Howdy!

What a second quarter our division had! Remember when I said that? Well, things continue to go very well thanks to everybody’s hard work. Last quarter, we bragged about the Wolves football team’s great success. This quarter, we have the opportunity to brag about the successes of men’s basketball (22-9, GSC tri-Champions and NCAA Regional qualifiers), women’s basketball (19-11, finished 4th in the GSC), baseball (currently 25-13), men’s golf (ranked 7th nationally), and women’s track and field (with relay teams ranked nationally) as well. Deonta Stocks, Alex Abreu, and Taylor Beverly were named to Division 2 All American teams. Wolves athletes continue to increase academic performance as a whole (6 teams had cumulative GPAs of 3.0 or better last fall). Senior wide receiver Alex Macauley was named the first UWG football Academic All American.

The goals for total giving and annual giving fundraising for the entire year were $6 million and $850,000, respectively. At the end of March, total giving was $6.1 million and annual giving had reached $713,000. Total fundraising will top out at or above $7.5 million, the third consecutive year to increase and exceed the university’s previous high. I promised to do a dance if the annual fund reaches its $850,000 goal, so I’ve already started practicing! The percentage of alumni giving has risen substantially this spring and promises to grow even more by the end of June. UCM produces an ever-increasing volume of quality, award-winning work and is just about to release a great piece on last year’s football Championship Run. You’ll want to get one of those as a keepsake.

This is my last entry in our newsletter as VP. I’ve been blessed to work with each of you, I’m proud of you, and I can’t wait to see where and how you grow in the next few years. Thanks for the chance to let me lead you. Go West. Go Wolves!

Bill Estes, Ed.D.
Vice President for University Advancement and 
Executive Director of the UWG Foundation
Congratulations to all the nominees for the Best of the West Awards and Recognition program. It is my pleasure to announce the winners this quarter of the Best of the West award for University Advancement. Please join me in congratulating our winners:

Eddie Duffey  Strategic Imperative
Sandra Nix  Values
Alyson Moffit  Cross-Divisional

Alumni Relations
Frank Pritchett received a Best of the West nod for the value “caring.” The nomination was related to his collaborative work with the family of alumna Lillian Williams, UWG’s first African-American student and graduate.

Meredith Ledbetter received the Irene J. Watts Outstanding Club Woman of the Year award for District 6. She is the first vice president of the Carrollton Junior Woman’s Club. Congrats!

Kevin Hemphill (Alumni Relations) and Jada Marcum (Annual Giving) will present at the iModules “Sizzler” conference this July in Kansas City, MO.

Communications and Marketing
UCM produced another Best of the West divisional winner. Alyson Moffit won the cross-divisional award for University Advancement. Rory Wojcik and Jami Bower received a nomination in the cross-divisional category. Congratulations to all!

Advancement Services
Brian Campbell has joined Advancement Services to fill a newly created position, chief operations and administrative officer for the UWG Foundation. Welcome to UWG, Brian!

Alumni database coordinator, Carolyn Freck, retires from her position on May 31. Thank you, Carolyn, for a job well done!

Alumni Relations
The Alumni Relations team had a stellar year meeting goals and expectations. The trio worked in tandem to produce and execute more than 50 events, which was more than a 100 percent increase from the previous year. Go Team Alumni!

Alumni Weekend has come and gone with success! The three-day event featuring social, intellectual and professional offerings, drew 512 unique individuals to campus and total event head counts exceeded 700. This represents another 100 percent growth rate compared to AW14 data.

AW15 also garnered gifts from event fees that will support two campus scholarship funds: $500 for the Women’s Studies Scholarship, and $610 for the Alumni Association’s Legacy Scholarship Endowment.

The Awards Gala went off without a hitch and our host, ESPN’s Todd Grisham, entertained the audience, and 13 extraordinary award recipients were feted. Grisham also spoke to students in the mass communications program during his visit.

The Alumni Association will host a Leadership Conference on May 16 to better serve and train its growing number of alumni volunteers.

The Alumni Association’s Legacy Scholarship Fund has eclipsed the $25,000 threshold in only two and a half years of a five year goal. The Board of Directors’ goal is to bring the corpus up to $50,000 before the original five-year project deadline comes up. The fund will provide scholarships to one male and one female student whose parent(s) or grandparent(s) attended West Georgia.

