

Middle Georgia State Today



SPRING 2013

Middle Georgia State Today is circulated to friends, faculty, staff and alumni of Middle Georgia State College.

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DEAR FRIENDS,

History was made on January 8, 2013, when the consolidation of Macon State College and Middle Georgia College became official. Two weeks later, I was privileged to lead a bus tour of the institution's leaders and some of our Foundation trustees on a tour of all five campuses of the new Middle Georgia State College, an event we called "A Day of Knights" in honor of our new mascot. The positive response we received from leaders in each community, and from faculty, staff and students on the various campuses, confirmed for me why the Board of Regents was confident that the two former institutions – each with a rich history and strong traditions – could make this merger work.

Of course, the enormous task of consolidation is ongoing. Representatives of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools will visit Middle Georgia State later this year to verify our work on what is called a "Substantive Change Prospectus," which we were required to complete in order for the accrediting agency to grant tentative approval of the consolidation. If the visiting SACS team verifies the accuracy of the many facets covered in the prospectus – and I believe it will – then the Board of Regents will consider granting the institution university status within a couple of years. That is a tremendously exciting prospect for the Middle Georgia region.

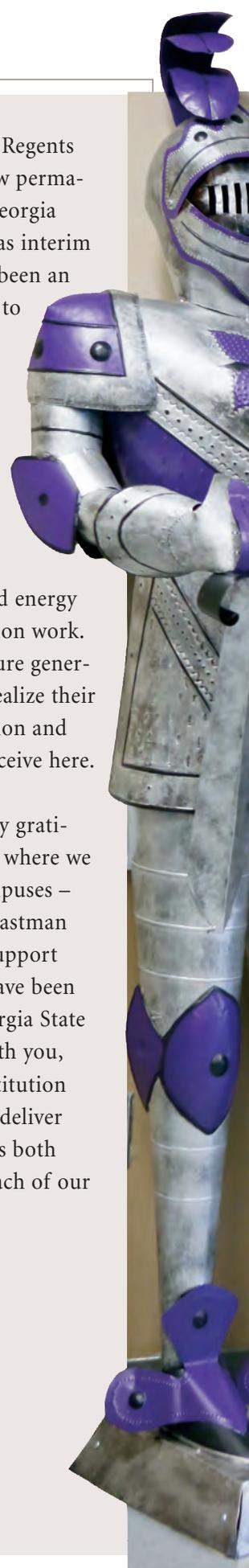
In the very near future, the Regents will begin a search for a new permanent president of Middle Georgia State College and my term as interim will come to an end. It has been an honor and privilege for me to preside over this significant time in the history of two distinguished institutions. There is probably no way I could ever adequately thank Middle Georgia State's faculty, staff and administrators, who have invested enormous time and energy into making the consolidation work. Their legacy will be the future generations of students able to realize their dreams through the education and other opportunities they receive here.

Finally, I want to express my gratitude to the people who live where we have brick-and-mortar campuses – Macon, Cochran, Dublin, Eastman and Warner Robins. Your support and your encouragement have been overwhelming. Middle Georgia State will continue to interact with you, our constituents, as the institution evolves, and we promise to deliver higher education that drives both growth and prosperity in each of our communities.

Most sincerely,



John B. Black
Interim President





Dr. John Black, Interim President

Taking Shape

Consolidation becomes official, kicking off the evolution of Middle Georgia State College.

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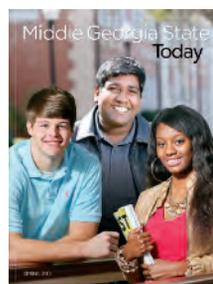
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Where Are They Now?

This regular feature profiles recent graduates sharing news of their career or graduate school success – or both!

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On the Cover



Representing the diverse student body of Middle Georgia State College are, left to right, Holden Copeland of Macon; Dylan John of Nawala, Sri Lanka; and Ondreya Grant of Conyers.

PHOTOS BY MARYANN BATES



The “Freshman Friendly” Cochran Campus offers the most traditional college experience of all of the Middle Georgia State campuses. FILE PHOTO.

"It's cool to be part of something new."

—Ondreya Grant, freshman

Middle Georgia State College

TAKES SHAPE

By Sheron Smith

*Consolidation remains a work in progress,
but students begin to embrace the new institution.*

[O]ndreya Grant wasted no time taking advantage of the opportunities the merger of Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges gave her.

A freshman from Conyers, Grant was a member of the former Macon State's Campus Activities Board. That was her ticket to participate in a leadership workshop with students of the former Middle Georgia College shortly after the two schools consolidated into a new five-campus institution.

"It was great to be able to make those connections with kids from the other campuses," said Grant, 19, a public service major. "The things that attracted us to Macon State or Middle Georgia still exist but now we're at a bigger school. It's cool to be part of something new."

