. The events are free and open to all.

Register soon for Business Affairs Conference - deadline is Oct. 11

Spartans, there is just over one week remaining to register for the 2019 Business Affairs Conference.

The conference will be on Oct. 15, 2019, in the School of Education Building. This will be an all-day event; registration begins at 8:30 a.m.
Business Affairs is proud to invite the UNCG community to join us for a day of concurrent workshop sessions designed to provide practical training and resources that will support our efforts to meet the exciting challenge of UNCG’s “inflection point!”

The theme of the conference is “Innovation at the Inflection Point.”

This means a transformation in how Business Affairs provides customer service to and engages with our colleagues across campus. These efforts are informed by principles of empowerment through access to information, and engagement through partnership with service providers.

Sessions are tailored to inform, educate, and entertain administrative staff who engage with and do business exchanges with UNCG’s Business Affairs. All staff are welcome.

Sessions will include:

- A Purchasing Primer – Panel Discussion
- Career Pathing at the G
- Ergonomics and a Healthy U
- Know Before You Go: Roadtrippers Edition
- Managing Your Funds at UNCG – Panel Discussion
- Onboarding: Employees in Transition
- Simply Stunning: Successful Event Planning
- Stress Less: The Importance of Self-Care
- The Color of Money
- The Employee Life Cycle at UNCG – Panel Discussion
- Your Departmental Wallet: The Budget Guide

The goal is to equip our customers with access to information and the knowledge of how to effectively use this information to meet their departmental objectives. The conference aims to provide practical take-aways while being supported by the theme of innovation throughout all sessions.

Registration (click here) is required to attend and participate.

Registration deadline is Friday, Oct. 11.

Registration = $35 (this fee is to be paid by your department).

- Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.
- Participants will be issued complimentary parking passes for Walker Parking Deck
Participants should expect to reserve the entire day to attend all sessions, lunch, and panel discussions.

For more information visit https://baf.uncg.edu/conference/.

Music to our ears – year’s first UNCG ‘Concert Weeks’

It’s that time of the semester: the first Concert Weeks at UNCG. There will be music in the air over the coming days, as a variety of excellent UNCG ensembles have their initial performances, marking the halfway point of the semester. All events are free and open to the public unless otherwise indicated.

The coming events are:

- **Oct. 3: Symphonic Band**: The Symphonic Band is a select ensemble of 55 music majors, chosen by audition. Their wide repertoire includes both contemporary and classic pieces. They will be joined by guest Justin Worley, UNCG’s Director of Athletic Bands, on tuba. 7:30 p.m., UNCG Auditorium.
- **Oct. 4: Jazz Ensembles I and II**: UNCG’s jazz ensembles will appear at the Carolina Theatre’s Crown space for another night of swingin’ tunes directed by Chad Eby and Thomas Heflin. 7:30 p.m.. Tickets are $9-12.
- **Oct. 6: University Band**: The University Band, composed of 85 majors and non-majors, perform two concerts every semester. They will play a variety of music with conductors J. Benjamin Jones, Cole Hairston, and Carolina Perez. 1:30 p.m., UNCG Auditorium.
- **Oct. 8: Wind Ensemble**: The ensemble of wind players will be joined by Associate Professor of Horn Dr. Abigael Pack for a selection of pieces by composers including Holst, Saint-Saëns, and Welcher. 7:30 p.m., UNCG Auditorium.
- **Oct. 10: Symphony Orchestra**: Violinist Marjorie Bagley will join UNCG’s symphony orchestra for a night of music by Ives/Schuman, Barber, Price, and Copland. 7:30 p.m., UNCG Auditorium.

For more information, see the College of Visual and Performing Arts calendar.
Chinese music concert follows Asian Autumn Festival

The Department of Languages, Literatures, and Cultures will host a Chinese music concert this Saturday, Oct. 5.

“Blooming Flowers and Full Moon” will be presented by Crescent Chinese Music Studios, a North Carolina nonprofit that promotes Chinese music. The ensemble includes Chinese and Western instruments and presents a diverse repertoire of Chinese traditional music, new folk music, and pop-styled music.