Other spring events included Backpack to Briefcase, which brought graduating seniors and seasoned alumni professionals to the same table. Also, the Student Externship Program allowed students to shadow UWG alumni in their workplace during spring break. Both events are the product of collaboration with Career Services.

Mark Your Calendar
We celebrate a West Georgia Through the Decades Homecoming on Sept. 25-26, and The Velcro Pygmies return to perform at Wolves Capture the Square.

Be sure to check out our events page for dates and times of all planned events. alumni.westga.edu/events
Athletics

It has been a banner year for UWG Athletics, and the spring is no different. But as the spring semester and athletic year are winding down, that means things are heating up as we enter into championship month – May. Many of our athletic squads will be vying for Gulf South Conference, NCAA regional, and potentially even NCAA national championships in the coming weeks.

Team Highlights

Men’s Basketball
- Best season under head coach Michael Cooney, finishing with a 22-9 record.
- Earned a share of the Gulf South Conference regular season championship, tying with Alabama Huntsville and West Alabama for the best regular season GSC record
- Earned a host spot for the first round of the GSC tournament, making West Georgia the only school to host a men’s and women’s GSC tourney game
- Won first round game against Christian Brothers, reaching the GSC Semifinals
- Earned a spot in the NCAA Regional as the fourth seed, playing West Alabama in the first round of the 2015 NCAA Division Men’s Basketball Tournament
- Sophomore Deonta Stocks hit a buzzer beater in that game to lift the Wolves to their first NCAA tournament victory under head coach Michael Cooney and reaching the regional semifinals, falling to eventual national champion Florida Southern
- Stocks earned a plethora of awards, including: Gulf South Conference Player of the Year, First Team All-GSC, Consensus First Team All-Region, Consensus All-American, GABCA Player of the Year
- Senior Alex Abreu was also named Second Team All-Gulf South Conference
- Head coach Michael Cooney was named GABCA Division II Coach of the Year

Women’s Basketball
- Best season under head coach Scott Groninger, finishing with a 19-11 record.
- Earned a host spot for the first round of the GSC tournament, making West Georgia the only school to host a men’s and women’s GSC tourney game
- Won that first round game against North Alabama, reaching the GSC Semifinals
- Senior Taylor Beverly averaged a double-double with points and rebounds during the year, earning All-Gulf South Conference, All-Region and All-American honors

Baseball
- As of the final week of the spring semester, was in the midst of its best season under head coach Skip Fite and the best season since 1998.
- Ranked for four weeks during the season, and entered the NCAA Division II South Region rankings as the No. 7 ranked team
- Artemis Kadkhodaian won GSC Player of the Week for April 21
- Senior pitcher Jamie Sexton set a new school record for career strikeouts and currently has 232 strikeouts
- Junior pitcher Tyler Gunnin has become the regular closer and has set a new school record with 10 saves on the year
- Will enter the GSC tournament with no less than a third seed and have a shot at making the NCAA tournament, which would become the third and possibly fourth team in the tournament this year
Tennis
- West Georgia and head coach Michael Coleman just wrapped up the best season in recent school history, going 9-10 and earning a spot at the 2015 GSC Championships in early April
- Went as the 8th seed, taking on top-seeded West Florida in Montgomery, where the season ended
- Sierra Brown was named Second Team All-Gulf South Conference, becoming the first All-GSC performer for UWG Tennis in school history
- Brown set a singles play record and doubles record with partner Sara Watson, winning 11 matches in both disciplines

Men’s Golf
- Experienced success on a whole new level this year, as the Wolves were ranked in the top-10 nationally throughout the year
- Senior Kevin Clarke was named GSC Golfer of the Month twice and finished in the top-10 at the GSC Championships
- Junior Corey Evans was in the top-10 in the nation among Division II golfers for the bulk of the year
- Team earned a trip to the NCAA South/Southeast Super Regional for the first time in school history
- Led the GSC Championships after the second round, but finished 5th in the tournament

Women’s Golf
- Junior Stephanie Bennett received an invitation to the NCAA Regionals as an individual, the first time that a female UWG golfer has earned that distinction
- Bennett and freshman Maria Torres earned top honors at the Gulf South Conference Championships in April, with Torres earning a spot on the All-Tournament team
- Bennett went one step further, as she shot a 78-72-71 in the GSC Tournament and was named low medalist for the tourney