On January 8, 2013, nearly one year to the day after recommending the consolidation of Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges, the University System of Georgia's Board of Regents voted to make it official. The Macon and Warner Robins campuses of the former Macon State College and the Cochran, Dublin and Eastman campuses of the former Middle Georgia College now form a single institution – Middle

Georgia State College – that is expected to become a university within a few years.

Visible evidence of consolidation steadily rolled out as spring semester unfolded.

Workers began replacing signage on all campuses. Bookstores on all five campuses stocked sportswear and novelty items with the new "Knights" logo. Tech services staff unveiled a new website and continued to develop it. Student leaders on all campuses began interacting to make long-range plans for working together. Faculty members representing both former institutions formed a new faculty senate.

It will take years for the merger to be fully realized, but like a spring bloom, the early signs symbolize great things to come.

"Not many institutions get a chance to develop a new character," said Dr. John B. Black, Middle Georgia State's interim president. "There is still a lot of work to do, but I think within 10 years this will be a destination university. With five campuses throughout the region we're perfectly positioned to attract students from Atlanta and Savannah and all points in between."

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A Firm Foundation

University System Chancellor Hank Huckaby in early 2012 proposed consolidation of eight institutions as part of his focus on increasing college completion rates, broadening access to public higher education and maintaining affordability.

Macon State and Middle Georgia were chosen as consolidation partners due to the potential that one regional institution could increase degree offerings to a larger geographic area, enhance education attainment rates and expand distance-learning options.

Leading up to the merger, numerous work groups and subcommittees addressed a staggering number of

issues related to consolidation. How would two different academic structures be combined? What about accreditation? How would differences in tuition rates be resolved? What about athletics, given that only one college (Middle Georgia) offered inter-collegiate sports? How would student information systems be merged and other technology issues addressed? What about differences in faculty matters, such as governance, promotion and tenure?

Not every issue is resolved, but a solid foundation for the new Middle Georgia State College has been laid:



- In December 2012, officials from SACS, the Southeast’s accrediting organization for higher education, announced the approval of the Substantive Change Prospectus submitted by Middle Georgia State College. That was the final step needed for the Board of Regents to grant its authorization for the new institution to begin to operate and to appoint a president. SACS representatives will visit Middle Georgia State later this year to verify the information in the prospectus. From there, if all goes well, the Board of Regents will consider elevating the college to university status within a few years.

- The new institution is guided by this mission statement: “The mission of Middle Georgia State College is to serve the educational needs of a diverse population through high quality programs connected to community needs in a global context and to serve as a leader for the intellectual, economic, and cultural life of the region.”

- Based on the fall 2012 enrollments of the formerly separate institutions, Middle Georgia State has an enrollment of about 8,800 students. It offers 20 bachelor’s degrees, along with a wide variety of associate’s degrees. Some certificate programs, mostly concentrated at Middle Georgia State’s aviation campus in Eastman, also are offered. Student housing is located on the Macon, Cochran and Eastman campuses.

- Discussions continue about which academic programs will be offered on what campuses, but one move sure to take place is the expansion of bachelor’s degree programs on the Cochran Campus, which was the former Middle Georgia College’s main campus. Middle Georgia College was the oldest residential two-year institution of higher education in the nation, although it had recently begun to offer a few bachelor’s degrees. Macon State became a baccalaureate institution in 1997 and eventually offered as many as 18 bachelor’s degrees.

- Middle Georgia State’s academic schools are: School of Aviation; School of Business; School of Distance Learning; School of Education; School of Health Sciences; School of Information Technology; School of Liberal Arts; School of Science and Mathematics; and School of Social Sciences. Each school has a dean. All schools except Distance Learning are further divided into academic departments, each with a chairperson.



Middle Georgia State College is to serve as a leader for the intellectual, economic, and cultural life of the region.

- A single tuition rate is set, although the activities fees students pay will vary, depending on where they take their classes and their number of credit hours.

- “Knights” is the new college’s mascot, and purple, black and silver/gray are the new colors, as voted on by students. A mascot logo, institutional logo and school seal were designed and introduced.

- Intercollegiate sports in basketball, soccer, baseball, softball and tennis are based on the Cochran Campus and will continue to compete in the National Junior College Athletic Association but will seek to join the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The teams played out their final seasons as “Warriors” this spring and will transition to “Knights” during the 2013-2014 academic year.

- The philanthropic foundations of the former Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges have been realigned. The Middle Georgia State College Foundation was created and designated the philanthropic foundation. It now holds all donor-contributed funds of both colleges. The Middle Georgia State College Real Estate Foundation was created to manage student housing and other facilities funded by bonds.

Article continues on page 10 ►

Middle Georgia State College is in the process of changing all the signs on the campuses of the former Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges. This sign marks an entrance to the Cochran Campus near the student housing community. PHOTO BY MARYANN BATES

An education class at the Warner Robins Campus poses for a photo during "A Day of Knights," a daylong, celebratory tour of Middle Georgia State's five campuses by its leaders that took place on January 23. PHOTO BY JASON VORHEES





Making a Mark

One of Middle Georgia State's major tasks is determining how to reintroduce itself to prospective students and other audiences while different facets of the merger continue to evolve. It's a daunting challenge, said Dr. Sheri Rowland, vice president for Enrollment Management, but one filled with opportunities.



