

DALTON STATE DIGEST

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Letter of Introduction and Intent



Dear Colleagues:

I appreciate the chance to share about myself and my thoughts on our future. In so doing, I will share a little about who I am and what I value. I will also share some broad thoughts on the current state and potential future of our college. I will close noting some key focus areas for the remainder of this academic year and a longer list outlining some enduring priorities and specific actions for consideration.

I do so with the understanding that a shared vision is a key goal. Establishing this shared vision will begin in earnest over the coming months and will be shaped heavily by many of you as you engage in setting this shared vision. However, I will offer some initial observations.

While my biography ([Office of The President | Dalton State College](#)) tells you about who I am and what I have done over the years, it probably is less effective in conveying what I value and how I intend to approach my work.

- I value being engaged in mission-driven work. I am happier and believe I am fulfilling my purpose in life when I positively impact the lives of others. I believe that higher education is one of the most effective ways to positively impact every single person.
- To quote Steve Covey in *The Seven Habits of Highly* (Cont. next pg.)

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Effective People, I think one should “seek first to understand, then to be understood.” For me, this means understanding context and the “whole story” before making a decision or providing guidance. This may reflect my 22+ years as an intelligence officer in the Army National Guard. Regardless, please don’t be surprised if I ask a lot of questions when first faced with a situation or what might seem like a straight-forward decision.

- I learn and grow through discussion and engagement. In practice, this means I like to engage in back-and-forth discussion. I often will assert a thought or perspective to stimulate discussion and sharpen thinking – my own and others. I welcome divergent views and perspectives that improve everyone’s thinking and are more likely to result in positive outcomes.
- I have found that planning is critical to almost everything we do as an institution of higher education. At the same time, I find much wisdom in President Eisenhower’s quote about planning, i.e., “plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” I do recognize the value in written plans, but only insofar as they represent quality and broad-based thinking about the future and our role in it alongside the ability to forge a common purpose and set of goals. Put another way, much of the value in planning is the actual process of coming together to plan.
- As a “quad” as reflected in the Emergenetics test, I have a “preference” for the analytical, conceptual, social, and structural. This really means I approach situations and decisions using multiple lenses or frames. Please don’t be surprised as I work in group and individual settings to move among and between these frames when trying to better define a problem and, ultimately, a solution.
- Finally, I like to walk around and

engage directly with faculty and staff. While I will be setting up formal visits with each academic and administrative unit, please don’t be surprised if I simply drop in to say hello and hear how things are going. Of course, you can always contact me directly on my mobile at 678-360-5377 or email me at jfuchko@daltonstate.edu.

As to a vision or perhaps to a strategic perspective, I think of strategy as a combination of art and science wherein we decide how both to harness and to create our unique capacity as a college to improve ourselves and to positively impact our environment as represented in our teaching, service, and research mission and through student success.

From an environmental perspective, I am excited about the role of Dalton State in our immediate community here in Dalton and Ellijay, as well as across the entire Northwest Georgia region. In my view, we have one of the most promising opportunities to have a transformative impact on individuals, families, and communities. My view is grounded in several observations I have thus far.

- Demographically, we are positioned at the top of two significant growth corridors in the State of Georgia, i.e., I-75 and I-575 / 515 both north of Atlanta. Given our proximity to Chattanooga, we also are positioned south of a growth corridor coming from Tennessee. While many institutions are facing near-term projections for a decline in high school graduates, I believe the long-term prospects bend towards growth. This represents both an opportunity and a challenge for Dalton State as we work to prepare ourselves for this likely future.
- Our long history in the world of carpets and floor coverings have created an economy and an entire system of support that is unique in so many beneficial ways to the College and our community. At the

same time, this region is positioned for further growth both from a workforce perspective and in terms of quality of life, cultural experiences, and expanding opportunity for individuals and families at every level. This opportunity is also reflected in the ongoing, significant support we continue to receive both from our donors and alumni and from the State of Georgia. Put directly, we are fortunate as a college to have received significant external support in many forms.

Within the college, my observation is that we have several unique strengths and attributes that must play into any consideration of our future.

- Our designation as the state’s first Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) presents a wonderful opportunity to support the students and families who are represented in our community.
 - Further, over 50% of all students are first-generation college students. I believe these realities have resulted in a more nimble, caring, and innovative institution as we strive for student success for every single student who is admitted to the College.
 - Our recent #1 institution in the country for student experience ranking from the *Wall Street Journal* combined with our significant Fall 2023 enrollment growth also represent some incredible momentum and an opportunity to think expansively about our future.
 - Our graduation and retention rates have generally been improving when viewed over multiple years and are among the top in our sector. However, we still have work to do to further improve both student success metrics.
 - Several prior years of enrollment stagnation as well as some decline have challenged budgets and resources across the college. We owe a debt of
- (Cont. next pg.)

gratitude to former President Venable and her team for shepherding the College through those challenges and to the Board of Regents and the Chancellor for their financial support, particularly as reflected in our most recent FY 24 budget. As of now, this means we are facing both faculty and staff strains across the institution as so many have had to do “more with less.” I am acutely aware of these challenges but also believe that the long-term path through these challenges means growing our enrollment as we more effectively prepare our students for the workforce, graduate school, and a life well lived. Preparing for long-term growth while maintaining student success, effectively resourcing faculty and staff across the college, and remaining responsive to the needs of our stakeholders is likely one of the biggest challenges we will face over the coming years.

I will close by outlining some near-term and longer-term expectations you should have of me. In the near-term, please expect me to:

- Schedule time to meet with each academic and administrative unit as I work to ensure a more fulsome understanding of the goals, challenges, and opportunities facing each of you and your units.
- Launch a deliberate effort to engage with our institutional and community partners across our service area as we determine regional needs, understand Dalton State’s role in meeting those needs, outline the programs we will implement, and acquire the resources required to move forward in that regard.
- Remain hyper-focused on our enrollment management efforts to include developing a strategic enrollment management plan under the immediate guidance of Dr. Jodi Johnson and fund a robust marketing and community

engagement effort in support of our enrollment management goals.

- Initiate the institutional strategic planning process with the expiration of our current plan next year. I will be seeking input on internal and external members of a strategic planning committee in the coming months.

Over the long term, following are some of the key areas I expect that we will focus on as an institution:

- Develop a long-term institutional strategy augmented by a written plan with key goals, enduring priorities, and metrics that will be implemented through a series of annual roadmaps at the division and school level. My intent is to start with “setting the scene” in terms of the future of our region and long-term trends in higher education with the idea of looking out over the next generation to set a true strategic direction.
- Improve student success and the student experience by:
 - Growing student enrollment through targeted recruitment efforts to include Tennessee, increasing accessibility to college throughout our service area, increasing credit hour density, and improving our adult learner offerings through varied modalities and expanded class times.
 - Supporting students across campus through institution-wide programs designed to simultaneously support specific groups of students and the student body as a whole, e.g., Excelencia, AAMI.
 - Partnering with Georgia Highlands College and Georgia Northwestern Technical College to enable student transfer to Dalton State upon completion of their current academic

programs with minimal loss of credit hours and to provide access to Dalton State facilities for students of those institutions.

- Supporting and maintaining our focus on our QEP/PACE programs associated with student success.
- Growing our Roadrunner Retention fund to assist students with financial need and further increasing donor support for scholarships.
- Developing and implementing targeted programs to improve student retention and graduation rates such as a summer bridge program and a pre-semester launch program.
- Expanding our international/study abroad experience alongside our Honors program.
- Improving our on-campus dining experience through expanded options, locations and validating through student and employee satisfaction surveys.
- Building an active alumni association that engages both alumni and current students.
- Supporting our intercollegiate athletics and club sports to further student success through engagement both on and off the field.
- Expanding student activity programming and physical space in partnership with Student Government and other student groups.
- Reviewing and strengthening our classroom and institutional

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technical offerings such as WiFi, computer labs, laptop loaner programs and other initiatives designed to ensure optimum use by and support of our students, faculty, and staff.

- Improving current and developing new infrastructure across our service region consistent with USG guidance and designed to maximize student and community engagement.
- Adopt and/or revise our Core and related academic programs in support of academic rigor, student success, and in service to knowledge, our community, and our future by:
 - Adopting the recent changes to the Core as approved by the USG Board of Regents and advocating for the value of the Core both internally and externally.
 - Further exploring the Core and our curricula to consider how we might better equip students to think critically, use data to interpret the world, engage as citizens, resolve conflict, communicate effectively in writing and verbally, identify and resolve ethical and moral questions, and to create and sustain communities in which each of us would want to live and that sustain generational thriving. This list represents my initial perspective but I would hope and expect that we would work collaboratively across the faculty to further revise, refine and define these learning objectives.
 - Identifying, developing, funding, and launching while strengthening new and current academic programs that address current and emerging community needs,
- Engage with our Foundation, current and potential donors, and community stakeholders to further the sense of community ownership of and investment in the College and its future.
 - Create School and College Innovation Funds to fund activities in support of faculty and administrative initiatives aligned with our mission.
 - Expand grant-writing and other activities designed to obtain external support for institutional priorities.
- Improve and strengthen our institution to support student success and our strategic plan by:
 - Launching a leadership development program in partnership with Georgia Highlands College and Georgia Northwestern Technical College focused on emerging / new leaders within the faculty and staff.
 - Further engaging all employees through an engaged shared governance model, transparency in decision-making, modeling ethical behavior, and competitive compensation as we work to improve both faculty and staff pay as well as adjunct and overload compensation.
 - Creating a campus culture grounded in a sense of belonging and inclusion as demonstrated by respect for others and their beliefs and viewpoints and dedicated to the success of every single person whom we serve.

build on institutional strengths, and leverage – where appropriate – a multi-disciplinary approach.

