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KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY

NEW IRML Air-Lab

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Students Create
Research Designs

New Dual-
Certification
MED

Leveraging AI
for Student
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\$2.5M Grant
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This year the Bagwell College of Education has been refreshing all of its social media platforms! Whether you are an incoming or current student, staff member, faculty, or Bagwell alumnus, our social media platforms will help you stay up to date with everything going on in the Bagwell College.

You can access all of our official social media accounts through our linktr.ee/bagwellcollege. This is conveniently located in the bio of each of our accounts for easy navigation between platforms.

Our main accounts are not the only ones that are being refreshed, so check out our department social media accounts as well. Many of our departments, including **Bagwell Advising and Student Success Center**, have their own pages for more detailed and relevant updates.

What's new? Our YouTube Channel!

You will find alumni testimonials and interviews uploaded throughout the year.



Message from the Dean



Dr. Adrian L. Epps

Thank you for your interest, engagement, and support of the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University. It is my pleasure to present you with the annual Year-In-Review Magazine, which provides you with small glimpses of

our many recent accomplishments. We have spent the last five years prioritizing partnerships, innovation, and educator workforce development so that our graduates are empowered and deeply prepared to teach and lead in the 21st century. The current societal context and dynamics impact the broader education profession in unique ways. Our response has been to lead in these uncertain times in ways that have positioned Bagwell College to become a national and global leader in our profession while meeting the needs of our local and statewide communities. The faculty, staff, administrators, and partners of the college have engaged collaboratively and collegially to create a positive and productive culture that has led record levels of student, faculty, and staff successes.

Our institution has always treated educator preparation as a first-class discipline. The Bagwell College is amongst the best at preparing, supporting, and partnering with educators, schools, school districts, and other stakeholders to produce high equality educators. We are consistently one of the top producers of teachers in Georgia and have developed a reputation for innovation that keeps us at the forefront of merging education with technology while leveraging a creative mindset. The collective efforts of colleagues and students produced record enrollment growth, record highs in scholarly productivity including grant procurement, increased donations and sponsorships, and a record number of doctoral graduates are just a few examples of our impact. For example, the college has met and exceeded new graduate student enrollment over the past three years yielding a 78% increase during this timeframe. While many institutions across the nation have declining undergraduate enrollment in teacher preparation, we celebrated a 2% increase this year.

As with previous years, our Year-In-Review Magazine is designed to provide you with a small glimpse into our partnerships, our people, our

innovations, our research, and our proven ability to capture technology for effective educational use. You will learn about several multimillion-dollar grants obtained by our faculty, both individually and collaboratively with colleagues in other universities and other KSU colleges. From a \$2.5 million grant to foster student success in calculus, to a \$3.5 million grant to address the dearth of Asian American Studies in K-12 schools, and \$2.5 million to boost a bilingual and multilingual educator workforce, our faculty are achieving national and global success as their research gains notoriety.

Several faculty members are leading the use of artificial intelligence in education. Dr. Dabae Lee's chatbot for elementary students has received national recognition from industry giants like IBM, and Dr. Iván Jorrín Abellán's use of AI in the Interactive Research Methods Lab caught the attention of the College Board, giving rise to a recent presentation to more than 13,000 educators who are fascinated with the Advanced Placement Research Development Open Access Toolkit and the Air-Lab, both designed by Dr. Jorrín Abellán for middle and high school students.

The iTeach consulting group is working with Fulton County Schools to prepare students for STEM careers as part of a multi-year \$8.6 million grant from the Toyota USA Foundation, part of their Driving Possibilities initiative.

We continue to enhance our Board of Visitors, made up of relevant community and business stakeholders to increase community awareness of education complexities and advocate on behalf of Bagwell College to encourage partnerships and donations.