Dr. John B. Black, Middle Georgia State's first president (interim), talks to Eastman Campus students during "A Day of Knights."
PHOTO BY MARYANN BATES

"It's allowed us, among other things, to establish a new regional recruiting model," she said. "Over the next five years, we think we can really make our mark within the state, in the Southeast region and with international students."

She noted that with Middle Georgia State's five campuses extending the college's reach beyond the areas traditionally targeted by the two former colleges, a full-time recruiter is now based in each of the Atlanta, Valdosta and Albany areas.

Another recruiting campaign in full swing is the promotion of the Cochran Campus as "Freshman Friendly." Rowland said the phrase is not meant to imply that the college's other campuses are not accommodating to freshmen; it's simply a way to acknowledge and strengthen the kind of college

experience the residential Cochran Campus offers to students right out of high school.

"That campus has all the nurturing elements of a traditional college environment," Rowland said. "For students living away from home for the first time, it's an ideal environment. We have strong residential communities there, small class sizes in core courses, learning communities, intercollegiate athletics and a wide variety of social and recreational activities. The Cochran Campus is one of the keys to building Middle Georgia State's enrollment over the next few years."

The college is also going after adult learners who already have some college but never completed degrees.

"That's a target demographic of the governor's Complete College Georgia initiative," said Dr. Martha Venn, vice president for Academic Affairs. "As a consolidated institution, we have more resources to help those students, whether it's helping them enroll in evening classes on one of our physical campuses or developing more online courses."

When consolidation was announced 18 months ago, some students from both institutions were upset while others were excited about the possibilities. Today, those who took the time to follow the merger process agree that the new institution creates opportunities for themselves and the students who come after them.

"I think the consolidation will result in a bigger, better school," said Michaela Etter, a junior biology major who had been a Middle Georgia College student. "Expanding into five campuses will give future students more choices in their education."

Johnathan Jackson, a junior and SGA president at the former Macon State, said Middle Georgia State College will begin to seem "real" to many students now that the consolidation is official.

"I think most students are going to be excited once the changes sink in," he said. "This is an opportunity to create new traditions. Even though I will have moved on by then, I'm looking forward to seeing what the college looks like over the next five to 10 years." ■

Middle Georgia State College Degree Programs

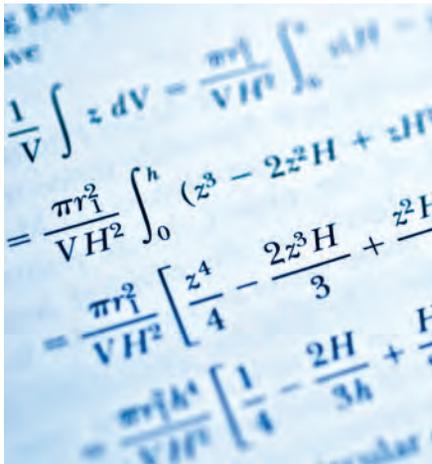


Bachelor's Degrees

Biology, B.S.
 Business Administration, B.S.
 Business and Information Technology, B.S.
 Criminal Justice, B.S.
 Early Childhood Special Education Non-Certification, B.S.
 Early Childhood Special Education, B.S.
 English, B.A.
 Health Services Administration, B.S.
 History, B.A.
 Information Technology (Online), B.S.
 Information Technology, B.S.
 Interdisciplinary Studies, B.A.
 Mathematics, B.S.
 Middle Grades Education, B.S.
 New Media and Communications, B.S.
 Nursing, Pre-Licensure, B.S.N.
 Nursing, RN to BSN, B.S.N.
 Psychology, B.S.
 Public Service / Human Services, B.S.
 Respiratory Therapy, B.S.

Associate's Degrees

Air Traffic Management, A.A.S.
 Aircraft Structural Technology, A.A.S.
 Art, A.A.
 Aviation Maintenance Technology, A.A.S.
 Avionics Technology, A.A.S.
 Biology, A.S.
 Business Administration and Aviation Management, A.S.
 Business Administration, A.S.
 Chemistry, A.S.
 Communication Studies, A.A.
 Computer Science, A.S.
 Criminal Justice, A.S.
 Early Childhood Special Education, A.S.
 Engineering Technology, A.S.
 English, A.A.
 Flight Technology - Airplane, A.A.S.
 Flight Technology - Helicopter, A.A.S.
 General Studies, A.A.
 Geology, A.S.
 History, A.A.
 Mathematics, A.S.
 Middle Grades Education, A.S.
 Modern Language, A.A.
 Music, A.A.
 Nursing, A.S.N.
 Occupational Therapy Assistant, A.S.
 Physics, A.S.
 Political Science, A.S.
 Psychology, A.S.
 Respiratory Therapy, A.S.
 Social Work, A.S.
 Sociology, A.S.
 Surveying, A.S.
 Theatre, A.A.