- Investing in CETL and other faculty development activities while expanding participation in external opportunities such as the Fulbright Program and ACE Fellows.
- Ensuring the successful implementation of our assessment efforts to guarantee compliance with SACSCOC Standard 8.2.a and ongoing adherence to our institutional and programmatic accreditation standards.
- Supporting, participating in, and providing leadership to USG initiatives and partnerships.

I recognize that this list represents only a portion of the activities with which many of us are already engaged. I also recognize that this list could represent the work of a lifetime. Many of the items listed are underway in some form. This list will be further revised and prioritized and perhaps trimmed as we move through our strategic planning process in the coming months. However, the overall focus on strategic direction, student success, academic programs, partnerships and external support, and institutional capacity likely will endure, even though the “how” of this will change.

I look forward to revising and refining these efforts in the coming years with the support, guidance, and work that each one of us brings to Dalton State.

Go Roadrunners!

John M. Fuchko, III
President
Dalton State College §



School of Education Student Success Initiatives

by Aimee Cribbs

The DSC School of Education is finding success in the second semester of Academic Affairs-supported Student Success Grants. The grants have funded five events, with at least four more to come before Fall 2024. Initiatives include: Student Success Day, revamping the School of Education Program Orientation and the DSC SOE Pre-Professional Conference. The shared program goals include: explicit instruction of professionalism, community-building, modeling engaging instructional techniques, providing certification test support, building resource awareness and engaging teacher candidate families.

Success Day was designed to be celebratory in nature. Teacher Candidates walked into the event on a red carpet with an audio-enhanced video of field work photos from throughout the semester. After the announcement of professionalism badges awarded through Georgia View, students moved to professionalism and team-building break-out sessions. As a culminating activity, students heard from a former graduate who has been teaching for several years.

These activities were tweaked to redesign the extensive Program Orientation each teacher candidate is required to attend. The goal is to provide a more engaging experience that establishes a community of support. Highlights of the orientation activities include: a team-building STEM challenge led by current teacher candidates who

give advice before the activity, a Goosechase scavenger hunt of Brown Hall, and a Kahoot! exploration of policies and procedures. The day culminates with a shared meal, to which families of candidates are invited and informally briefed on their important role of support during the rigorous program.



The Pre-Professional Conference was designed to support current teacher candidates with GACE preparation and professionalism training. The event was optional, but candidates may use the experience as part of their professional development plan assignment that comes during student teaching. Like a professional conference, attendees chose between concurrent breakout sessions. Topics included Interviews and Resumes, Emotional Intelligence, Problem Solving, Time Management, Reading GACE Prep, Math GACE Prep and GACE Constructed-Response and Professional Writing.

In follow-up surveys for each of the five events, attendees reported increased understanding of professionalism

expectations (specifically focused on professional communication), policies and procedures of the School of Education, and how to address personal professionalism weaknesses. Teacher candidates who attended summer orientations reported a strong sense of community.

As one attendee wrote, “I loved the getting to know your peers activities. The scavenger hunt and the tower building activities allowed me connect with people in a way that would not have happened naturally. It also helped when it came to the first day of class because I saw familiar faces and felt less like an outsider.”

Another teacher candidate wrote, “The orientation was very engaging and worked very well getting us students comfortable around each other.”

Pre-Professional Conference attendees shared an appreciation for the attention of professors who are willing to go above and beyond the call of duty. One student said her favorite part of the conference was “the

collaborative work with professors.” Another student explained, “Professors were well-prepared and positive. Fun, engaging activities. Lots of fun.” Pre-Professional Conference Attendees who attended GACE sessions reported feeling confident about taking the GACE and appreciated the opportunity to work practice problems together.

On October 25, Dr. Aimee Cribbs, and teacher candidates Savannah Cecil and Nour Issa presented on the initiatives at the Georgia Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (GACE) Conference in Peachtree City. The presentation was focused on sharing resources, which are included in [this Padlet](#). Please visit this link and feel free to borrow ideas. The group was

(Cont. p. 7)

Setting the PACE for Success

by the PACE Leadership Team

Here we are. After a couple of years of planning, including making some significant adaptations over the past year, we have arrived at the starting line for Dalton State's Quality Enhancement Plan (2023-2028), PACE (Perspectives, Advising, Campus Resources, Engagement).

To maintain compliance with Standard 7.2 from The Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement (2011), we must have a QEP that is aligned with our institutional planning, supported by our campus community (both ideologically and in regard to resources), focused on continuous improvement for student success, and rooted in a sound assessment plan (19).

Here is an update on what we have been up to:

Campus Resources, Cameron Godfrey

Dalton State offers many valuable student resources. As a pillar of PACE, the Campus Resources portion seeks to inform first-year students enrolled in the Perspectives course of available offerings from the moment they begin their journey on our campus. One class period consists of a presentation outlining available resources, divided into three areas: Academic, Well-Being, and More Essential Resources. This approach illustrates to students that college success depends on various factors, and Dalton State strives to provide holistic support.

The presentation encourages students to take advantage of these resources sooner rather than later. Students do not passively view the presentation, however. Embedded within every Perspectives course is a "lab" assignment. Students choose one

resource from the provided list and actively engage with it. Afterward, they reflect on their experience through a written assignment, the purpose of which allows students to consider how they may leverage the resources throughout their entire educational journey.

In Fall 2023, employees managing each highlighted resource collectively presented to all 48 face-to-face sections of Perspectives. Students enrolled in online sections engaged with a recording of the presentation.

Advising, Elizabeth Hutchins

The Student Success and Advising Center spent time earlier this year discussing what information first-year students need to know and when it makes the most sense to present the material. Sharing information that new students need for success while trying to avoid overwhelming students in the process can be a balancing act. Advisors created New Student Orientation presentations and Perspectives class advising presentations that aligned with our institutional planning. During the Fall semester, advisors presented to students in 51 PRSP classes (over 1,000 students), sharing tips for success and guided pathways for their academic programs. In preparation for Spring 2024 registration, advisors met with 54% of their advisees prior to the first day of registration, a 13-14% increase over previous semesters. As Spring 2024 registration began, the College saw an increase in Week 1 freshmen student registrations from 43% last year to 58% this year. Our hope from these positive trends is that more students will persist at Dalton State, and our future retention and graduation rates will be positively impacted.

Perspectives, Cortnee Bunch, Katelyn Magana, Barbara Tucker

This semester, there are 30 instructors (28 faculty, 2 professional staff) teaching the 51 sections of the Perspectives course. The course enrolled a total of 1,122 students. Eight of the courses were eight weeks long (B session), and three of the classes (114 students) were in online sections, which are reserved for fully-online students and students who are repeating the course.

Looking at the future, we hope to recruit more instructors to teach the course. Moving forward, we will discontinue the 8-week configuration of the course in favor of the course lasting the entire semester. This will enable Perspectives faculty to shepherd students through their entire first semester. Next year, in addition to presentations on Campus Resources and Advising, the Perspectives course will integrate presentations on Service Learning and Engagement; another area that is central to PACE.

The Office of Student Transitions is piloting a new program for peer mentoring in the first year. This semester, two trained student leaders are serving as mentors who are embedded in a Perspectives course. These students attend each class and spend time working to foster a sense of community and friendship with the students outside of the class. This includes inviting students to campus events, athletic events, hangout sessions in Pope, or even for a cup of coffee in the Rage Café. Our goal is to expand this program to additional Perspectives classes and to make the transition during the first year as seamless as possible.

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A Bridge

by Nancy Avila De Welles



When you come to my office, one of the quotes you will read is this by Theodore Roosevelt: “People don’t care how much you know until they know

how much you care.” I strongly believe in this statement!

My journey at Dalton State began in 2013 when I decided to go back to college as a non-traditional student, in a different language, and in a culture that I am still trying to learn. During that journey, I found myself struggling with understanding the material and navigating college life. I experienced discouragement and frustration like many others.

Fast forward ten years, and I am at the same college where I earned my Bachelor of Social Work, and I am serving as the first non-clinical case manager/social worker on campus! Students typically visit my office with different struggles and challenges, where I educate individuals about the services available to them, as well as the mission of the C.A.R.E. Team. Moreover, I speak with students in classrooms and set up C.A.R.E. tables once a month to talk

about the resources and the support students have on campus.

