Points of Pride

At the University of West Georgia, we are in the business of transforming lives and we are focused on success. With so many advancements at UWG, our campus is constantly brimming with excitement. Through the Points of Pride we celebrate these achievements and examine our success through the four major Strategic Imperatives of our Strategic Plan – Student Success, Academic Success, Partnership Success and Operational Success. Congratulations to all those who have strived for excellence and have achieved it.

February 2015

Academic Success

U.S. News & World Report once again ranked several UWG online programs among the top 100 in the nation, with the graduate computer information technology program ranking 16th. UWG also ranked 41st in online graduate nursing, 44th in online MBA, 75th in online graduate education, and 79th in best online bachelor’s programs in the nation.

The Richards College of Business MBA program has been ranked as a “Top Tier” program by CEO Magazine. The Georgia WebMBA was ranked No. 10 for Online MBA.

Media & Instructional Technology Professor Danilo Baylen was elected as president of the International Division of the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) at its 2014 Annual Convention in Jacksonville, Florida in November. AECT is a professional association of those actively involved in design instruction and the systematic approach to learning as well as instructional and educational technology.

Phyllis Snipes, associate professor of School Library Media, won the Juanita Skelton Award, Georgia Association for Instructional Technology’s highest recognition of achievements in higher education at the state or national level in instructional technology. Recipients of the award are recognized for their distinguished careers.
As a result of a well-received presentation at UWG’s Annual Distance Learning Administration Conference, Janet Gubbins, director of Distance Education (UWG Online), was asked to deliver the presentation a second time at the biannual USG’s GeorgiaVIEW Administrator Retreat. She presented on UWG Online’s use of various Google tools to increase departmental efficiency, communication, and service.

Theatre Professor Rochelle (Shelly) Elman attended the 47th Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Region V as a guest artist. There she judged the semi-final round of the Irene Ryan Scholarship Auditions. She also gave a workshop on “Devising Theatre and Building Relationships,” which included both faculty and student participation.

Associate Dean of Online Development Jason Huett ended his term as president of the Division of Distance Learning for the Association of Educational Communications and Technology with an invited presidential panel discussion on the rise of adult learners. He was also invited to be the keynote speaker for the Georgia Virtual Learning Symposium in Athens.

UWG hosted Dr. Steve Perry, the founder and principal of Capital Preparatory Magnet School in Hartford, Connecticut and an accomplished author and media education contributor, as the main speaker at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. program held on January 13, 2015.

Student Success

Alumni Tammy Garces was selected as the P-12 Language Teacher of the Year by the Foreign Language Association of Georgia (FLAG). She will be presented with the award at the joint state/regional conference in March 2015. She was recognized for her excellence as a teacher, for building a dynamic language program in a rural county, and for her compassion.

The WOLF Internet Radio is a five-time finalist for the 2015 Intercollegiate Broadcasting System (IBS) Golden and Silver Microphone Awards of Excellence in radio, television, and webcasting. The station is a finalist in the following categories: best promo series, best celebrity/artist interview, best blog, best use of social media, and best online college station.

The Disability Advocacy Council (DAC) recently became the first student organization at UWG for the advocacy and inclusion of the disabled student population. The goal of the group is to ensure that all students with disabilities have equal access to the college experience at UWG, which also includes the program “Going Beyond the Curriculum,” that ensures the inclusiveness of disabled students in extracurricular activities at UWG.

The student group Sociological Collective collected toys and assembled 15 “Jared boxes” for hospitalized children. The students delivered the shoebox-sized packages filled with small toys, cards, and games to Scottish Rite Hospital in Atlanta during the holidays.

Operational Success

Assistant Professor Julia Whisenhunt is part of a new work group for the College of Education that is tasked with identifying ways to improve our preparation and response to crisis situations (natural, man-made, and medical). This work group is charged with promoting awareness of existing campus resources and response when critical situations occur.

UWG was honored with multiple awards at the Georgia College Counselor’s Association event held on January 22. Director of the Counseling Center Lisa Adams Somerlot received the Counseling Center Director of the Year award. Associate Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Dr. Alicia Caudill received the Advocacy Award, the UWG Counseling Center Outreach Program received the Program of the Year Award, and Outreach Coordinator Terri Ducker was elected the new president of GCCA.
Partnership Success

*Georgia Trend* has named University of West Georgia President **Dr. Kyle Marrero** to its annual list of 100 Most Influential Georgians. Marrero joins top business, political, and cultural leaders in the state. This is his first appearance on the competitive list.

**Southwire** has made a commitment to a $40,000 gift to fund two 4-year scholarships for incoming students in the Southwire Sustainable Business Honors Programs in the Richards College of Business. These scholarships will help the program recruit top students from around the nation.

UWG has three new opportunities for students to spend a semester abroad while earning credit towards their UWG degrees. This fall, the institution signed exchange agreements with **universities in the Netherlands, Ireland, and Australia** that will provide students in a variety of disciplines the chance to gain global experience while customizing their degree programs.

**Chris Spruck**, web applications developer for Distance Education (UWG Online), co-presented with colleagues from Georgia Tech and Athens Tech at the USG 2014 Annual Computing Conference at Rock Eagle on “USGWeb: a new knowledge-sharing community for people who work on websites.”

Share your own story and tell us your own Point of Pride, for more information visit [www.westga.edu/ucm/1792.php](http://www.westga.edu/ucm/1792.php).