Certificates

Air Transport Pilot Management; Aircraft Structural Technology; Aircraft Structural Worker; Airline Management; Airport Management; Aviation Maintenance Technology Airframe; Aviation Maintenance Technology Airframe & Powerplant; Aviation Maintenance Technology Powerplant; Avionics Technology; Commercial Pilot – Airplane; Commercial Pilot – Helicopter; Criminal Justice; Criminal Justice Leadership; Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management; Flight Instructor – Airplane; Flight Instructor – Helicopter; Flight Technology – Airplane; Flight Technology – Helicopter; Graphic Arts; Instrument Pilot Rating Airplane; Multi-Engine Pilot Airplane; Supply Chain Management; Surveying; Unmanned Aerial Systems



MACON

The Campuses of Middle Georgia State College

[L]ocated in Bibb County near Interstate 475, convenient to Macon and Warner Robins, is the **Macon Campus** of Middle Georgia State College. The 419-acre campus – the main campus of Middle Georgia State – includes a beautiful lake and has a dozen major buildings, including the Professional Science & Conference Center and the state-of-the-art Education Building. Student housing is available on the Macon Campus, which also is home to the Waddell Barnes Botanical Gardens. The Macon Campus has grown significantly since the late 1990s when bachelor's degrees were introduced, and it

continues to expand student life opportunities. Construction of a recreation/wellness center is underway.

Situated near the town center of Cochran, the historic **Cochran Campus** in Bleckley County is noted for its beauty, characterized by a traditional quad and stately oaks. The campus covers about 182 acres and includes a scenic lake. Buildings include Dillard Hall, Russell Hall, Walker Hall and Whipple Hall, as well as recreation and athletic facilities. Student housing is available on the Cochran Campus, where Middle

Georgia State's intercollegiate athletics program is based. The Cochran Campus is home to the Georgia Academy for Aviation, Mathematics, Engineering and Sciences (GAMES), a program for highly motivated high school students, and a Post-Secondary Readiness Enrichment Program (PREP).

The **Dublin Campus** extends the reach of Middle Georgia State College into Laurens County and surrounding areas. The 49-acre campus includes a main library building, which provides classroom space and computer labs. An annex building provides additional classrooms, a nursing lab and a computer lab. Programs on the Dublin Campus lead to associate's degrees, including the associate of science in nursing. The campus has the potential to grow significantly in the next few years.

The **Eastman Campus** in Dodge County is devoted almost entirely to aviation programs. It is the only campus in the University System of Georgia that includes flight training and airport management programs. Located adjacent to the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport, the campus takes up 22 acres, including five acres of building space. The primary academic building houses classrooms, teaching labs and computer labs. There are five hangars located in the main building for storage and maintenance of a fleet of airplanes and helicopters used in training and instruction. Eastman is a residential campus and offers bachelor's and associate's degrees and certificates related to aviation.

Opened in 2003, the **Warner Robins Campus** in Houston County is located just a half mile from the main gate of Robins Air Force Base. The campus takes up about 72 acres. Two acres are currently devoted to building space, which means there is plenty of room for future expansion in what is one of Georgia's fastest growing counties. Buildings include Thomas Hall, the Academic Services Building and Oak Hall. Library services are provided through a cooperative agreement with neighboring Nola Brantley Public Library. Warner Robins Campus instruction supports bachelor's degrees in IT, business and early childhood education, along with several associate's degrees. ■



COCHRAN



DUBLIN



EASTMAN



WARNER ROBINS

Dublin Campus Fills Vital Role for Middle Georgia State

By Sheron Smith

[A]ustin Jones wanted to go to college right after high school, but at the time he needed to help support his financially struggling family. He put his education on hold while he worked full time building fences.

He was nearly 30 when he finally was able to enroll at the Dublin Campus of what is now Middle Georgia State College. Today, he is thriving as a student leader and member of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society.

“I’m grateful there was a campus where I live so I could start college,” said Jones, now 32, a psychology major whose goal is to earn a doctorate and become a therapist working with troubled teens.

“The Dublin Campus is convenient and has a good reputation. It’s not overwhelming, which is good for people like me who were out of school for a while.”

About 700 students attend the Dublin Campus, which has served Laurens County and the surrounding area for nearly three decades.



Partly located in a former hospital that Laurens County donated to the University System of Georgia, which renovated the space into classrooms, it could be the only campus any place where faculty and staff occasionally hear students say “I was born here” and know they mean it literally.

“We also have a morgue,” said the campus’s affable director, Dr. Stephen Svonavec. “We use it for storage.”

Laurens County, about an hour southeast of Macon, is the site of a major Veterans Administration hospital and a regional hub for distribution centers. A recent Telegraph article noted that two large companies, Dinex, a Danish manufacturer of automotive exhaust and emission systems, and another vehicle supplier, Germany-based Erdrich Umformtechnik GmbH & Co., have major expansions underway in the county.