It's been a very busy, deeply rewarding year. Our team of faculty, staff and students came together to create many winning ideas and programs, including our "I Belong in Bagwell" campaign, which began in our Secondary and Middle Grades Department and quickly caught on collegewide! This college came together as members of a multicultural family, to support and encourage each other in ways that created mutual respect, valued partnerships, lifelong friendships, and bright futures for our students. Please look through the student section of this magazine for a glimpse of the great work being done on this campus.

This is a bitter yet sweet moment for me personally and professionally. After serving five years as the dean of Bagwell College of Education and with over 38 years of service credit in the Teachers Retirement System, I have made the difficult decision to retire. From a classroom teacher to an administrator for Atlanta Public Schools, Dalton State College, and Kennesaw State University, I can honestly say that it has been an incredible journey filled with fond memories and lifelong friendships. Leading and collaborating with fellow educators and

partners to innovatively improve teaching and learning for ALL students and ALL educators has been the highlight of my career. I feel blessed to have contributed to the success of the college and the university.

I often say that the Bagwell College of Education is at the forefront of change and innovation in education, and the stories in this magazine provide the proof. It has been an honor to serve as Dean, and I have a deep and abiding fondness for the people here and the institution. God bless you as you continue to do great, and innovative things to champion the education profession. It has been a privilege to work with you.

Sincerely,



Adrian L. Epps, Ed.D.
Dean and Chantal & Tommy Bagwell Endowed Dean's Chair

DEANS OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER [EPP] COLLEGES AT KSU

At Kennesaw State University, we believe that preparing great teachers comes from a well-rounded education that includes gaining valuable expertise from various experts in their field. While Bagwell College of Education takes the lead, other colleges at KSU play an important role in the success of our students, and they are listed below with a photo of their dean. Teacher preparation is a campus-wide responsibility at KSU, and the Bagwell College of Education is grateful for the priority KSU places on preparing great teachers for 21st century classrooms.



Dr. Valerie B. Morris
Interim Dean
Geer College of the Arts



Dr. Juliet Langman
Dean
Graduate College



Dr. Karen Kornweibel
Dean
Journey Honors College



Dr. Monica Swahn
Dean
Dr. Betty L. Siegel Distinguished Chair in Health and Wellness
Wellstar College of Health and Human Services



Dr. Sumanth Yenduri
Dean
College of Computing and Software Engineering



Dr. Catherine Kaukinen
Dean
Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences



Dr. Heather Koopman
Dean
College of Science and Mathematics

KSU receives \$2.5 million

U.S. Dept. of Education grant to boost bilingual and multilingual educator workforce



The fact that Georgia has the eighth highest number of multilingual students in the country has led three Kennesaw State University researchers to work toward increasing the number of teachers who speak two or more languages.

Kennesaw State's Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) program in the Bagwell College of Education was awarded more than \$2.5 million over the next five years by the U.S. Department of Education to assist in the recruitment and retention efforts of bilingual and multilingual teachers in Georgia.

There are 1.06 million Georgians whose primary language is something other than English, according to the U.S. Census. The most commonly

spoken language besides English is Spanish, followed by languages spoken in Asia and Pacific Island nations.

Dr. Jayoung Choi (Principal Investigator, PI), professor of TESOL in KSU's Bagwell College of Education, Dr. Tuba Angay-Crowder (Co-PI and Project Manager), a postdoctoral researcher, and Dr. Zurisaray Espinosa (Co-PI), clinical assistant professor of TESOL, are heading a program set to tackle a growing shortage of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers. The three researchers are multilinguals with an immigrant background, instilling in them the importance of their current work.

"It is important to have bilingual or multilingual

teachers, especially in Georgia where we have a diverse student population from so many various linguistic backgrounds,” said Choi. “Schools in Georgia, similar to other parts of the U.S., are experiencing a significant shortage of qualified ESOL teachers.”

The grant is part of the National Professional Development program’s \$7.5 million in funding and will support KSU’s Grow Your Own TESOL program over the next five years. The project aims to recruit and train 160 bilingual and multilingual teacher candidates over that time.