If someone asked me to describe my job in one small sentence, I would say: I am a bridge! I connect individuals to resources whether on campus or in the community. Additionally, I offer support and resources to reduce or eliminate some of the barriers students face on their college journey. Though many have a support system at home, at work, or with friends, students can rest assured that at Dalton State, the C.A.R.E. Team and I have their backs. We are an extra support system to them!

Although some students are referred to the C.A.R.E. Team, many only have to ask! In his journal article, Algharaibeh (2020) described some of the factors that influence academic achievement and success in life, which included intrinsic motivation and help-seeking. In my role, many of my efforts are focused on encouraging our students to seek help and to understand that it is okay to ask for assistance. As a bridge needs support columns, our school has a diversity of services that support my role and provide relief to some of the students’ needs.

Our campus has a variety of excellent resources, from academics (peer education, academic advising, professional development support, and library services,) to well-being services, such as the birdfeeder, the counseling

and the health center, gym, and much more. Most of these services are paid for by student fees and are accessible to our campus community. Furthermore, I can assist students in their search for health insurance or a mental health provider, and/or applying for government assistance or finding a food bank. They can ask or stop by the Dean of Students office, across from the bookstore in Pope.

During my college journey, I got help! I found the motivation and courage to ask for assistance. One of the supportive and friendly faces in Dalton State is Alma Hurtado, who is the office manager in the Dean of Students office. She helped me connect with a tutor for my math class and told me about the writing lab for help with my English. Thanks to the support I received, I passed my classes and graduated. Now, I have the opportunity to give back. I am here because I care for our students’ success in academics and life in general.

Students do not have to walk this journey alone. We are here because we CARE about them. To our faculty and staff, thank you for your efforts, continued support, and referrals. We all are working together to help our students succeed and get to graduation day.

Reference

Algharaibeh, S. A. S. (2020). Should I ask for help? The role of motivation and help-seeking in students’ academic achievement: A path analysis model. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15(5), 1128–1145. §

(Cont. from p. 5)

excited to talk extensively with the Chair of Education at Toccoa Falls College, who plans to replicate the model at her institution. As fall semester winds down, spring and summer orientations and new sessions of the Pre-Professional Conference are being planned.

We invite you to visit Brown Hall and take a look at the student photos from these events hanging throughout the building. We also welcome any questions or ideas. These initiatives are led by Aimee Cribbs (acribbs@daltonstate.edu) and Janet Johnson (jejohnson@daltonstate.edu). §

Are You a Podcast Fan? You Are Not Alone

by Barbara Tucker

Podcasts have been around since the time of the iPod (2004 marks the first “podcast”) and have a longer history than our smartphones (born in 2007), the way most of us listen to them today.

And we do listen to them.

Depending on where you get your information (I used HubSpot DemandSage for this article), as of September 2023, there were 70 million episodes created by 5 million podcasters, listened to by more than 467 million people. That many podcasts give a potential listener plenty to choose from: politics, literature, sports, business, religion, true crime, leadership, arts, marketing a small business . . . the list is endless.

Some podcasts are very “niche,” while some are designed for a wider audience. The most-listened-to podcaster? Love him or hate him, it’s Joe Rogan. Yes, the *Fear Factor* guy.

Finally, video podcasting is growing exponentially.

Let’s look at four angles on podcasts.

PODCASTING AS EDUCATION

Ms. Amanda Triplett approached me last spring about her teaching a podcasting class. Amanda is the originator of the National Podcast Project, which is homegrown in Dalton, GA.

You will never find a more passionate advocate of the educational power of podcasting than Amanda. By day, she is an English teacher in Dalton. Amanda stated:

As a teacher, podcasting has changed my classroom and my own approach to

learning. Though some see podcasting living in the technology world, it is truly a literacy tool that should be used in every classroom, regardless of content or ability/age level. Like writing, the process allows us to create an artifact that makes connections between academics and life, drawing in our stories and providing access to stories we may never be able to hear in person.

The power of the human voice and our shared experiences bring learning to life in a way that nothing else can. When I started the National Podcast Project back in 2020 with a regional competition called “Speak Up Whitfield,” it was in response to the NPR Student Podcast Challenge. Since then, the project has grown to train teachers and students across the country on how to implement podcasting into classrooms, businesses and community organizations. With collaborators like Spotify and PBS, we continue to grow the project by creating panel presentations, mobile podlabs, and competitions/podcast events, all of which help marginalized voices find an audience.

Lauren Holverson, former Director of Government & Alumni Relations and an Adjunct Professor in the Wright School of Business, is working with Amanda on bringing the benefits of podcasting to the Dalton community and the campus. She states:

Podcasting is a valuable tool that facilitates the development of creativity and communication skills, which are highly sought-after in the workplace. The stories shared through podcasts have the potential to create a lasting impact on our lives, and, as such, podcasting serves as a medium for sharing experiences and collaborating

with others. This medium is especially beneficial for educators, students, and employees alike.

This Fall 2023 semester, the Department of Communication, Performing Arts, and Foreign Language offered COMM 3900: Special Topics in Podcasting, taught in our MAC Lab in Sequoyah. Of course, Amanda Triplett is the enthusiastic instructor.

PODCASTS AS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

If you are a podcast fan, you know it’s easy to default to favorites. But with over five million podcasts, there is probably a great deal for you to explore.

One of those areas is higher education, as well as college teaching and learning. What’s your interest? Teaching online? Using technology? Equity and inclusion? Research in Teaching and Learning? Leading change? There’s a podcast—or several—for that. The beauty of podcasts, which I consider the new radio, is that as long as your smart phone has battery life and a signal, you can listen while driving, exercising, cleaning, walking the dog, or gardening.

SHAMELESS PLUG TIME

I saved the worst, or best, for last. I have a podcast.

For a long time, I wanted to sit down with creative people and see how they “did” creativity. Thanks to recent graduate Clemencia Villafuerte, an expert in sound design and our producer, I started in March of 2022, and, as of this writing, I have 40 episodes out. The title of my podcast is *Dialogues with Creators*, and it is not confined to
creators in the

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Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs Updates

by Katrina Autry



Dalton State is in a constant state of evolution, and the same goes for both Financial Aid and Veteran Affairs.

I have been a Financial Aid Counselor and the Veteran Affairs Representative here at Dalton State College for over 15 years. I graduated with my associate degree from DSC in 2012 and my bachelor's degree in 2018. I attended the University of North Georgia and earned a Master in Public Administration in 2022 and will begin Georgia Southern's Doctor of Educational Leadership program next fall.

Policies, rules, regulations, and laws keep the Financial Aid office on its toes.

There are always new concepts to learn and implement, whether processing federal and state financial aid or certifying VA education benefits. Every academic year is different from the previous in one aspect or another, and we strive for excellence.

The biggest change to Financial Aid to happen in many years is that the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is having its first overhaul since 2017. We have been preparing for this update for well over a year, and some of its aspects are still up in the air. The new FAFSA for the 2024-2025 academic year will not be made available to students until the end of December at the earliest. Previously, students could access the next academic year FAFSA on October 1st. This means that the Financial Aid office will only have about 6 months to process student financial aid, instead of 9 months, prior to the start of the fall 2024 semester. We have begun the process of updating students and high school counselors about the changes, but, again, many things are up in the air as we await the final word from the government and Department of Education.

As for Veteran Affairs and VA Education Benefits, did you know that Dalton State's military and veteran student population exceeds 100? These students make up a distinct group within the nontraditional student population. While they may experience difficulties with balancing their warrior and student identities, they are brilliant and offer the classroom a unique perspective from the traditional student due to their military service, which incorporates discipline, stress management, motivation and leadership skills. I am an Army brat, a Marine Corps mom, and a Navy aunt, so even though I'm not supposed to have favorites among students, I'm just going to say it. This is my favorite group of students to work with.

I love Dalton State. The faculty, staff, and students are all wonderful to work with. There are brilliant minds on this campus. We have a daily opportunity to learn with and from each other, to change student lives, and to sprinkle the world with kindness confetti. In the traditional way that I sign off on my military and veteran student emails, I end with this: Do great things! §

(cont. from pg. 6) The Perspectives Faculty Learning Community (FLC) topics focus on getting back to the basics. Amid positive shifts in the Perspectives program, led by PACE, it felt necessary to reconnect our purpose with common challenges experienced by our first-year students. Meeting monthly, the topics of discussion cover the following: overcoming being underprepared, skills for student success, developing new learning styles, recognizing diverse needs, and addressing student success and challenges. Selected faculty are asked to prepare an article for discussion each

month that aligns with the topic. Thus far, meetings have been positive and productive, shedding light on the challenges and accomplishments that faculty across the institution face in their Perspectives courses. Conversations have been lively and have honed a sense of community among faculty through each meeting. Creating this network among Perspectives faculty has been indispensable in fostering the development of our first-year students.

The **Engagement** area is slated for implementation in Fall 2024. **Heather**

Williams, its project coordinator, is working toward implementing the Presence App and planning the Perspectives presentations surrounding service learning and engagement.