The economic growth potential along Interstate 16 is expected to continue, placing the Dublin Campus in a strategic position. Svonavec said Middle Georgia State is planning a needs assessment to see what bachelor’s degree programs it could offer in Dublin that are most in demand and would support area economic interests.

Article continues on page 16 ▶



Austin Jones, a sophomore majoring in psychology, shops for Middle Georgia State swag in the Dublin Campus bookstore. Being part of the newly consolidated institution “is something to be proud of,” he said. PHOTO BY SHERON SMITH



The Dublin Campus was the first stop on “A Day of Knights,” a daylong bus tour of Middle Georgia State’s top administrators to each of the college’s five campuses. PHOTO BY MARYANN BATES



For her English 1102 class, freshman **Brooke Wilson** studies the works of Emily Dickinson in the Dublin Campus library. An aspiring pharmacist, Wilson, 19, moved to Dublin from McRae specifically to enroll at the Dublin Campus. PHOTO BY SHERON SMITH

“All of the professors are really great.”
—Brooke Wilson

Currently, the Dublin Campus offers the University System’s core curriculum and about 20 associate’s degrees, including nursing.

“If we could offer a handful of bachelor’s degrees here, that would mean more students at this campus would stay at Middle Georgia State instead of transferring,” Svonavec said. “But, really, I think just being part of a larger consolidated institution is going to encourage more of our students to stay. Dublin may not get the specific bachelor’s degree a student wants, but there’s a great chance one of our other campuses will have it.”

The Dublin Campus originated in 1984 when it opened in a downtown location as a resident center of several University System schools, including the former Middle Georgia College. (The other schools are no longer involved.) The campus later moved to the renovated hospital building (known as the

Dublin Building) on Kellam Road, near Carl Vinson VA Medical Center.

Enrollment growth at the new location prompted the Board of Regents to fund the construction of a new building in 2000. That facility, which students and employees call the Library Building, serves as the campus’s main entrance.

A few years ago, the Veterans Administration donated to the Regents an old annex building and 40 acres of land for the Dublin Campus’s use. Part of the annex is being renovated for the nursing degree program.

“We have plenty of room for future expansion,” Svonavec said.

The new and renovated buildings have coalesced into a friendly feeling commuter campus that focuses on quality instruction (12 full-time and a number of part-time faculty are based on the Dublin Campus) while mixing in opportunities for students – about 70 percent of whom are traditional college age – to get involved outside the classroom.

MIDDLE GEORGIA STATE COLLEGE

The University System of Georgia



Dr. Stephen Svonavec, left, Dublin Campus director, receives from Mayor Phil Best a copy of the proclamation declaring "Middle Georgia State College Day" in Dublin. PHOTO BY MARYANN BATES

Scotty Rainwater, the campus's coordinator of student services, said a number of Dublin students, whom he affectionately calls "Dubsters," are active in such organizations as the Multicultural Club and the Middle Georgia State Association of Nursing Students. The campus has a Student Government Association, which Rainwater advises. Recently, the SGA sponsored the 17th annual Battle of the Bands competition, part of Dublin's St. Patrick's Day Festival celebration.

"There is always something to do here, whether we are hosting a large event like Battle of the Bands or Spring Fling, or holding a collection drive for the Dublin-Laurens Humane Society," Rainwater said. "For every day time event we have, we try to have a corresponding evening event so our non-traditional students with families can participate. Being a commuter campus can pose difficulty for planning activities, but we have many students who really want to be involved."

"Being part of a larger consolidated institution is going to encourage more of our students to stay."

— Dr. Stephen Svonavec

An associate professor of history who still teaches classes, Svonavec became director of the Dublin Campus in early 2012, right about the time the consolidation of the former Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges was announced. The merger, which became official in January 2013, remains a work in progress, but Svonavec believes the Dublin Campus will reap many short- and long-term benefits.

"This early after consolidation I'm not sure our students have noticed many differences on a day-to-day basis just yet," he said, "but they will. Being part of Middle Georgia State College is a nice recruiting tool, and it's going to give all of us – students, faculty, staff and the community – more opportunities." ■

For more information about the Dublin Campus of Middle Georgia State College, visit www.mga.edu/about/campuses/dublin.aspx.

Presidential Scholarship Program Draws Top Students to Middle Georgia State

By Sheron Smith

[L]ike many high school seniors, Kristin Hanlin of Warner Robins wanted to go to college away from home, preferably out of state.

But to please her mother, she attended an information session about the Presidential Scholarship program established by what was then the Macon State College Foundation. The \$20,000 scholarships, aimed at high-achieving students, represent the Foundation's largest awards ever.

"That (information session) completely changed my mind," said Hanlin, now a junior majoring in English at Middle Georgia State. "I applied for a scholarship and got one, and I can't begin to tell you how helpful it's been. I haven't had to work and I can focus completely on my studies and extracurricular activities. I'm grateful for that because the academics here are very challenging."