The concert is free and open to the public and will begin at 6 p.m. in UNCG’s Tew Recital Hall. Refreshments will be available starting at 5:30, following the the Asian Autumn Festival, which takes place at the EUC Auditorium 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Asian Autumn Festival will include Asian dance, music, crafts, martial arts, guest speakers, and activities for children.

Free parking for the festival is available at the Walker Avenue parking deck, and for the concert at the McIver parking deck.

For more information about the concert, contact Dr. Mequing Sun by email: m_sun@uncg.edu. For more information about the festival, contact Yvonne Matlosz by email at ylmatlos@uncg.edu or by phone: (336) 334-5560.

Ethics Bowl deadline is Oct. 10

The third annual UNCG Ethics Bowl is coming up on Oct. 25, 2019.

Participant registration deadline for students is Oct. 10, 2019.

What’s an Ethics Bowl? It’s a debate competition where teams of 3-5 students present and defend their answers to real-life ethical dilemmas. No
prior ethics coursework needed to compete. Prizes, free dinner, and lively conversation! Students may sign up as a team or register as a free agent at tinyurl.com/UNCGEthicsBowl.

The virtual reality in Spielberg’s “Ready Player One”

Come contemplate a real-world illustration of the virtual reality technology depicted in Stephen Spielberg’s 2018 film “Ready Player One.”

Friday, Oct. 11, Dr. David P. Parisi, Associate Professor of Emerging Media at the College of Charleston, will present “Feeling the Game: Creating Haptic Sensations for Video Games & Virtual Reality.” The presentation will discuss the way touch can play into modern technology, and how it can be used in a variety of academic and social contexts.

The presentation will be at noon in the Digital Media Commons, located in the lower level of Jackson Library.

“This talk shows how video games have layered touch sensations onto images and sounds, as a way of increasing player engagement with and immersion in games. This use of touch to convey meaning and emotion marks video games off as distinct from media – like film and television – that operate only through the eyes and ears,” Parisi explains.

“I will provide examples of touch feedback interfaces drawn from the past, present, and future of video games, including a detailed look at the next-generation Teslasuit – a haptic bodysuit that uses electricity to simulate the feel of virtual objects, and gives a real-world illustration of the virtual reality technology depicted in Stephen Spielberg’s 2018 film ‘Ready Player One.’”

It is sponsored by the Digital Media Commons, University Libraries, and the departments of Anthropology, Communications, Computer Science, Media Studies and Religious Studies.

UNCG’s new and improved Workshops Website

ITS presents a new and improved Workshops website. Take a look at the new design and see what workshops are coming up at UNCG.

New features:
• Mobile check-In

• Multimedia event pages and previews

• Calendar, list, and grid views

• Add-to-Google calendar option

• Advanced filters

Check out the Workshops Portal – Event Management article to learn more about event management in the new website, and the Workshops Portal – Mobile Check-in article to learn more about the mobile check-in app.

Questions? Email itscomm@uncg.edu.

**Finding funding and submitting grant applications**

Learn about submitting grant applications and about securing grant funding, in the coming weeks.

**Learn about ‘Show Me the Money: Locating Grant Funding Opportunities,’ Oct. 21, 2019, 11 a.m., 304 Curry.**

This workshop will explore how to get the most from grant seeking databases: SPIN, GrantSelect, Grant Advisor Plus, and the Foundation Center. Participants will search for possible funding opportunities, practice identifying eligibility, and realize the importance of key words. Attendees will have opportunities to access databases and engage in searches related to their topic of interest. Presented by Helen G. Kiss, Ph.D., Grants Specialist, Office of Sponsored Programs, and Gerald Holmes, Associate Professor and Diversity Coordinator, University Libraries.

Register at [https://workshops.uncg.edu/event/show-me-the-money-locating-grant-funding-opportunities-2/](https://workshops.uncg.edu/event/show-me-the-money-locating-grant-funding-opportunities-2/).

This workshop will also be offered on Nov. 13, 10 a.m.-noon, 304 Curry. [Register here.](https://workshops.uncg.edu/event/show-me-the-money-locating-grant-funding-opportunities-2/)
Learn about ‘Steps to Submit Successful Grant Applications,’ Oct. 29, 2019, 9-11 a.m., in 2711 MHRA Building.