Women’s Track & Field
- The Wolves spent the bulk of the 2015 season with multiple athletes ranked among the best both in the region and in the nation
- West Georgia won three meets out of four in their second full season of competition and third season overall
- Andrea Foster ran a 14.29 in the 100m hurdles at Oglethorpe, earning a provisional qualifying status for the NCAA Championships in late May. At the time, her mark in the 100m hurdles was the 20th fastest in the nation

Softball
- Sophomore shortstop Randi Phillips was named Gulf South Conference Player of the Week for the week of February 24
- Junior second baseman Jordan Corbin was named Gulf South Conference Player of the Week for the week of April 20

Football
- Head coach Will Hall and his Super Region 2 Champion Wolves finished up spring practice just before spring break with the Annual Spring Game
- A strong crowd was on hand to get a first glimpse of the 2015 version of UWG Football, braving the rain to see the Wolves in action
- Hall and his staff continue to hit the recruiting trail, and are also getting extensive training by visiting major Division I college football spring practices. He and his staff have spent time at Michigan, Auburn, and Alabama, to name a few.
Development

Fundraising for the UWG Foundation and the UWG Athletic Foundation through the third quarter of the fiscal year totaled $6,139,526 surpassing our annual goal of $6 million. In April, a $1 million legacy gift was committed bringing total dollars raised to a record $7 million plus. Our professional and dedicated development team with the help of our partners in the UWGAF, Alumni Relations, Advancement Services, and UCM have achieved new heights building the momentum towards the official launch of our comprehensive campaign.

As a part of that success, the Annual Fund has had a great year with more than $750,000 in gifts and securing more than 500 first-time donors.

UWG’s comprehensive campaign is now in the feasibility study phase. More than 30 alumni and friends of the university are being interviewed by our campaign consultants at Alexander Haas to test our campaign case for support and gauge the level of support we can expect once the campaign is launched. In June, our consultants will present a report detailing the results and recommending a campaign goal.

University Communications and Marketing

UCM has completed one of our busiest months – the month of April! A sprinkling of highlights captures our bustling coverage, creative and communications successes, and ongoing support to campus events and happenings:

- Participated in the February 2015 Leadership Development Institute
- Supported professional development through attendance of two staff members at the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) regional conference in Orlando
- Became more enlightened through attending mind-opening discussions in the Courageous Conversations series
- Taught graphic design and photography classes to UWG students and community members
- Completed the spring semester with interns, students assistants, and graduate assistants based on the value and reward of experiential learning
- Produced a Best of the West divisional winner in UCM
- Provided coverage, promotion, design, and live events production for the winning Wolves basketball season in both men’s and women’s teams
- Covered April commencement; created the program; and served on the committee
- Supported Stop Hunger Now by providing the venue at the UWG Coliseum for this signature rotary club event. Over 250 community and campus volunteers assembled 30,000 meals for distribution in countries of need across the world.
- Embraced signage and other marketing opportunities in preparation of the August grand opening of UWG Newnan
- Promoted the spring student concert held on April 18 featuring T.I. with B.o.B.
- Collaborated with agency partner Mindpower to create new television spots to air in early fall 2015. Stay tuned for details of these dynamic new spots representative of our new Go West brand refresh!
- Collaborated with IEA to create new staff performance goals for assessment and project refinement for the remainder of 2015
- Supported the USG scholarship gala in March. Jami Bower served for a second term on the executive board committee for the USG Foundation. April Saunders and Teresa Pyron served as the creative designers for all gala pieces. The 2015 gala raised more for needs-based scholarships. The gala also provides recognition for outstanding faculty and exceptional alumni.
- Plan to celebrate a year of success at the UCM summer outing hosted by the Saunders with a “prom” theme!

Events

University Events continues to grow with both qualitative and quantitative results. Here is a previous list of what has occurred with a glimpse into the Fall Semester,

- February 2, UWG Day at the Capitol
- February 13, LDI
- February 13, Bland Cup
- February 26, Champions Council VIP Reception
- March 28, Regents Gala at College Football Hall of Fame
- March 31, Athletics Student Success Center Open House
- April 16, Reception honoring UWG Basketball
- April 23, Best of West Celebration
- May 8, LDI
- May 14, 6:00 p.m., Westpy Awards
- September 26, Homecoming, Scholarship Gala, 5K