Our team has been hard at work, and each of these project coordinators are working with various teams across campus to make the fruit of this work a reality for our students. As a friendly reminder, PACE belongs to all of us, and it is a journey that all of us are on together. Thank you for everything that you do to support our first-year students. §

Peer Education Continues to Foster Academic Success

by Cameron Godfrey

It has been an exciting time in Peer Education in the Dean of Students office! Each semester, we hit the ground running in offering quality academic support and engaging events for our students. We wish to provide a brief update on the services available to both first year and returning students.

Peer Tutoring is offered for most 1000- and 2000-level courses and a wide range of upper division courses, based on tutor availability. Students may choose either in-person or virtual options to fit their needs. All Peer Tutoring scheduling occurs through TutorOcean (dalton.tutorocean.com), which is funded through the Title V grant. One-on-one tutoring takes place in the Dean of Students office, which is in the Upper Pope Student Center.

In the Fall 2023 semester, we experienced an increased demand for this service. Consequently, we are piloting group tutoring for a few course sections, with one being a virtual option supporting a course at the Mountain Campus (Ellijay). As we move forward with the expectation that higher enrollment means increased demand, we are actively conversing with campus stakeholders about other courses that would benefit from a group setting for students.

Supplemental Instruction (SI) offers interactive, peer-led group study sessions for supported courses. SI Leaders are students who have already excelled in a course who then sit through a lecture (like auditing) and stay up-to-date on how and what the faculty member is teaching. Outside of class, the SI Leader hosts two SI sessions where the SI Leader facilitates group activities

based around the most salient content from the lecture.

In May 2023, the International Center for Supplemental Instruction granted accreditation to our SI program. This process required three semesters of SI data, and we are proudly displaying the official logo on our website and marketing materials. The 2022-23 academic year witnessed a 167% increase in duplicated student touchpoints. For the same period, out of the total number of students enrolled in SI-paired courses, 24% of them attended at least one SI session in the 2022-23 academic year.

The Math & Science Learning Center (MSLC) is drop-in support where students can take advantage of the study areas, computers, and other resources available to them. MSLC assistants, who are peer educators, are available to answer any questions that arise. We are also fortunate to have faculty members who volunteer some of their office/student hours in the MSLC; a faculty presence further provides additional support for students and peer educators to learn while working alongside the faculty.

In Fall 2022, the MSLC's physical space was reimagined to encompass new collaborative seating and resources that enhance student learning. Practical and aesthetically-pleasing signage and student photographs were integrated to enhance brand recognition while transforming the center into a space where students continue to enjoy spending their time. Feel free to stop by Sequoya Hall #219 and view the revamped space! The MSLC is a popular destination for students; total student touchpoints increased by 20.21% and unique students by 8.4% from 2021-22 to 2022-23 academic years.

Special Programs – The BEAK (Building Essential Academic Knowledge) Series remains one of the top “courses” booked on TutorOcean. In this eight-week series,

students meet with a Peer Educator to cover important topics such as studying, note taking, and test taking at the college level, time management, Growth Mindset, and other pertinent topics. The goal is to provide students with individualized strategies they can implement during their time here at Dalton State and hopefully become more independent learners both inside and outside the classroom. Many of our students are first-generation students, and college is a completely new experience. The BEAK Series can contribute to a more positive college transition experience.

We also recently revamped our Understanding & Avoiding Plagiarism series, which is a three-session series that allows students to meet one-on-one with a peer educator. The material covers defining plagiarism, understanding the different forms plagiarism can take, utilizing available campus resources (e.g., Writing Lab; faculty; Grammarly Premium), and assisting students to create a time management plan, which can help students plan ahead for assignments and get the most out of their educational experience.

We empower Peer Educators to provide top-quality academic support and build lasting relationships with their fellow Roadrunners as they work towards their degrees; therefore, we need assistance from faculty and staff to recruit qualified individuals to serve as Peer Educators who contribute to this vital work.

How faculty/staff can assist Peer Education:

- Encourage qualified students to work as Peer Educators. We appreciate recommendations!
- Recommend students to Peer Education services. Unsure where to send students? Contact us; we can help!
- Request a Peer

(Cont. next pg.)

Financial Management, Fraud, and AI: Professor Delivers Presentations on Timely Topics

by Carl Gabrini



Being a member of the faculty at Dalton State College affords me the opportunity to participate in many different activities. Our Wright School of Business AACSB accreditation requires that faculty engage in scholarly activities that support our school's mission. To show impact, engagement, and innovation, the leadership of the Wright School of Business (WSOB) encourages our participation in opportunities that allow us to share our work with others. This semester has been a very active one. I said "yes" and participated in three major events that allowed me to share my work with others in very different settings.

First, I prepared and delivered a financial management training to nonprofit board members through the United Way of Northwest Georgia. Through my annual service on community needs assessment panels for the United Way of Northwest Georgia, I was invited to present in a training course on September 13 for

board members of regional not-for-profit organizations. I delivered a presentation on financial management and fielded questions about activities board members should be engaged in to ensure that management is using the financial resources of the organization to achieve their mission. The presentation included a review of the accounting process, resulting in the preparation of the annual financial statements. I spoke to board members about internal controls and fraud. Based on feedback I received after the presentation, the board members in attendance appreciated the information I shared with them and recommended that it be shared regularly, as a refresher and orientation for new board members.

Second, I presented a teaching case to a group of public administration scholars and practitioners at Southeast Conference on Public Administration (SECOPA) in Atlanta on September 28. The case is about fraud in a not-for-profit setting. I am currently writing the case and teaching notes with a colleague from Auburn University in Montgomery with the goal of submitting it for publication in a case journal.

The case focuses on a fraud committed by a business manager over seven years while employed by an area church. The fraud resulted in an estimated loss of over \$1.5 million by the church and the charging and sentencing of the perpetrator. The purpose of the case is to help students, who will assume

leadership roles, recognize that fraud can occur anywhere and at any time, to help students learn the red flags of fraud, and to help students understand how to protect organizations from these types of fraud through effective internal control systems. The presentation was well received with one faculty member inquiring about using the case and teaching note in a course they teach.

Finally, I planned, presented, and moderated a webinar for the American Accounting Association on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) that included sharing practical AI applications for the classroom on October 13. The webinar was attended by 225 faculty from across the country. Our topic focused on the use of AI in industry and how responsible use of AI might be taught to students in the classroom. My co-presenter was Dr. David Wood of Brigham Young University, a distinguished and well-known accounting expert. I shared the results of initial interviews I conducted with members of a local manufacturing firm about how they planned to use new AI technologies in their operations. Based on feedback received from attendees, our presentation was well received with many indicating a desire to learn more.

My goal is to turn each presentation into a publishable scholarly contribution to benefit the fields of accounting and public administration. I am grateful to the WSOB and Dalton State for their continued support of my teaching, scholarship, and service efforts. §

(Cont. from previous) Education classroom presentation. We cover topics such as Exam Preparation, Study Strategies, etc. Finally, we wish to thank all faculty and staff who continue to encourage our students to utilize academic support and the Peer Educators who provide it!

If you have questions about Peer Education, please email peereducation@daltonstate.edu or stop by the Dean of Students Office (Upper Pope Student Center). §

The Georgia Innocence Project Comes to Campus

by Angela Nava



In the summer of 2023, I reached out to the Georgia Innocence Project to tell them that I was teaching a course on wrongful conviction and would like to partner with them to design this course. I happened to reach Christian Stegall, their Community Engagement Manager, and he was immediately interested.

We met many times over the semester, and he and the attorneys working at the Georgia Innocence Project provided guidance on cases that should be included in class discussions, which helped shape the course.

A major part of this partnership was Wrongful Conviction Day events on October 2. The Georgia Innocence Project (GIP) shared a template used for their banners and my students used that to make their own banners profiling Georgia exonerees. We took those banners to the base of the belltower on October 2 and joined the GIP to speak to students that passed by and raised awareness about wrongful conviction.

Many students stopped and read the banners. After that activism event, Lee Clark, an exoneree from Rome, Georgia, spoke to the wrongful conviction class. Lee Clark was convicted of conspiracy to commit murder in 1997 and spent 25 years in prison for a crime that he did not commit.

In 1996, Brian Bowling was 15. He and Joshua Storey, then 16, were in Brian's bedroom. Bowling was on the phone with his girlfriend, and the young men were playing with a handgun that Storey had taken from his father's safe. Bowling was shot in the head and died.

Bowling's family and a couple of family friends that were visiting at the time went running into the bedroom. One person remained in the living room. Months later, that individual supposedly reported seeing Lee Clark run by the open, front door. The initial statement from Storey was that Bowling was playing Russian Roulette.

The story pushed by law enforcement was littered with inconsistencies. The death was initially ruled accidental. After urging from the family that Bowling would not play with a gun in such a manner, manslaughter charges were filed against Storey for bringing the gun that was used in Bowling's death.