Are you new to applying for external funding for your research/scholarly activities? Do you need a refresher session on applying for external funding? Come to the Office of Sponsored Programs workshop that will provide you with general guidance on preparing a competitive grant proposal based on sponsor guidelines.

Register at https://workshops.uncg.edu/event/steps-to-submit-successful-grant-applications/.

This workshop will also be offered Nov. 21, 1-3 p.m., 2711 MHRA Bldg. Register here.

Additionally, a special workshop – “Grant Writing for Maximum Impact” – helps you enhance your grant writing skills.

This workshop, on Nov. 6, will dive into writing for grant proposals, with practical tips, proven strategies, and examples from proposals where those tips/strategies have been applied. Instructors are Aubrey R. Turner, Ph.D., Proposal Development Officer, Office of Sponsored Programs; Julie Voorhees, Title III Grant Project Director, Office of Research and Economic Development

Register at https://workshops.uncg.edu/event/grant-writing-for-maximum-impact/.

Millennial Campus, basketball, SERVE grant, GTCC orientation, and DeJesus and Bobay

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:

- The News & Record featured the two new buildings on Gate City Boulevard planned as part of the Millennial Campus initiative. The feature.
- WFMY News 2 featured the upcoming “3 on 3 with the G” basketball event. The piece.
- The $6.2 million SERVE Center grant to work with homeless youth was featured with a piece in the News & Record. The article
Yes! Weekly featured a piece on the first joint orientation program for GTCC students interested in transferring to UNCG. The piece.

Assistant professors Jasmine DeJesus and Louis-Marie Bobay are performing in the comedy science show “Stand Up Science” at the Idiot Box, as reported in the News & Record. The article.

UNCG alumnus Emily Spivey, whose show, “Bless the Hearts,” premiered last Sunday evening on Fox, was interviewed by WGHP’s Bob Buckley. The clip.

Dr. Patricia Reggio

Dr. Patricia Reggio (Chemistry and Biochemistry) received additional funding from Temple University for the project “Molecular Characterization of GPR35 and GPR55, Putative Cannabinoid Receptors.” This project is also supported by funds from the National Institutes of Health. The goal of the proposed project is to understand the functional features of the candidate cannabinoid receptor GPR55 and the recently de-orphanized GPR35 that may define mechanisms of drug-receptor interactions relevant to physiological and pathophysiological function including drug abuse.

Dr. Terri Shelton

Dr. Terri Shelton (Office of Research and Engagement / The Center for Youth, Family, and Community Partnerships) received new funding from the Guilford County Partnership for Children for the project “Bringing Out the Best: Supporting Young Children’s Social and Emotional Development.”

By 2019, it is estimated that there will be over 32,000 children birth through 5 years of age in Guilford County. Conservatively, at least 20% or 6,400 will be at increased risk for social emotional/mental health challenges that if not addressed, will negatively impact not only their future mental health but their cognitive development, health, kindergarten readiness, and future success.

With nearly half of the county’s children being born into poverty, the number at risk could easily be higher. However, research shows that well timed intervention, supporting their families and childcare/teachers/providers to implement evidence-based strategies, can reduce or ameliorate this risk.

Bringing Out the Best (BOB) through its team of seasoned early-care and education specialists who have delivered such services for 10+ years, along with consultation from adjunct therapists, will enhance the social emotional development of young children in Guilford County by: 1) building and improving child care/preschool provider competences to
identify, prevent, and address mental health challenges; 2) increasing family/caregiver capacity to support their children’s social emotional development and reduce behavioral challenges; and 3) serving as preschool part of the Ready/Ready collaborative effort to build a connected, innovative system of care with and for Guilford County’s youngest children and their families.

This will be accomplished by: training 400 childcare providers/preschool teachers in 75 centers/schools in early childhood competencies and evidence-based practice through individualized technical assistance as well as regular workshops; supporting directors/administrators to support these practices; screening and referring to needed services; building caregivers’ skills through in-home therapy, peer support, parenting workshops, and parent mentoring/advocacy; providing mental health consultation as needed; and on-site individualized intervention for 150 children (including capacity to serve Latino/immigrant children) and their families; and coordinating with other community services for vulnerable children.