There are three pathways within the Grow Your Own program: A master’s degree in teaching, a graduate-level certification program, as well as undergraduate-level TESOL courses. These pathways aim to attract bilingual teacher aides, or even high school students from within local communities to become certified educators.

“Our project helps teacher candidates by providing financial and academic support through tuition assistance, mentoring, and coursework,” Angay-Crowder said. “It also acknowledges the importance of community-based teacher recruitment, encouraging people

“

IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE BILINGUAL OR MULTILINGUAL TEACHERS, ESPECIALLY IN GEORGIA WHERE WE HAVE A DIVERSE STUDENT POPULATION FROM SO MANY VARIOUS LINGUISTIC BACKGROUNDS,

DR. JAYOUNG CHOI

who are already familiar with local linguistic and cultural dynamics to enter the teaching profession. Alternative certification pathways offer flexible and accelerated routes to teacher certification, specifically targeting individuals who may already hold degrees, but lack formal teacher training.”

For people who complete the Grow Your Own program, they receive continuing support through mentorship, continuous professional development, and more. But the overall goal of each pathway is to recruit, train, support, and retain bilingual educators, while ensuring they have the skills and qualifications to teach English learners effectively.

All three professors hope that each teacher candidate who completes the program stays, but for the project to be seen as a success, 80% will complete their programs.

“Success will also be evaluated by the program’s ability to retain candidates,” Espinosa said. By the end of the five-year project, the three aim to have recruited 80 candidates for the Master of Arts in Teaching licensure. The second pathway open for non-degree programs is seeking 40 candidates while the last pathway on the undergraduate-level TESOL courses is looking for 40 candidates as well.

“So in addition to language instruction, bilingual or multilingual teachers also serve as important role models,” Choi said. “They show students from similar backgrounds that it is possible to succeed academically while maintaining one’s cultural identity, which is something I speak to a lot with my own students. This representation is powerful and can inspire a lot of students to pursue their own academic goals, or even, careers in education.”



KSU Receives \$2.5 Million Grant to foster student success in calculus

The brainchild of three Kennesaw State University professors will introduce concepts of calculus into high school math earlier to help students be more successful when they get to college.

The National Science Foundation awarded Kennesaw State a \$2.5 million interdisciplinary grant for a project being called "Calculus for All." The thought behind it is relatively simple – if students are exposed to concepts of calculus in high school, they stand a better chance of passing calculus classes in college and can pursue STEM-related careers.

Brian Lawler, professor of mathematics education in the Bagwell College of Education, is the lead researcher on the project. "We're saying we can teach calculus differently, so more students have a positive image of their ability and say, 'I can do this,'" Dr. Lawler said.

Another professor involved is Alan Shaw, associate professor of computer science in the College of Computing and Software Engineering. He believes the number one reason students move away from STEM-related careers is because they can't pass their calculus classes in college.

"If a student has never been exposed to calculus in high school, they typically aren't prepared to do well in STEM fields in college," Dr. Shaw said. "A lot of times, that affects minorities and women more. If we can introduce, for example, the concepts of derivatives and integrals to high school students in Algebra 2 classes, then when they get to college, these calculus classes aren't so brand new and overwhelming."

Kennesaw State is partnered with the Algebra Project and the National Society of Black Engineers on this grant. Starting in the 2024-2025 school year, the curriculum for the algebra 2 course at McEachern High School in Cobb County as well as at a high school in Boston were revised to introduce concepts of calculus. The grant uses the "near-peer mentoring model" meaning engineering students in the age range of 20-21 will be in the classroom at McEachern

to work with the high school students.

Roneisha Worthy, assistant chair and associate professor in the Southern Polytechnic College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, is passionate about the concept.

"The innovative approach to this is that it's not grounded in the way that calculus has traditionally been taught," said Dr. Worthy. "Calculus is the pathway into engineering. We are providing professional development for the teachers to teach this. We are bringing in support through the college math literacy workers. We are paying these teachers extra through the grant, because the funding would otherwise not be there to support them in this endeavor."