Then the rumors in the community started, and there were rumblings of all three young men being in a gang and that Bowling had told police about the two others committing thefts in the community. Add the 'gut-feeling' of the coroner that his was not an accidental death and the statements from those present in the home at the time of death. The case was eventually described by prosecutors as a revenge killing, and Lee Clark and Joshua Storey were convicted of conspiracy to commit murder at 17 and went to prison.

While in prison, Clark met Joey Watkins, who is also from Rome. Watkins' case was investigated by lawyers Rabia Chaudry, Colin Miller, and Susan Simpson for their Undisclosed podcast, which is devoted to freeing the wrongfully convicted. The podcast has covered 24 cases – twelve of the defendants in those cases have been exonerated, two had stays of execution,

one received a commutation, one was granted parole, three have appeals working through the system, and the others have upcoming appeals (Undisclosed-podcast.com, 2023).

It was Watkins that connected Clark to Susan Simpson, who began her own podcast to free the wrongfully convicted. Simpson investigated Clark's case for her Proof podcast and uncovered evidence that freed both Lee Clark and Joshua Storey in December, 2022. Both men spent 25 years in prison for what is now understood to be an accidental death. They were in prison for a no-crime case. No-crime cases account for about 40% of wrongful convictions.

Lee Clark shared his story with the wrongful conviction class and then for a larger audience of about fifty people. In these talks, Clark was emotional when describing the violence that he saw in the many prisons that he was in during his incarceration. He described senseless violence and men being killed for no reason or over minor issues like disagreements. He described men extorting the families of other inmates and killing those inmates if the families did not send the money demanded. He was stabbed and part of many fights. He missed so much life.

He was incarcerated at 17 and released at 43. He talked of losing all those years of life experience and trying to navigate the world that changed so much while he was inside. He spoke about feeling like he missed the opportunity to marry and have kids like others his age did. Twenty-five years of work experience is missing from his resume, so he is left

(Cont. p. 21)

Meet the Members of the New Undergraduate Research Committee for Liberal Arts

The purpose of the newly formed Liberal Arts Research Committee is to encourage, promote, and support research broadly, such as individual research and creative works, research with undergraduates, and scholarship of teaching and learning in the Liberal Arts division of the School of Arts and Sciences. The committee started with a core group and now invites any faculty member who is interested in research to join next semester (or just to visit some meetings).

Committee member Dr. Jenny Crisp's research with students involves the new Appalachian Studies minor; past students have worked primarily on Appalachian dialects, but also on quilting, bluegrass, shape notes in traditional singing schools, and heirloom vegetables and seeds. Dr. Crisp is particularly interested in the collection of stories and oral history as part of building a corpus of speech samples from the various peoples of our area. Dr. Crisp and her students are studying stories and language patterns from people across the region with a special focus on minority communities whose speech is less represented in historical research on Appalachian dialects.

Additionally, committee member Dr. Elizabeth Dunaway's research interests are broadly focused on the mechanisms involved in learning. She is particularly interested in the effects of time on associative and operant learning. She is currently conducting research with rats to look at the effects of different temporal intervals on the efficacy of treatments intended to attenuate

conditioned fear. Dr. Dunaway is investigating new parameters with which to study associative and operant learning as well as spatial navigation in betta fish. In addition to working with rats and fish, Dr. Dunaway also conducts studies with human participants. Currently, she is investigating the role of swear words and other stimuli on pain tolerance. In the past year, she has supervised 6 students on projects in these areas.

Committee member Dr. Susan L. Eastman's scholarship addresses memory and war of the twentieth and twenty-first century found in memorials, literature, film and culture. She serves as a volunteer scholarly consultant for the Global War on Terror Memorial Foundation and is currently writing two articles on the immediacy and proliferation of War on Terror Memorials in the U.S. In her book, *The American War in Viet Nam: Cultural Memory at the Turn of the Century* (University of Tennessee Press, 2017), Eastman analyzes veteran, civilian, American, Vietnamese, and Vietnamese American memorial, literary and cinematic representations of the war produced from the Persian Gulf War (1990–91) through the post-9/11 War on Terror. Eastman's journal articles include "How to Tell a True [War] Story": Tim O'Brien, Mark Twain and Metafiction" (*Midwestern Miscellany*, 2018) and "The War Prayer" in Contemporary Film and Social Media" (*The Mark Twain Annual*, 2016). Her chapters in edited collections include: "The 'Nam Comics: Remembering the American War in Viet Nam" in *Beyond the Quagmire: New Interpretations of the Vietnam Conflict* (UNT Press, 2019); "Randall Wallace's We Were Soldiers: Forgetting the American War in Viet Nam" in *The Martial Imagination: Essays on the Cultural History of American Warfare* (Texas A&M UP, 2013); and "Aesthetic Limbo: Memory Making at the Vietnam Women's Memorial" in *Thirty Years After: New Essays on Vietnam War*

Literature, Film, and Art (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2009).

Furthermore, committee member Dr. John D. Fowler is engaged in several research projects. As a military historian, most of his work focuses on that field. Recently, he completed a reevaluation of Confederate General John Bell Hood's generalship. "A Student of the Lee and Jackson School: John Bell Hood and the Atlanta Campaign" will be a book chapter in the forthcoming anthology entitled *The Atlanta Campaign and Sherman's March to the Sea* by Savas Beatie, one of the premier publishers in Civil War history. Fowler also has an article under consideration by the *US Army War College Quarterly: Parameters* entitled "'Grant is not a mighty genius, but he is a good soldier': An Examination of the Generalship of Ulysses S. Grant." This manuscript argues that the generalship of Ulysses S. Grant has never properly been evaluated in terms of traditional military standards of competence and ability and offers such an analysis. This submission differs from most scholarship on the topic because it establishes an "objective" measure for Grant's generalship and presents a simple model that can be built upon and applied to all historical military leaders. Additionally, Dr. Fowler has a forthcoming book entitled *Awash in the Storm: Tennessee in the Civil War Era 1860-1870*, which is being published by the University of Tennessee Press. The book will cover a gap in the synthesis of Tennessee's experience during the Civil War and Reconstruction. Finally, Dr. Fowler also has another book-length manuscript under review at the University of Tennessee with the working title of "The Double-Edged Sword: The Impact of Industrialization and Urbanization on Harlan County, Kentucky." This work explores the long-term impact of the integration of the county into the modern world. Dr. Fowler is a native of this county. Dr. Fowler's dedication to research stems from his philosophy

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Greetings from the School of Health Professions

by Holly Miller

The SHP faculty, staff and students have been extremely involved this year with personal accomplishments, campus events, and community events.

Focusing on nursing, Kim Horne, Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing, graduated from Georgia State University in May 2023 with a 4.0 GPA as a Doctor of Nursing Practice. This is a major accomplishment for her as well as a great benefit for the SHP and nursing program. Congratulations, Dr. Kim Horne! We are very proud of you.

We had another very successful career fair, headed up by Jennifer Parker, Program Director for the LPN program. There were vendors invited from area hospitals and clinics from the surrounding areas and beyond. The students participating in this event were able to network and give resumes to the companies represented who were seeking future healthcare employees.

Focusing on Social Work, the Dalton State Social Work Club recently collected birthday box donation items. The students collected items such as cake mix, icing, birthday party supplies and other gifts. These items were then donated to the families of the Northwest Georgia Family Crisis Center. The students titled their project "Everyone Should Get to Celebrate Their Birthday."

Focusing on Health and Wellness, Dr. Christy Price invited faculty from the SHP to participate in a panel in one of her classes. This panel included Dr. Deb Richardson, Associate Professor of Nursing, Jennifer Parker, Program Director for the LPN program, Stephanie Watkins, Clinical Coordinator for Respiratory Therapy, and Holly Miller, Clinical Coordinator for Radiologic Technology. The panel members were asked to speak about their journey to their chosen careers, what it takes to be a student in these SHP programs, and tips about being successful in college.



Focusing on Radiologic Technology, I am very proud to announce that earlier this summer, the Radiologic Technology program received the exit summation from the JRCERT site visitors after their two-day on-site review. There are six standards (each with multiple objectives) that are required for the program to address and meet.

The visitors' report reflected that our Radiologic Technology program passed every standard and all objectives. We received no findings/citations! Although we are still awaiting the official report of accreditation, we feel certain that JRCERT will agree with the site visitors' findings.

In addition to the program compliments, the site visitors were extremely complimentary of our campus and the services we provide to students. In an email to Dr. Fuchko and Dr. Hicks, Dr. Gina Kertulis-Tartar, Dean of the School of Health Professions, indicated that Susan, Holly, and Courtney have done an amazing job and dedicated themselves to making this a model program. I am grateful to them for their dedication to our students, college, and community.

A few personal accomplishments for me included receiving tenure as well as my RSO Certificate (Radiation Safety Officer) this year.

The SHP Community Outreach and Service Committee has had the privilege to engage several area high school students. When the students gather in the lecture hall, someone from Social Work gives a brief explanation of the misconceptions of social workers, their importance, and different areas where one may find a job in the field. The students are then broken into groups and given a tour of each of the SHP programs.