Project activities will result in infants and preschoolers with behavioral challenges maintaining their child care/preschool placement; families and child care providers/teachers/directors developing new skills to support children’s social-emotional development; and earlier screening and intervention reducing behavioral challenges and increasing social emotional competencies.

The impact of this project will be to intervene early to support children who will be ready for school and ready for life, to play an important role in advancing the mission of the Guilford County Partnership for Children, and to play a unique role in Ready/Ready’s efforts to build a comprehensive and integrated early childhood system.

Dr. Terri Shelton is vice chancellor of research and engagement and holds the Carol Jenkins Mattocks Distinguished Professorship.

Dr. Christina O’Connor

Dr. Christina O’Connor (Dean’s Office – School of Education) received new funding from the US Department of Education for the project “Piedmont Teacher Residency Partnership (PTRP).” Dr. Beverly Faircloth, Dr. Sara Heredia, Dr. Scott Howerton, Dr. Marcia Rock, Dr. Amy Vetter, and Dr. Holt Wilson are co-principal investigators on the project.

In response to the growing need to support student development of computational literacy,
the Piedmont Teacher Residency Partnership (PTRP) addresses the Absolute Priority of establishing an effective teaching residency program for high-need subjects and areas with two rural school districts – Rockingham County Schools and Surry County Schools.

The PTRP also addresses Competitive Preference Priority 1 by developing and implementing an innovative teacher residency model designed to improve educational outcomes in computer science. Within the proposed teacher residency model, candidates, supported by university and school-based faculty, integrate computational content and practices into K-12 instruction to ensure that all students develop the knowledge and skills to engage with and design innovative technologies.

The project will utilize a framework for computational literacy that focuses on the integration of computational practices in STEM classrooms and design frameworks through making across content areas. The project focuses on both computation and design so that all students have an opportunity to apply their developing understanding of computation to long-term design projects worked on in school-based Makerspaces.

Dr. Eric Josephs

Dr. Eric Josephs (Joint School of Nanoscience and Nanoengineering) received new funding from the NIH National Institute of General Medical Sciences for the project “Complex Mechanisms of Mutation and Mutation Avoidance in Living Cells.”

All organisms strive to maintain genomic fidelity in the face of agents that can damage their genetic material and the possibility that errors that can occur whenever their DNA is replicated. The ultimate goals of this research are to understand (i) how the mechanisms and higher-order coordination of DNA repair processes are governed by molecular, genetic, and epigenetic factors in vivo; (ii) how these factors affect diverse repair processes in different contexts to affect human health; and (iii) how clinically-important modulators of DNA repair activities and of repair-related toxicity can be leveraged as novel therapeutics.

Josephs has focused primarily on DNA mismatch repair (MMR) pathways, the pathways responsible for correcting errors that occur during DNA replication. As a primary mechanism of DNA damage repair in nearly all organisms, MMR plays a central role in many diverse processes that affect human health, from the emergence of drug resistance in infectious pathogens and cancers to the onset and treatment of somatic genetic diseases.

The researchers developed a novel assay to deconstruct the mechanisms of MMR in vivo that uses chemically-modified oligonucleotide probes to insert targeted DNA ‘mismatches’ directly
into the genome of living cells. This assay, which they call by the acronym ‘SPORE,’ can therefore be used to directly interrogate replication-coupled repair processes like MMR quantitatively in a strand-, orientation-, and lesion-specific manner—something otherwise nearly impossible to achieve. Using the SPORE assay as a uniquely powerful baseline of approach, in combination with next-generation biotechnologies like CRISPR and innovative experimental design, the researchers will seek to answer the following questions:

- How do different molecular, genetic, and epigenetic factors affect the higher-order architecture (components and interactions), coordination, dynamics of canonical and non-canonical MMR mechanisms?
- How do these factors affect repair-associated toxicities? Are different molecular lesions recognized by MMR repaired according to different mechanisms with different toxicities?
- Do the unique repair mechanisms in pathogenic organisms represent a novel source of antimicrobial targets?
- How do viral factors and environmental mutagens modulate MMR and MMR-related toxicities and by what mechanism?
- What is their role in hypermutation and emergence of drug resistance?
- What governs the tradeoff between mutagenic and anti-mutagenic roles of MMR in TNR diseases?
- What occurs during collisions between DNA repair mechanisms with each other or other processes on DNA?
- What is the nature and origin of catastrophic mutational events?
- These questions are each complex in their own right and have remained difficult to answer using traditional techniques, but the SPORE assay provides a direct way to address each of them. The likely outcomes of my laboratory’s approach during the R35 award will be numerous breakthroughs in our understanding of genomic stability and how it can be manipulated in living cells; with a long-term impact being a sea-change in the ability to probe and exploit DNA damage repair mechanisms to treat disease.

Research that is reported in this post is supported by the National Institute Of General Medical Sciences of the National Institutes of Health under Award Number R35GM133483. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Jared McGuirt
Dr. Jared McGuirt (Nutrition) received a continuation of funding from the DHHS Health Resources and Service Administration for the project “Designing and testing a community context driven evidence-based virtual avatar coaching approach to improve access to health promotion programs for low-income children and families.” Dr. Omari Dyson and Dr. Christopher Rhea are co-principal investigators on the project.

Community health promotion programs, including the Expanded Foods and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP), are important sources of obesity prevention programming for low-income children. Unfortunately, due to barriers including time, limited transportation, accessibility, and monetary resources, low-income and rural individuals who are most impacted by childhood obesity are often not able to access this type of programming.

Virtual peer coaching using avatars – an interactive educational experience that is more engaging than one-way videos – may be a way to reach low-income individuals and people living in rural areas with intriguing health promotion programs that may not have been previously available or accessible, and thus may help federal nutrition education programs save costs while also increasing reach.

Therefore, the researchers propose the design of a low-cost virtual reality avatar coaching approach accessible via internet to augment and increase access to existing evidence-based federal community health promotion programming. In this approach, the Avatar coach will present EFNEP curriculum in an interactive way so that participants can have an engaging educational experience – which may be missing from other approaches that seek to increase remote access to curriculum.

Researchers will design the program by observing the standard classroom experience and by speaking with child and parent participants, and examining existing curriculum and virtual experiences to help ideate and match the virtual experience with the curriculum. Researchers will then develop the prototype from the ideas generated. After development, they will conduct initial testing of the user experience and changes in knowledge in a small group of EFNEP youth participants.

Dr. Emily Janke

Dr. Emily Janke (Institute for Community and Economic Engagement) received a continuation of funding from Triad Health Network for the project “Advancing LEAP: Lifetime Eating & Physical Activity Practices.” Dr. Lauren Haldeman is co-principal investigator on the project.
LEAP is a collaboration among UNCG, Cone Health, and Guilford Health Department, with support from Guilford County Schools, Greensboro Parks and Recreation, and Ready for School Ready for Life. The purpose of the effort is to identify common goals and measures that existing program providers and residents can use to inform their health and wellness efforts. LEAP will bring together multiple stakeholders across the county to collectively determine these goals and measures through various meetings. This funding will provide administrative support to extend the efforts of the LEAP collaborative.

Dr. Zhenquan Jia

Dr. Zhenquan Jia (Biology) received a continuation of funding from Campbell University for the project “Activating Multiorgan Antioxidative Gene Network for Treating Sepsis.”

Despite more than three decades of extensive research, sepsis remains the chief cause of death in intensive care units. However, the exact pathophysiology of sepsis remains to be elucidated. It is thought that sepsis is the culmination of complex interactions between the infecting microorganisms and the host inflammatory cells, leading to dysregulated inflammation, multiple organ failure, and death.

Lipopolysaccharides (LPS), also known as lipoglycans and endotoxins, is a widely used model for studying sepsis. LPS endotoxemia is simple and reproducible proving a rapid tool for to study systemic inflammation mimicking the inflammatory storm in sepsis in the clinic. Substantial studies support a causal role of oxidative/inflammatory stress in the development and progression of multiple organ injuries in sepsis in both animals and humans.