Now in its sixth year, the Foundation's Presidential Scholarship program has given a full financial ride to 25 top high school students who enrolled at what is now Middle Georgia State College in pursuit of bachelor's degrees. Eight of the recipients have graduated and are now establishing careers or going to graduate school.

A few recipients ended up transferring to other institutions that offered the degrees they decided to pursue. A dozen, including Hanlin, remain enrolled and are on track to graduate.

"These students represent the best and brightest and really raise the academic bar at Middle Georgia State," said Sue Chipman, associate vice president for Development and Alumni Affairs. "We wanted to create a scholarship program that would get the attention of the top students at area high schools, and I think we've accomplished that."

To be eligible to apply for the scholarships, high school seniors must score at least a 1,200 on the read-

ing and math portions of the SAT and hold a 3.5 grade point average. The scholarships are awarded in \$5,000 increments per academic year, renewed as long as the student maintains certain grade requirements.

For a full-time student pursuing a bachelor's degree, the grand total of Middle Georgia State tuition and fees is just under \$15,000. So, **as long as they maintain sufficient grades, Presidential Scholarship recipients can cover the entire cost of their education and have enough money left over to apply toward living expenses.**

"That was by design," Chipman said. "It allows students to be fully engaged in campus life and become campus leaders. I know that several of our recipients have used some of the money to study abroad. One was able to use part of her award to get her car repaired so she could get back and forth to school."

Hanlin served as editor-in-chief of the student newspaper and is active in the English honor society. She hopes to be a professional writer and is also considering a teaching career. Whatever path she takes, she knows her Presidential Scholarship has given her a huge head start.

"I'm financially stable," she said. "That's a great feeling."

Below are more detailed descriptions of the endowed Presidential Scholarships currently offered through the Middle Georgia State College Foundation. For more information, email development@macon-state.edu.

David A. Bell Endowed Presidential Scholarship for the Humanities – The Macon State College Foundation Board of Trustees established this scholarship to honor David A. Bell, Ph.D., for his exemplary leadership of Macon State during the college's most



Kristin Hanlin, a high-achieving Warner Robins High School graduate, planned to go away to college until she received a Presidential Scholarship from what is now the Middle Georgia State College Foundation. PHOTO BY MARYANN BATES

accelerated growth in its history, 1997-2011. This scholarship serves as a lasting tribute to Dr. Bell for his many contributions to Macon State, the region and its citizens. The scholarship will be awarded to an incoming freshman who plans to pursue a bachelor's degree at Middle Georgia State majoring in any of the humanities.

Barbara J. Stickel Central Georgia Health System Endowed Presidential Scholarship in Nursing –

Established by Central Georgia Health System to honor Barbara J. Stickel, retired nursing officer and her distinguished 40-year career of recognized leadership in the field of nursing. This scholarship will be awarded to a high-achieving incoming freshman pursuing a bachelor's degree in nursing at Middle Georgia State who is notable for exemplifying academic excellence on national achievement exams, and, preferably, demonstrating service to others.

Charles H. Jones Family Foundation Presidential –

As a member of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, Charles H. Jones was passionate about improving access to public higher education throughout Georgia and committed to playing a very positive role in restructuring facilities and fiscal management in the University System. The scholarship was established by Charles H. Jones and the Charles H. Jones Family Foundation to provide an annual award to a high-achieving entering freshman pursuing a baccalaureate degree at Middle Georgia State College.

The Peyton Anderson Foundation Endowed

Presidential – The Peyton Anderson Foundation Scholarship was established by a generous gift from The Peyton Anderson Foundation, Inc. Peyton Anderson Jr., a native of Macon and one-time owner of The Macon Telegraph and The Macon News, established the Foundation stating that the people of Macon, Bibb County and Central Georgia had been good to him and he, in return, wished to be good to them. The scholarships are awarded to outstanding Bibb County public or private high school seniors who plan to attend the Macon or Warner Robins campuses of Middle Georgia State. ■



Long-Awaited Center Will Enhance Recreation and Wellness Program for Macon Campus Students

By Sheron Smith

The old real estate adage “location, location, location” holds true for the new recreation and wellness center now under construction on the Macon Campus.

It’s the first facility to be built on the far north side of the campus and will complete the transformation of an area once thick with tall pines until a 2008 tornado swept through. The building will have a spectacular view of the campus lake.

“We want our students to get academic experiences of the highest caliber while they enjoy an atmosphere that is warm, inviting and motivating,” said Dr. John Black, Middle Georgia State College’s interim president. “This new building, with its incredible view of the lake,

will greatly enhance that atmosphere for students on the Macon Campus.”

The \$21.5 million center, expected to be completed in spring 2014, will be located across Ivey Drive from College Station, the Macon Campus’ student residential community. Planned features of the center include aquatics and fitness areas; basketball, volleyball and racquetball courts; interactive gaming area; and an indoor walking track.