We have many students within the SHP programs speak to these students in their respective program labs. Several of the programs even allow the students some hands-on experience, including CPR, intubation, and the birthing of a baby, all with mannequins, of course. After the tour, the students gather back into the lecture hall, where we have a question-and-answer session as well as informing the students on many of the great benefits offered to Dalton State students, such as affordability, campus housing, the Bird Feeder and career closet, and resources such as the CARE team and the Ken White Health Center. §

Dalton State College HSI STEM Project: Report on Grant Activities for Year 2

by Frances Haman-Prewitt

We have just completed Year 2 of the 5-year HSI STEM grant. Overall, we are pleased to report that we have met our objectives for this year.

For Objective 1, Dual Enrollment Coordinator Hayley Cooper has been an essential addition to the College. She has increased dual enrollment from 252 students in spring, 2022, to 462 students in fall of 2023. By working diligently to target high schools with significant enrollment of Hispanic students and having recruiting materials translated into Spanish, she has also significantly outpaced our goal of increasing the percentage of Hispanic students taking dual enrollment courses.

As part of our dual enrollment initiative, the STEM department has also begun hosting counselors, administrators and STEM teachers from area middle and high schools to tour our facilities and meet faculty and students.

For Objective 2, we are not scheduled to report on graduation until year 4 of the project, when the grant activities have had an opportunity for impact.

For Objective 3, we are pleased to see that fall-to-fall retention of first-time full-time Hispanic freshmen enrolled in STEM pathways has increased and that we have exceeded our year 2 goal. Case Manager/Social Worker Nancy Avila de Welles has been working very hard to connect students with resources that will help them overcome obstacles so that they can stay in school. She serves the entire college as an essential member of the CARE team but keeps a special focus on STEM students as well.

Our peer mentoring program struggled in Year 2, but we have revised our

Obj. #	Objective Description	Y2 Goal	Y2 Achieved
1	Increase % of Hispanic Dual Enrolled Students	21%	31%
2	Increase 6-year STEM degree completion for Hispanic students	NA	NA
3	Increase fall-to-fall retention of Hispanic STEM students	61%	63%
4	Increase the number of students who conduct STEM research	46	47
5	Increase percent of Hispanic students who conduct STEM research	33%	26%
6	Increase STEM internships	9	17
7	Increase transfer-in rates of students from 2-year colleges	9	10
8	Increase rates for students who earn an AS degree in Physics/Pre-engineering & transfer to 4-year institution	NA	NA
9	Increase STEM scholarship endowment	\$50,000	\$50,000

approach. In her new role as Director of Student Transitions, Katelyn Magana has taken over peer mentoring and is working to hire a coordinator to oversee this program. Currently, there are two STEM peer mentors embedded in Perspectives classes as a pilot project, which we believe will increase the connections between mentors and mentees. We have plans to increase this to seven mentors next fall, and for every STEM Perspectives class to have a mentor by fall of 2025. If successful, we hope to expand this model to the entire campus.

For Objective 4, we are pleased to see that we have met our Year 2 goal for undergraduate research projects – a significant increase from Academic Year 2021-22. We have put many resources into making students aware of undergrad research and helping them connect with appropriate faculty, and we feel these efforts are paying off.

Experiential Learning Coordinator Carole Shealy began work in April. She oversees our STEM Student Research Ambassador, Emilie Leyssens, and two STEM Marketing Interns, Eddie Bretado and Diana Hernandez. This team works to publicize STEM activities and undergraduate research opportunities and connect students with faculty mentors. They have also created a

vibrant STEM Instagram account – follow us at DaltonState.STEM.

For Objective 5, though we have more students in undergraduate research, we are concerned that the percentage of Hispanic students participating in these projects has not increased. We will be working hard to understand why and address this goal.

For Objective 6, our baseline and goal for STEM internships counted only for-credit internships, since one of our weaknesses was a lack of tracking for internships that were not for credit. Experiential Learning Coordinator Carole Shealy has been working hard to identify students who are participating in internships, even if they are not for credit, so we are reporting the total. However, either way we look at it, we met our year 2 goal – we do have 9 for-credit internships and another 8 that we have identified as not -for-credit. Shealy is also working hard to connect with industry representatives to help even more students obtain internships.

For Objective 7, our goal for year 2 was to identify a baseline for the number of students who transfer to Dalton State's Engineering Technology and Information Technology programs from 2-year technical schools. We had 8 students transfer in 2022, which grew

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Overview of Game of Life: The Business Plan

by Hannah Makarczyk

My classroom strategy involves 50% lecture and 50% application-based learning. This is especially prevalent in my Environment of Business (BUSA 2106) courses. For example, students are expected to comprehend the following learning objectives in chapters four and five: LO 4-2: Describe the differences between general and limited partners and compare the advantages and disadvantages of partnerships; LO 5-1: Explain why people take the risks of entrepreneurship; list the attributes of successful entrepreneurs; and describe entrepreneurial teams, intrapreneurs, and home- and web-based businesses; and LO 5-4: Analyze what it takes to start and run a small business.

To do so, students must apply what they learned from lectures and readings of the chapters to an application-based group project; this project is intended to help students apply what they have learned in class to a real-world scenario.

To complete this project, I divided students into five randomized groups and let one student from each group randomly draw a scenario in which they were to write a business plan.

Students are provided with a business plan template and are required to work as a group to create a cohesive business plan from their randomized scenario.

Beyond the scope and learning objectives, this activity intends to:

1. Promote critical thinking skills.
2. Encourage collaborative learning.
3. Develop group relationships and interactions.
4. Create individual- and group-based accountability.

Prior to assessing the topic, I expected both sections' class averages to be a combined 85% per the rubric standards and requirements.

However, the combined average was an astonishing 99.45%.

Even so, I allow students to provide critical feedback anonymously on their fellow teammates for individual grades. The individual grades for both courses averaged 85.30%. The individual averages are lower due to students not participating at all (e.g., non-attendance) or for poor performance and/or lack of participation overall (e.g., attended class but did not contribute to the project).

During the group project process, many students admitted that they prefer the integration of both lecture and application-based learning. However, I had many students advise me that this project would have been much more beneficial as an extended semester long project (incorporating more elements



than what was required for this project) in which they could complete a new section each week that is related to a chapter in the textbook.

Students also offered the idea of completing the project and compiling all of the information into an oral presentation with visuals in lieu of a written final exam. With the feedback taken into consideration, I intend to continue to implement application and team-based learning elements in future courses and will consider making the project more lengthy, potentially utilizing an oral presentation with visuals as a final exam.

Projects are fuller and enriched when faculty and students collaborate and work together. §

to 10 in 2023. We will be working to **(cont. from previous)** increase this number this year by doing more marketing and outreach to the technical schools, inviting their faculty and advisors to visit our campus, and sending our staff to visit theirs. We hope to significantly increase these

numbers going forward.

For Objective 8, we are still struggling to identify how many of our students have transferred from our pre-engineering program into 4-year programs, but we hope to have this data soon.

For Objective 9, the Dalton State Foundation has successfully met its goal of matching \$25,000 to the grant's contribution of \$25,000 for a scholarship endowment.

Our hard-working team is proud of these accomplishments and looks

CETL Update

by Marina Smitherman



TRANSFORM **BOLDLY**

What a beautiful fall we are having! Here in CETL, our diversity of events has echoed this rainbow of incredible colors with a wide range of opportunities for us to explore and transform together boldly the way we teach to help our students learn. A huge thank you to all of our fellows for the work you have put in to each workshop, book group discussion, or collection of resources, as we have run the gambit from best practices in experiential learning to how we need to adjust to teaching in the world of A.I. In Pints & Pedagogy, we have discussed strategies to reach struggling students and opportunities presented by the Core Impacts to think intentionally about the overarching goals for our classrooms. Also, thank you to all of you who have signed up and enthusiastically participated in these groups because it makes the effort in organizing them worthwhile. We had to implement a room booking system this semester to deal with room conflicts, and it is lovely to be able to work with our new faculty in one area of CETL while a book group is meeting in another. Thank you, Alicia, for both stepping up to serve as Assistant Director and for implementing this system to keep us all organized.

We are always looking for new ways that we can support our community in enhancing teaching, engaging our students, and staying up-to-date with the latest pedagogical trends. We hope that our new CETL newsletter that launched this fall will serve as a go-to resource for everything that is excellent about teaching and learning here at Dalton State.

Here is what you can expect to see included:

Inspiration: We will spotlight success stories and insights from faculty who

have successfully transformed their classrooms using innovative teaching or technologies.

Professional Development: Stay informed about upcoming opportunities to engage in learning communities, workshops, webinars, and other events hosted by CETL.

Teaching Tips: Practical strategies related to teaching, from designing engaging course materials to fostering inclusive and active learning environments.

Resources: We will be highlighting teaching resources, both on and off campus, that can support your teaching, whether books in our CETL library or regional conferences you can attend.

