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.

March 2015

Academic Success

At the February 2015 Georgia Science Teachers Association (GSTA) Awards Banquet in Macon, Dr. Gail Marshall received the Dallas Stewart Award. This award is a lifetime achievement honor and is presented by GSTA only when merited. It is awarded to recognize excellence in leadership and significant contributions to the organization and to science education.

The UWG Theatre Department had great representation at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Region Four (KCACTF) in Albany, Ga. Eric Graise and Gabby Benson made it to the final round of the Irene Ryan Scholarship Audition. James Parker and Nick Suwalski progressed to the Society of Directors and Choreographers Directing Fellowship finals. James Parker was also awarded a scholarship to the summer KCACTF Directing Intensive this summer. Eric Graise also won the region’s first ever Musical Theatre Initiative Award competing among 32 other finalists. In addition to these accolades, his Irene Ryan presentation earned him the Southeastern Theater Conference Musical Theatre award. On top of this, KCACTF additionally awarded him another Musical Theatre Award, giving him an opportunity to perform at the KCACTF National Festival. Finally, Toni Sterling won a two-week scholarship to the Stagecraft Institute in Las Vegas for her lighting design of the fall UWG production of Cabaret.
Dr. Caroline Perjessy, Assistant Professor, Department of Clinical and Professional Studies (CPS) Counselor Education, and College Student Affairs Program, and Dr. Lama Farran, Assistant Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders, announced the First Annual College of Education Research Symposium: “Reflections of our Diverse Research.” CPS Diversity Task Force was pleased to honor the work of COE faculty by showcasing their research. COE faculty members represented research reflecting cultural diversity. The goal of this symposium is to provide an educational environment in which faculty from all disciplines within the COE who are interested in cultural diversity issues can learn, interact, share ideas, and network with one another.

University of West Georgia’s Master of Education in Reading degree online program was ranked 13th out of the 25 best programs by TheBestSchools.org. TheBestSchools.org selected UWG’s program based on several weighted factors, including academic excellence, course offerings, faculty strengths, and reputation, including reputation for online degree programs. TheBestSchools.org is a leading resource for prospective students seeking a college or university degree.

**Student Success**

Audry Quartey-Lynch & Martina Smith, UWG UTeach students were chosen to be a part of a NASA event called “Rockets To Racecars” (R2R) at Atlanta International Raceway on Sunday, March 1. Their selection followed several rounds of successful competition.

Men’s Basketball are the 2015 Gulf South Conference Regular Season Tri-Champions! Splitting the regular season title with West Alabama and Alabama Huntsville, the Wolves finished with a 15-7 Gulf South Conference record. This is the first title for the program since the 2000-2001 Season.

**Sophomore Deonta Stocks** of Lithonia was named the Gulf South Conference Player of the Year, as voted by the league’s head coaches. This is the eighth time in the Division II history of the University of West Georgia men’s basketball program that a player has been selected. Stocks was also named First Team All-Gulf South Conference, one of two players to earn All-GSC honors. He is currently 9th in the NCAA in points per game, 10th in total points and 9th in three-point field goal percentage. He became the 10th player in school history to surpass 1,000 points in a career.
**Operational Success**

**Susan Webb's** article was accepted for publication in the *Journal of Research in Business Education*. The article is titled “Integrated Reading Literacy Interventions (IRLIs): A Quantitative Analysis of the Characteristics, Intentions, and Outcomes in Business Education.”

UWG was named one of the **top 15 Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs 2015** by the Center for Higher Education Enterprise (CHEE) in partnership with Diverse: Issues in Higher Education and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). The survey looked at workplace diversity, staffing practices, and work environment among other factors at colleges and universities throughout the country. Findings are published in the current edition of *Diverse* magazine.

Once again, the **Center for Business and Economic Research** is conducting research for the Georgia Senate. Hilde Patron, Mike Sinkey, David Boldt, and Joey Smith have completed five projects for the Senate, with more on the way!

Several UWG faculty were awarded **Teacher Quality Grants** by Georgia’s Improving Teacher Quality Higher Education program: Dr. Christopher Jett of the Mathematics Department, Danilo Baylen and Dr. Deborah Jenkins of the Education Technology Department, and Dr. Anne Gaquere-Parker and Dr. Sharmistha Basu-Dutt of the Chemistry Department.

College of Education **Professor Markesha Henderson** was invited to serve as a Research & Evaluation Adviser for the NFL PREP Leadership Series: Sports Career Expo for Super Bowl XLIX, that took place Jan. 30, 2015. The Sports Career Expo is a national campaign that enlists professionals from all aspects of the sport industry to inform, educate, and enlighten student athletes on career opportunities within the professional sports arena. The purpose of Dr. Henderson’s participation was to observe and identify best practices to collect important data on the target groups that this group serves (high school athletes) at the Sports Career Expo and to develop strategies that will enhance the research based workshops/programs that are implemented at each Sports Career Expo across the country.

**Lecturer Kim Holder** was an invited speaker at the fall EconED conference and her presentation on Rockonomix was uploaded as a video on YouTube: http://youtu.be/8y4vfmpxwTE. Holder was also an invited plenary speaker at the Robert Morris University Teaching Conference in February and has been invited to speak at the Jacksonville branch of the Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank.
Partnership Success

A recent **$25,000 donation from Walmart** is supporting a new program to reach out to high school and middle school educators hosted by the Center for Economic Education – a cooperative venture of the Richards College of Business and the College of Education. Workshops held around the state of Georgia will allow teachers to learn more about a new virtual tool called “Economentor,” a website that will assist teachers and offer them access to instructional materials, like AP economics course outlines, study tools, and games – like the Stock Market Game – to engage students.

Cane Bay Partners Founder and **UWG Alum David Johnson** donated a legacy gift to the David A. Johnson Professor of Predictive Analytics endowment that he created in 2011 with the economics department at the Richards College of Business. Johnson’s donation to the Applied Econometrics and Analytics Fund will allow students to receive an education in one of the most advanced programs in the nation, one of only two programs that offer SAS Certification for undergraduates. This donation will ensure that the SAS program will have a dedicated professor for years to come.

**School Library Media student Lana Nix** received $1,000 through the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) Teen Tech Week Program Grant. Through funding provided by Best Buy, YALSA will distribute 20 grants of $1,000 each to support digital literacy programming.

The University of West Georgia athletics program has formed the **Champions Council**, an elite group of athletics supporters whose generosity will be key in shaping the program into a consistent contender on the national level. There are currently 11 members on the Champions Council ranging from alumni to friends of UWG. Each member commits to donating a leadership gift over a five-year period. Funds from this campaign are earmarked to support special, transformational projects for UWG Athletics.

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).