Shaw says the grant shows that Kennesaw State is breaking new ground in bringing computer

science, math, and education together. He said the monetary value of the grant is so large because it ultimately deals with the systemic barriers for success and racial equality in STEM.

"I went to Harvard and MIT and I just didn't see a lot of other black students there, so I have a passion to want to broaden that pipeline – to bring more students of color into this field of academia," Shaw

said. "To get into STEM fields, it requires learning math in ways that are accessible to people of all backgrounds. My three boys have African American parents who have advanced degrees, a computer scientist and a lawyer, and one son went to Harvard, one went to MIT, and one went to Dartmouth. But, if you're in a family that doesn't have that background, we must figure out how to get STEM to work for you."

Worthy says this three-year grant should be seen as a student success initiative. "It's the students doing most of the heavy lifting here," said Worthy. "In the end, we hope people remember that innovation comes with a diverse group of people doing the innovating. Even if just one student we work with becomes an engineer because of this, I'm so proud of this project. That equals success."



Researcher Explores New Way To Use AI For Student Teachers

Student teachers face a common challenge in their academic careers – they have limited opportunities to interact with elementary school children prior to their final year of college. To fix this, a Kennesaw State University researcher is leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to give education students lifelike interactions with a virtual student earlier in their training.

Through the support of a three-year, \$300,000 National Science Foundation grant, associate professor of instructional technology Dabae Lee is exploring how artificial intelligence can help simulate children in an elementary school classroom. Her research involves the use of a chatbot, a computer program designed to simulate a text conversation with human users.

The chatbot is designed to be another tool for student teachers to use in the challenging task of developing responsive teaching skills, the ability to respond to children's unique ideas or ask questions to help them extend their thinking.

"A majority of pre-service teachers usually have no opportunity to practice responsive teaching skills in a teacher education program before being placed in field experiences and interacting with real children," said Dr. Lee, who teaches in KSU's Bagwell College of Education. "When they are given practice opportunities before student teaching, such opportunities are rarely authentic or effective."

In some cases, a trained adult or instructor plays the role of a child for the entire class, during which only a few student teachers get to pose their questions. Student teachers can also role-play with their peers, which still fails to mimic an authentic situation.

While the chatbot Lee is developing is not a student, it would work in tandem with other classroom simulation technologies to provide a realistic experience prior to student teaching in a real school.

"What we were thinking is, how can we create an

AI system in which the learner plays an active role," Lee said. "But then we need to also think about what makes meaningful interaction between teacher and learner."

During the development of the chatbot, student teachers can ask a variety of questions, and the bot responds to those questions. When they (student

teachers) ask questions that the virtual student doesn't yet understand, the virtual student answers the questions based on her current understanding, revealing her misconceptions.

Lee said, "We don't view misconceptions as errors to be replaced or corrected, but rather as valuable assets that learners can utilize to refine, reorganize, and expand their knowledge." These interactions provide the student teacher the opportunity to explore and extend the virtual student's thinking. According to Lee, the research team aims to assist student teachers in developing responsive teaching skills that enable them to leverage children's misconceptions as unique assets for building and expanding learners' knowledge.

Lee and her colleagues went through several iterations of development of a chatbot prototype. Each iteration, the chatbot has gotten better at answering questions, allowing the student teachers to improve

their responsive teaching skills, by responding to and interacting with the virtual student. Based on the evaluation from each iteration, several features were added, including showing the feelings of the virtual student with emojis and the student being able to learn from interactions with key questions. Several other chatbots are now in development.

"I am encouraged by the progress we've seen in the early iterations of the chatbot, and I look forward to expanding its capabilities in the near future," Lee said. "Through this unique application of artificial intelligence, I hope that we generate new learning opportunities for our students and equip them with experiences that bolster their teaching capabilities once they enter the field."