Community Engagement: Learn about opportunities to collaborate with your peers, participate in discussions, and engage in our supportive community of educators.

Another exciting development is an increase in the number of requests for consultations. Consultations are a great way to discuss and collaboratively find solutions to teaching challenges tailored to your style in a confidential one-to-one meeting. We hold these in the CETL library, which makes connecting each other with supportive resources as easy as reaching over and pulling a book off the shelf. You can request a consultation or classroom mid-semester feedback using the CETL Bookings Page linked here.

We recently hosted Cynthia Alby from Georgia College & State University for a three-hour webinar focused on teaching with A.I. If you were not able to join us, you can access the recording

on our CETL Georgia VIEW page (linked here), in addition to links to other webinars on the teaching implications of A.I. offered by the USG. Developing your own syllabus policy on the use of A.I. in your assessments is proactive and helps prevent problems of how to respond when students make use of these tools. If you need help with developing a policy or thinking through how to effectively make use of A.I. tools, please reach out to Jenny Crisp or Alicia Briganti.

In the spring, we will be hosting two virtual speakers: (1) Todd Zakrajsec from UNC Chapel Hill will present in January on what active learning means to us as a community and how this can be used effectively to engage students in the work of learning, and (2) Jessamyn Neuhaus from SUNY Plattsburg, author of *Picture a Professor*, will join us in February to explore stereotypes students hold about faculty. We are also launching a year-long program in spring to support faculty in carrying out a scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) project, so be on the lookout for the application in your email. In May, in response to requests for the content contained within New Faculty Academy for those that started before we began this program, we are going to run it in an accelerated format off-campus as a Course Design Institute with the goal of participants coming with a teaching challenge and leaving with an action plan and/or product ready for fall. If either of those interest you or you would like more information, please email cetl@daltonstate.edu.

Also coming up in the Spring 2024 semester, we will once again host the 'Bold Talks' conference on Friday March 1 from 9am-12pm

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DSC Criminologists Take on CrimeCon

by Natalie Johnson

What is CrimeCon, you ask?

It's like ComicCon, but for true crime lovers and enthusiasts and is highly educative.

Dr. Angie Nava is a podcast fanatic and uses them regularly in her courses to supplement what she teaches. It was through her listening to a podcast that she heard an advertisement for CrimeCon upon which she immediately texted Professor Emma Jackson and me to exclaim that we must attend together.

Emma and I both immediately said "Yes, we must go!" The three flew to Orlando for the three-day event. It was the most useful conference we have ever attended. I learned more in three days than I ever have in attending the prestigious American Society of Criminology (ASC) conference—and I've been going for 13 years. I'm going to prioritize CrimeCon over ASC moving forward.

CrimeCon was an experience like no other. We saw and/or met 'true-crime celebrities' like Josh Mankiewicz from *Dateline* (who FaceTimed Keith Morrison in his session); Matt Murphy, who is now a legal correspondent for ABC's *20/20* and former famous homicide and sexual assault prosecutor in Orange County, CA; Ann Burgess, who co-wrote the *Crime Classification Manual* and was the first female FBI Profiler; the prosecutor from the Bill Cosby trial; Johnny Depp's defense attorney; Candice DeLong, who was one of the first female FBI profilers and was the correspondent for the popular true crime show *Deadly Women* and now has a podcast called *Killer Psyche*; Dr. Katherine Ramsland, a famous forensic psychologist who has written 71 books including one on the



serial killer BTK (she has personally interviewed him for countless hours), and Dr. Michael Baden, the world famous medical examiner. He examined the Jeffrey Epstein death using crime scene photos, and we'll just say the man did not die by suicide—come ask us questions!

The South Carolina Law Enforcement Division's lead investigator on the Maggie and Paul Murdaugh murders gave a presentation on the forensic evidence at the crime scene (did you know that Maggie Murdaugh had tire tracks from an ATV on her leg?!).

But more than all the meeting and greeting, we met Gabby Petito's family and shared their grief. Many in the audience were crying along with them. We learned about their foundation, and perhaps the most impactful part of their foundation is the women (and men) who have written in to say that her story has given them the courage to leave their abusive relationships. Professor Jackson's favorite part was speaking with Gabby's mother, stating, "Learning about their foundation and the work they are doing has been the most inspiring thing to come out of CrimeCon for me." The

Petito family is changing one life at a time for the better. Gabby's murder has not been in vain.

Stacy Chapin, the mother of Ethan Chapin who was murdered in the Idaho murders last November, spoke about the trauma she has endured and is continuing to endure in the legal process of the suspect in custody. She spoke up at the end of Dr. Joseph Morgan's presentation of the forensic evidence in the Idaho Murders about how terrific those kids were. There aren't really words to describe how moving it was. We saw Kerri Rawson speak, who is serial killer BTK's daughter. She is on a mission to prove that he killed more than the ten victims for which he pled guilty. She is one of the few children of serial killers that has ever been outspoken, and she openly discusses her CPTSD (Complex PTSD).

There was a panel on missing people, and we heard from two families that have sons that are still missing (Dylan Rounds and Daniel Robinson). Did you know that more men than women go missing each year in America? That's right! But you wouldn't know that from watching the news. We (cont. p. 20)

Become Certified in CPR

by Vicki Fisher

Have you ever thought about getting certified in CPR? Have you ever been in a situation where you wished you could have done more or assisted in some way. We can help you with that!

Public Safety will be offering a CPR Certification Course in 2024. Space will be limited to 8 participants; an e-mail will be sent out with dates and information on how to sign up.



We hope to see your name on the list and hope to have a waiting list so we can provide another class.

Congratulations to the student workers from the gym (pictured above), and thanks to Garrett Burgner for

suggesting to the students to take the Heartsaver CPR AED and First Aid course.

Public Safety will e-mail information on any future dates, if anyone is interested in taking the course. §

(cont. from p. 8) typical arts. I have interviewed a guest who started a publishing company, a married couple who turned the church they pastor into a center for the arts in a local community, an anthropologist who works with the storytelling nonprofit Narrative4, writers, filmmakers, visual artists, a Harvard-trained Biblical archaeologist, a mom of a son with an autism diagnosis, and a symphony conductor.

Best of all, I have interviewed twelve full- or part-time faculty members from

history, psychology, biology, communication, theatre, and English. It is for that reason I recommend you check out Dialogues with Creators, which can be found on YouTube.

PODCASTS ARE WORTH IT

No matter whether you use podcasts for your own learning, for entertainment, or as a tool for student engagement, you can benefit greatly from this aural medium. My most recent go-to podcast is *The Revolutions Podcast* with Michael Duncan; right now, I am listening to him

explain the Russian Revolution's origins in a way I want to keep coming back for more.

Recently, I listened to one by NPR, *White Lies*, on what happened to the prisoners from the Mariel Boat Lift (not a story with a happy ending, as some of them languished in American prisons for decades). And let's not forget Shankar Vedantam and Hidden Brain—he's the podcaster I aspire to be.

Let podcasts speak to you. §

(cont. from p. 17) with a theme of 'Innovations in Engaging Students in the Classroom and Beyond.' There may have been some Buzz Lightyear jokes made in that committee meeting!

The USG Teaching & Learning conference is being held in Athens, GA on April 15-16 on 'Best Practices for Promoting Engaged Student Learning.' This conference is always a great value for the content shared. More information is available at https://www.usg.edu/teaching-and-learning-excellence/teaching_learning_conference.

Finally, our annual 'Celebration of Teaching' will be held on Friday April 28 immediately following the Campus

Assembly. If you have ideas of things you would like to see celebrated at this, do let us know.

Dr. Fuchko asked CETL this fall to work on an exploration of teaching and learning culture at Dalton State with a view to working on belonging in the classroom and beyond. Angie Nava has stepped up to work with a new CETL Culture & Belonging committee, focusing on this presidential initiative which dovetails nicely with work Kim Hays and I have been doing on inclusive excellence through a grant.

As a part of those efforts, we will be working to capture and explore as many stories from campus as possible, so be thinking about what you would like to

share in the spring and encourage your students to do the same.

In this thanksgiving season, we once again launched our Thank a Teacher opportunity for students to spontaneously thank instructors that have helped them through this fall semester, and once again, we have had an immense and immediate response to that. Thanks to Pat Horton for her help in getting the message out to our students.

As you can see, we've had a busy fall and anticipate an even busier spring! We are always open to suggestions for programming and resource needs, so if you have any requests, please let us know using [this link](#). §

Faculty 'Best Costume' a Result of Student Success

by Nick Carty



My eyes were on the prize, but they were also on the mirror; what looked back looked nothing like a werewolf. Now that normally

wouldn't pose a problem for my service to DSC, but Halloween was not far off, and I had signed up for the English Department's Annual Literary Spooktacular event, picked my "The Werewolf Poem"/"Werewolves of London" combo for recitation, and I was bound and determined to look the part.