The larger project is geared toward understanding the molecular basis and role of a series of endogenous Nrf2-regulated antioxidative/anti-inflammatory (AO/AI) genes in LPS-induced endotoxemia. This sub-award work from the Campbell University Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine will support this goal by analysis of total glutathione, and NADPH:quinone oxidoreductase 1, glutathione transferase, glutathione reductase, glutathione peroxidase and catalase by enzymatic activity, immunohistochemistry, Real-Time PCR techniques.

Dr. Diane Ryndak
Dr. Diane Ryndak (Specialized Education Services) received a continuation of funding from the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, for the project “Project LEAPS: Leadership in Extensive and Pervasive Support Needs.” Dr. Christie Cavanaugh and Dr. Kara Holden are co-principal investigators on the project.

The Doctoral Program in Special Education at UNCG has a history of (a) graduating scholars who procure and maintain employment in teacher preparation programs nationally, and (b) conducting OSEP projects to prepare high quality leaders. LEAPS builds on this history by collaborating with the North Carolina (NC) Department of Public Instruction, low-performing schools in NC, self-advocates and parents of students with disabilities, and national experts to prepare leaders in research and the preparation of teachers to meet the needs of high-need students with disabilities who are far below grade level; at risk of not graduating with a regular high school diploma on time; or not on track to being college- or career-ready by graduation.

Specifically, LEAPS will focus on competencies for conducting research and preparing teachers to work with students historically labeled as having significant intellectual disabilities, autism, severe, or multiple disabilities (i.e., extensive and pervasive support needs; EPSN), areas in which there has been a chronic critical shortage of qualified teachers nationally and in NC.

LEAPS will extend the existing doctoral program’s competencies for research, preservice teacher preparation, and service, and add competencies for evidence-based practices (EBP) to meet the needs of high-needs students with EPSN in low-performing schools. Scholars will learn competencies in inclusive practices, secondary and post-secondary education and transition, EBP and individualized supports (including assistive technology), advocacy, and academic and behavioral Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. This will be accomplished using technology during courses, when teaching, and in collaboration with schools, national experts, and other scholars nationally within the context of the existing doctoral program, additional 1-hour seminars related students with EPSN, authentic experiences with low-performing schools, and the use of resources and expertise of National Technical Assistance Projects. The intent is to improve outcomes for these students and their schools.

George Hancock

George Hancock (SERVE Center) received new funding from the U.S. Department of Education for the project “Region Center 6 at SERVE (RC6).”
The SERVE Center will operate the Region 6 Center at SERVE (RC6) to provide intensive, capacity building services to Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. They outline a Five-Year Plan in Section B Project Design in five areas (two of which include Competitive Preference Priorities 2 and 3). They propose “intensive” capacity building services to state education agencies (SEAs) and others to address four High-Leverage Problems:

1. Statewide Systems of Support to Low-Performing Schools
2. Support to Rural Schools
3. Equitable Student Access to Effective Teachers and Principals (Competitive Priority 2)
4. Positive School Climates through Student Supports and Family Engagement Interventions (Competitive Priority 3)

The fifth area in the Five-Year Plan is support for the National Center’s “targeted and universal services” to SEAs, REAs, LEAs, and schools.

The intended clients in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina include: (1) schools and districts that have high percentages or numbers of students from low-income families; (2) LEAs and schools who are implementing comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) or targeted support and improvement (TSI) activities; and (3) rural schools and districts.

Hancock also received new funding from Dillard Academy Charter School for the project “Dillard Academy Charter School: Comprehensive Needs Assessment.”

This project is a systematic assessment of practices, processes, and structures within a school to assist school leadership and key stakeholders in determining needs, examining their nature and causes, and setting priorities for future actions. The assessment guides the development of a genuine school improvement plan that is grounded in data and provides a roadmap to future progress. Research supports the fact that schools who undertake a true comprehensive needs assessment make better decisions, resulting in improved outcomes relative to the achievement of their students.

The Assessment Process – An assessment team (2-3 team members) will visit the school, providing an opportunity for teachers, support staff, school improvement team members and other stakeholders to outline current perceptions relative to leadership, instruction, professional development, planning and operations, and family and community engagement.

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.