Rome City Schools and Kennesaw State Invest In Educators Pursuing Advanced Degrees



Through a new partnership with Kennesaw State University, dedicated educators in Rome City Schools are pursuing advanced degrees.

Rome City Schools and Kennesaw State University's Bagwell College of Education formed a partnership to support dedicated educators in Rome City Schools in their pursuit of advanced degrees. This collaboration was presented to the Rome City Schools Board of Education by Superintendent

current teaching staff but also facilitate their growth as they seek advanced degrees."

The school district conducted a comprehensive analysis of local and statewide staffing data, identifying specific focus areas for consideration under the partnership. Program options for current staff with degrees

- TESOL [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages]

Program options for current educators with undergraduate degrees in education include obtaining a Master of Education Degree in one of the following subjects:

- Early Childhood Education
- Instructional Technology
- Secondary & Middle Grades
- Special Education [General Curriculum]
- Teacher Leadership & Educational Leadership Tier 1
- TESOL [Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages]

To ensure that their educators have the support they need, Rome City Schools has allocated funds to assist with tuition costs, and KSU will waive application fees for program participants while also facilitating the formation of cohorts for the designated subject area courses.

"The Bagwell College of Education places a high priority on forging partnerships that strengthen the teacher workforce and harness the potential of innovative curricula and research expertise," said Dr. Adrian Epps, Dean of the Bagwell College of Education. "Rome City Schools' advanced degree program is meticulously designed to align with the district's strategic objectives and will provide several opportunities for educators to further their expertise."



Dr. Eric L. Holland and Dean of Bagwell College of Education Dr. Adrian Epps.

"At the core of our Strategic Plan lies the commitment to attract and retain highly qualified educators," noted Superintendent Holland. "The program promises to not only enhance the professional capacity of our

in areas other than education include obtaining a Master of Arts in Teaching Degree in one of the following subjects:

- English Language Arts
- Math
- Science [Biology, Chemistry or Physics]
- Special Education [General Curriculum]

Kennesaw State and DeKalb Schools Partner For Pipeline Of Highly Trained Educators



Through a new partnership with Kennesaw State University, a group of DeKalb County educators are receiving specialized training and earning a master's degree to better serve their district's student needs.

The Inspiring Greatness and Normalizing Innovation in Teacher Education (IGNITE) Teacher Residency Program aims to bolster teacher retention and combat a shortage of educators, while providing them with no-cost professional development. DeKalb County School District [DCSD] launched the program in January, but the new partnership with KSU will expand it to specifically address the need for special education teachers.

"Bagwell College prides itself on graduating prepared and highly qualified educators, who are ready to take on the next challenge in the classroom," said Dr. Adrian Epps, dean of KSU's Bagwell College of Education. "This partnership with DeKalb Schools, and other partnerships with K-12 districts, will create a cadre of teachers committed to their students and to the needs of specialized areas of education."

The purpose of the IGNITE DeKalb Teacher Residency Program is to create an alternate route to certification programs designed to prepare high quality, committed, aspiring teachers who can work effectively with students in Horizon schools across DeKalb County. These aspiring teachers may be current paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, tutors, non-certified employees or college graduates who have a passion for teaching the next generation of scholars.

Bagwell College has similarly partnered with Paulding County Schools and Rome City Schools to create pipelines of quality educators and combat teacher

shortages locally and statewide.

The 25 resident teachers selected for DeKalb's IGNITE residency program will earn a Master of Arts in Teaching in Special Education from the Department of Inclusive Education in the Bagwell College. The DeKalb County School District is paying for tuition, textbooks, certification assessments, and fees on behalf of the selected candidates. All candidates will be employed by DCSD and serve in a paid \$30,000, full-time, student-facing position, alongside a mentor, while completing their coursework and clinical experience requirements.

Upon completion of the program and additional certification requirements, resident teachers will be eligible for a full-time teaching position. They will serve as full-time teachers of record in a Horizon School in the District for a minimum of five years.