Fortunately, help was not far away. I found DSC student Ivana Hernandez, who is pursuing her Associate of Arts in general studies film pathway, and she agreed to practice the skills she had acquired in her Special Effects Makeup course and do her best to transform me into a first-class werewolf. That she absolutely did, and to hear her tell it, she gained quite a bit from her involvement as well: "Doing Professor Carty's werewolf makeup was a fun experience! Although this is one of my first experiences outside of class with makeup, I believe this project really helped me become more confident in my work."

Ivana had originally hoped to work with a fellow makeup classmate during our collaboration, but schedules conflicted.

I therefore invited interested students from one of my COMM 1110 classes to come observe and perhaps lend a hand if needed. Jazmin Cortes, a first-year accounting major, stepped forward and joined us at the session to both observe and help turn crepe wool into werewolf hair. Jazmin, too, was pleased with her participation: "It was an exciting experience getting to know a new student and what she's passionate about. And just being involved with it, being helpful," she said.

If students are engaged and empowered through our creative collaboration with them, that surely spells student success. And "The Spookiest/Literari-est Costume Award" certificate dated October 31, 2023? That's frameable icing on the cake. §

(cont. from p. 18)

from the Black and Missing Foundation, Inc. (BAMFI) about the vast differences in media attention that we see between white victims and victims of color. BAMFI reported that about 550,000 people were reported missing in 2022, and almost 40% were people of color, yet the media coverage of their cases was 7% of the total media coverage of missing people.

We met and spoke to many podcasters on CrimeCon's Podcast Row, including Margot from *Military Murder*, Kelly Evans from *Mama Mystery*, Payne Lindsey from *Up and Vanished*, and many more. Conversations with podcasters focused on how they have created new avenues for justice and added new aspects of learning in the classroom for students. Dr. Nava stated, "CrimeCon inspired me to encourage everyone to use their platform to make a difference!" In fact, we ran into Podcaster Kelly Evans at dinner, and Dr.

Nava asked her to use her platform to spotlight missing people, and she did!

All the speakers mentioned that CrimeCon felt like family, and they were sharing their pain with people that were caring and supportive. One audience member asked Dylan Round's mom how they can help and how to approach someone that has a child missing. She told them to come up to her and say 'tell me about Dylan' because she wants to talk about him and keep his memory alive.

Please remember that we have missing persons in our own community. There are 403 missing persons in Georgia—one is Keeslyn Roberts, who disappeared from the Flying J at the I-75 exit in Resaca, GA. There are 775 people missing in Tennessee. Please check out NamUS (National Missing and Unidentified Persons System) and BAMFI to see who is missing in your area. Bring attention to their cases. Help bring missing people home. Their families

need our help. Make it personal—imagine if your loved one was missing and the help you'd want.

Remember the victims and survivors. They are the heart of our work. Remember Gabby Petito and the victims of BTK, including his daughter Kerri Rawson, Maggie and Paul Murdaugh, the rape and sexual assault survivors from the Bill Cosby trial, and the many victims that did not get the attention for the world to know their names.

We left CrimeCon changed. We came back dedicated to focusing on victims and to bringing attention to those that do not get the media attention that other cases do. We are reinvigorated and have many ideas for projects stemming from our experience there. We cannot wait to go back. I have already purchased my ticket for next year! CrimeCon is for anyone, not just academics. Check out their [site](#) if you wish to learn more or would like to attend! §

Opportunities with Fulbright

by Amy Burger

Earlier this semester, I spent two weeks in Vilnius, Lithuania, where I met and worked with the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of Mykolas Romeris University (MRU), one of Dalton State's international partners.

My visit to MRU was sponsored by the Fulbright program, through which many opportunities are available: working on projects as a specialist, as I did; teaching for a semester or a year; studying for an advanced degree; and for college graduates, teaching the English language.

As Dr. Fuchko has mentioned, international opportunities are a priority for our institution, so consider learning more about your options to go

abroad with Fulbright at one of the interest meetings held monthly on campus.

Fulbright interest meetings for the spring semester will be held in Roberts Library room 141 at 2 pm on the last Thursday of each month. Next year, those dates will be January 25, February 29, March 28, and April 25.

If you have questions for me about Fulbright, please get in touch! §

(cont. from p. 12) working entry-level jobs.

A few weeks ago, he was seconds away from being seriously injured or killed in an accident at his job. He was putting air into a tire that exploded, and, if he had been a few seconds slower, he would have been killed. His description of surviving 25 years in prison only almost to be killed by a mistake from a co-worker was heart wrenching.

During his heart-breaking visit, everyone that he encountered found him to be kind and straightforward. He is an

innocent person who was drawn into the criminal justice system for reasons that he still does not understand. He could be you or me.

He was living his life in Rome, Georgia, but it was altered by the death of his friend, and then a maze of circumstances left him losing more years inside than he had lived before conviction. Lee Clark is all of us. Any one of us could be in his shoes.

I hope to bring the Georgia Innocence Project to campus many more times. We will work together to prevent wrongful

convictions. Several of my students are now planning to volunteer with the organization, and a few want to intern there in the future. This experience was one of the most rewarding of my career, and it is just the beginning of the relationship between Dalton State and the Georgia Innocence Project. §



and belief that research is vital not only to the scholarly community but also to his teaching as well.

Committee member Dr. Sarah Min joined the Dalton State College in Fall 2010. Her teaching interests include public speaking, human communication, intercultural communication, interpersonal communication and conflict management, applied research methods and qualitative research methods. Dr. Min's research interests focus on intercultural communication, conflict management, and organizational communication. Her latest publication was on the importance of culture influence NGOs. Since 2019, Dr. Min has supervised and organized four students' panels to present at Georgia Communication

Association conferences. Those presentations included both intercultural communication and qualitative research methods areas.

Finally, committee member Dr. Tami K. Tomasello studies the uses and effects of digital communication media as well as the diffusion of new media research within and across disciplinary boundaries. Her research has been published in top-tier journals in her field, including the *Journal of Communication*, *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, and *New Media & Society*. She is also coauthor of the book, *Managing the Infosphere: Governance, Technology, and Cultural Practice in Motion*. Prior to joining the faculty at Dalton State College, she taught and/or supervised undergraduate and/or graduate

research at Florida State University, University of Florida, West Virginia University, and East Carolina University. Her teaching interests include emerging media, mass communication, mass media and society, quantitative research methods, and statistics. She currently teaches her department's Senior Seminar in Communication course, which requires students to conduct, write, and publicly present original research.

If you are interested in the committee's work, please reach out to Lizzy Dunaway at epdunaway@daltonstate.edu or come to the next meeting, which will be scheduled for Wednesday, January 17 at 9:30 am in the Peeples conference room. §

Faculty & Staff Accomplishments



Brooklyn Cole Herrera – MM, CSAEd, Assistant Director of Peer Education, Associate Director of the PACE program, and Dean of Students Office – recently published a chapter, “Minority Serving Institutions in Georgia: Exploring Theories of Rural Cultural Impact” in the book *Race and Rurality: Considerations for Advancing Higher Education Equity*.



Baogang Guo, a professor of political science, attended the 2023 Annual Meeting of the Association of Chinese Political Studies held at the University of Duisburg-Essen, Duisburg, Germany, October 12–14, 2023. He presented the paper on "Assessing the Rising Dragon and the Changing World Power Constellation: The Need for a New Paradigm." Between October 20 and 22, he also attended the 28th ACPSS International Conference at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA. He presented the paper on "China-Related Legislation in the 118th Congress of the United States: Political and Trend Analyses."



Tammy Rice, BSW Program Director, recently received two grants from the Community Foundation of Northwest Georgia in support of the BSW program’s ongoing mental health initiative. The program received \$2,500 for the Spring 2024 community wide mental health symposium and \$24,400. for the LCSW licensure initiative.

The symposium will gather stakeholders from across the community to discuss the state of mental health in Dalton/Whitfield/Murray and how to best address mental health disparities, especially those impacting the Hispanic/ Latino/a/x community members. The licensure initiative will help fund bilingual clinical supervision for Spanish speaking LMSW clinicians engaged in LCSW supervision. As a part of the supervision program these clinicians will provide pro bono therapy to the Spanish speaking community upon receiving their clinical license.

In addition, Tammy was recently appointed by the Council on Social Work Education Board of Accreditation as a CSWE site visitor. Site visitors serve three year terms and are responsible for completing accreditation visits for BSW and MSW programs to ensure compliance with accrediting standards.

Submit to the Digest!

Faculty members and professional staff may submit any of the following:

- Essay of personal reflection of a classroom incident or phenomenon with an evidence- or theory-based approach to interpreting the incident or phenomenon.
- Updates or interviews related to programs, initiatives, or centers around campus.
- Professional accomplishments,
- Upcoming Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Conferences of interest to multiple disciplines.

Submissions should be sent as Word files to journal@daltonstate.edu. All submissions should be accompanied by an image or graphic related to the topic of the submission. Faculty and staff headshots should only be included with professional accomplishments submissions. Published submissions will appear in the next issue of ***Dalton State Digest*** and appear on the publication’s website. Submissions may be edited for length and clarity.