The rec center lobby will be a public area where visitors can buy food and see the aquatics area through glass walls. Beyond the lobby, access will be restricted to Middle Georgia State students (those taking classes on the Macon Campus are paying for the center through a



Macon Campus Recreation & Wellness Center. Projected Opening: Late spring semester, 2014. Location: Immediately north of the campus lake bridge, on the Columbus Road side of the Macon Campus. Size: 84,000 square feet. Cost: \$21.5 million. Architect: Lyman Davidson Dooley, Inc. Builder: Chris R. Sheridan & Co.

\$140 per semester recreation and wellness fee) and employees assigned to the building. Faculty and staff who want to use the rec center's facilities will pay a monthly fee.

For years, the Macon Campus's recreation and wellness program has been housed in an aging gym and an adjacent building that limited any growth. The new rec center was planned several years ago but construction was put on hold while the former Macon State and Middle Georgia colleges worked through the process of consolidation, which became official in January 2013.

"We're very excited to have this project back on track," said David Sims, assistant vice president for Facilities and Plant Operations. "We're putting in

everything we can that students have asked for. The recreation and wellness center won't be just for athletes. Students more interested in gaming and other activities will find the facility offers a lot to them, too."

Middle Georgia State recently expanded recreation and wellness on the Warner Robins Campus.

In fall 2012, the Warner Robins Activity Center & Café opened. The WRACC (pronounced 'rack') includes a fitness center, video gaming area, ping pong and pool tables and a food service area. The campus also developed a walking trail.

Students taking classes on the Warner Robins Campus support the enhanced rec and wellness opportunities through a \$40 per semester fee. ■

“Being placed in a new conference will give us much greater visibility, and we will be able to compete with bigger schools, where we belong.”

— Charles Mullis



Left to right are Shelby Ashley, Nate Ashley and Tricia Wharton, who will play varsity tennis for the Knights this fall.
PHOTO BY GREG ROWLAND

Becoming Knights

By Tricia Purser



The consolidation of Middle Georgia College and Macon State College kicked off a process of combining two distinctive athletics programs into the Middle Georgia State College Knights.

Before the consolidation, Macon State was home to Blue Storm club sports, while Middle Georgia College was home to the varsity athletics Warriors. Macon State's club sports included baseball, men and women's basketball, cheer club, dance club and football club, among others. Middle Georgia College's varsity athletics included six teams: baseball, softball, men and women's soccer, and men and women's basketball.

Now, Knights are coming in both varsity athletics and club sports.

The next step is for Middle Georgia State to seek permission from the Board of Regents to begin the application process to transfer from the National Junior College Athletic Association to a larger conference, such as the Southern States Athletic Conference or the Appalachian Athletic Conference, and then the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. With membership in the NAIA, the Knights would be eligible to compete on a national level. If all goes as planned, the Knights could begin competing in the NAIA in fall 2014.

Admittance into a larger conference would reflect the growing number of students at the new consolidated institution, said Charles Mullis, director of Student Recreation and Athletics. "Being placed in a new conference will give us much greater visibility, and we will be able to compete with bigger schools, where we belong."

Due to bylaws established by the NJCAA, schools with varsity athletics are not allowed to have duplicate varsity and club sports teams, so Middle Georgia State's club baseball, softball and basketball teams end after spring semester 2013. However, club sports such as rugby and bass fishing will remain, and students from all campuses can participate. The football club team will remain but be based at the Cochran Campus this fall.

James Hagler, associate director of Recreation and Athletics, said the transition to the Knights will be beneficial for students. "There will be more things for students to do outside of the classroom," he said.

Cole Thompson, a freshman on the Warrior baseball team, said he is looking forward to becoming a Knight. The transition "will bring more opportunities for students in athletics."

Caitlin Greer, a freshman on the Warrior softball team, said the transitioning into the Knights is a new beginning. "It will be awesome for more athletes to come to the Cochran Campus," she said. "We all hang out and support each other, so more athletes will be a good thing." ■

A bit of athletic history was made April 22, when three Northside High School students signed to play for the first intercollegiate teams – men and women's tennis – created since Middle Georgia College and Macon State College merged to become Middle Georgia State College. "We have several high quality high school tennis teams in the area, but until now students had to leave to find college opportunities," said Charles Mullis, director of Student Recreation and Athletics. "We are very excited to serve the needs of these athletes."



Cathy Miller works at the National Archives at Atlanta while pursuing a graduate degree. PHOTO COURTESY OF MAUREEN HILL



Where Are They Now?

Cathy Miller

Archives Technician and
Graduate Student in Atlanta

*Bachelor of Arts in History, President's Scholar,
Class of 2009, Macon State College*

“**[I]** have always loved history. It was my favorite subject throughout grade school. Therefore, it seemed only natural to pursue this for my undergraduate degree. If there is one piece of knowledge I can impart to people, it is to follow your passion when it comes to choosing your major. While at Macon State, I was an active member in the Student Government Association (SGA). In my three years with SGA, I served as secretary, vice-president and president. I also participated in the Model United Nations Club, which was truly amazing. Over the span of two years, we represented both Iran and North Korea. You can just imagine how we were the darlings of the General Assembly. I was honored also to be part of the inaugural group of the college's Student Ambassadors. And I would be remiss if I did not mention the Macon State College History Student Organization (now the Middle Georgia State College History Student Organization), an amazing group of students led by an even more amazing group of professors.

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“Since graduating from Macon State, I have been working as an archives technician at the National Archives at Atlanta in Morrow. As a history major, I spent my fair share of time in archives doing research, but using an archive is nothing like actually working in one. And I love it! I realized a few months into my job that being an archivist is what I wanted to do with my life. Toward that goal, I began the master of archival studies program at Clayton State University in fall 2012.

“Learning to become an archivist has been a fascinating journey. In the summer of 2011, I attended the Georgia Archives Institute, which is a two-week crash course on the principles and practices of archives. Another very exciting opportunity for advancement happened last summer when I was selected as the Mary Wolfskill Trust Fund Intern for the Manuscript Division at the Library of Congress. While meeting famous historians was a perk, the internship was most amazing for the learning experiences it provided me. I also cannot



“The investment I put into Macon State was paid back in full.” —Cathy Miller

stress enough the valuable experience I have gained through my employment at the National Archives.

“My experience at Macon State was transformative. The person I was as a freshman was not the person who graduated five years later. I have succeeded in my chosen career field in part because of the opportunities afforded me in both education and extracurricular activities at Macon State. The investment I put into Macon State was paid back in full. What I find most amazing of all is the investment of the professors in helping their students to succeed. They truly care!

“My advice to current Middle Georgia State students is GET TO KNOW YOUR PROFESSORS! The benefits I have received from the relationships I was able to build with my professors are numerous. Your professors can help you in your job search, enlighten you as to other careers you may not have realized your degree was applicable to, and most advantageous of all, they can write letters of recommendation!

“My second piece of advice would be GET INVOLVED! The people you will meet through involvement in extracurricular activities can provide you with new friends and networking opportunities. I’m pretty sure I would never hear the end of it from my professors if I did not stress the importance of being a serious student. After all, you are going to college to get a degree. However, I feel that a student’s academic success is largely informed by how engaged they are with the complete college experience. This means not only late nights with several cups of coffee but also active interaction with your professors, showing them that you are invested in what they are teaching.

“In 2008, while still at Macon State, I was asked on a questionnaire where I saw myself in five years. I said I hoped to be pursuing my master’s degree and working in a career that I find fulfilling and enriching, and, hopefully, driving a 1983 Pontiac Trans Am Firebird because it is my dream car. I am happy to say that the first two goals have been met. Much to my chagrin, I have not yet acquired my dream car. But all in good time.”

Michael Parkerson

Deputy Director of Operations,
Georgia Public Safety Training Center

*Associate of Business Management
Middle Georgia, College Class of 2002*

“**I** earned an associate of business management from Middle Georgia College in 2002, and a bachelor’s in business administration from the University of Georgia in 2004. I started working at an early age and found that as I grew older, I had more and more questions about business. I chose my major because it was a natural fit. I am glad I pursued a business degree because business is ever changing and requires me to constantly look at situations analytically, and I think my education provided me with a solid foundation suitable for the challenge. My time at Middle Georgia College set the foundation for my professional career. It was there that I began developing my networking and business skills, which I have used every step of the way.

“When I attended Middle Georgia College, I commuted to school and worked a part-time job, like many others. This didn’t leave much time for extracurricular activities, although now I wish I had found the time and had been more involved on campus. I didn’t realize it then, but that was the time in my life that I had the most unstructured free time and I should have put it to the best use possible. If I had to do it over again, I would have been much more involved in extracurricular activities and networking opportunities, and I would give that advice to today’s students.

“While at UGA, I worked as an intern for the Speaker of the Georgia House of Representatives. Upon graduation, I went to work as a budget analyst for the Georgia House of Representatives Budget Office. After two years there, I accepted a position to head the Homeland Security Program at the Georgia Department of Agriculture. When the deputy commissioner made his bid for labor commissioner, I left the Department of Agriculture to be his campaign manager.



“I would advise current students to learn inside and outside of the classroom and to build relationships. And most importantly, don’t be afraid to create your own path.”

—Michael Parkerson

“In 2011, I went to work as fiscal services director for the Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia. In that role, I managed the budget for the state’s elected prosecutors and their staff and also served as the legislative liaison. When Georgia Public Safety Training Center Director Tim Bearden asked me to serve as his deputy director of operations in April 2012, I realized that this move would allow me to continue serving the state that has given me so much.

“I am enjoying the work I do at the training center, which allows me to work with some of the sharpest minds in public safety. I have also recently earned my real estate license and am involved with the Board of Trustees of Middle Georgia State College.

“I would advise current students to learn inside and outside of the classroom and to build relationships. And most importantly, don’t be afraid to create your own path.” ■



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