"DeKalb County School District is an innovative district, and they developed this partnership to address teacher shortages affecting their district, a problem not unknown to many districts across the country," said Dr. Denise Ross, chair of the Department of Inclusive Education and professor of special education. "This partnership is critical, because it helps KSU and DeKalb Schools join together to increase the number of qualified special education teachers and, therefore, the success of our children."

DeKalb County School District Superintendent Dr. Devon Q.

Horton said his district is thrilled to partner with KSU on the residency program, which will combine rigorous academic coursework and practical experience.

"This partnership extends our commitment to providing a streamlined pathway for teacher certification and will help a group of already outstanding individuals become certified special education teachers," Horton said. "These educators are in high demand and crucial for schools, so this collaboration is very good news for our district community."

The 25-teacher resident cohort began its master's degree program in June 2024 and must complete the training no later than May 31, 2025. DeKalb is similarly partnering with a second university to train another 25-teacher cohort.





Kennesaw State Partners With Marietta Schools To Deliver A New Dual-Certification Master's Program

A new partnership between Kennesaw State University's Bagwell College of Education and Marietta City Schools (MCS) seeks to develop the next generation of teacher-leaders.

The Department of Educational Leadership at Kennesaw State University's Bagwell College of Education has launched an innovative partnership with Marietta City Schools aimed at preparing classroom teachers for leadership roles. This collaboration

sustainable and effective distributed leadership within the district.

MCS district leaders have worked closely with KSU faculty to tailor courses to meet the district's unique needs. These customized courses integrate KSU's cutting-edge

experience, offering significant time and financial savings.

"We changed the game in the state of Georgia when we launched our Dual Certification Master's Program in Teacher Leadership and Educational Leadership," said Bagwell College of Education Dean

Dr. Adrian Epps. "Our partnership with Marietta City Schools represents an evolution of that degree program, and an opportunity for Bagwell to address specific educational needs in our communities." Upon completion, graduates will earn a master's degree and certifications in Teacher Leadership, Tier I Educational Leadership, and a GaPSC Coaching Certificate — all in under two years for less than \$10,000.

This partnership is expected to serve as a model for similar collaborations across the state.

is anchored by the newly established Dual Certification Master's program in Teacher Leadership and Educational Leadership, designed to foster

curriculum, ensuring a mission-specific connection between academic theory and real-world application. The program also leverages candidates' on-the-job





Paulding Schools Target Critical Classroom Needs in agreement with KSU

Kennesaw State University is working with the Paulding County School District to boost teaching within the critical areas of math, science, special education, and elementary education.

The Paulding County Board of Education passed an agreement with KSU's Bagwell College of Education that will provide school district funding for 80 Paulding County schools' staff to pursue degrees in those high-need areas. Classroom teachers and paraprofessionals are eligible for the program.

"The Bagwell College of Education prioritizes partnerships that bolster the teacher workforce and leverage innovative curricula and research expertise," said Adrian Epps, Dean of the Bagwell College. "The Paulding Degree Advancement Program is uniquely tailored to the district's strategic priorities that focus on critical areas for the district, and it's one of many partnerships we have with Paulding County Schools, an invaluable partner."

Epps said in addition to the DAP partnership Bagwell partners with Paulding County in placing teacher candidates in field experiences across the district, and jointly through the Horizon's Atlanta Program, TRIO Upward Bound Programs, and other mutually beneficial partnerships. Many current educators in the district are Kennesaw State University

alumni.

"The DAP program will deepen our existing partnership and generate more quality educators for the district and new KSU alumni," Epps said.

The Paulding system's top administrator said the program will advance the system's goal of having excellent educators in its classrooms. "A key component of the school district's Strategic Plan is recruiting and retaining quality educators," said Superintendent Steve Barnette.

"The Paulding Degree Advancement Program will not only build staff capacity within our current teachers but also foster growth for our paraprofessional staff who are seeking to become teachers."

The school district analyzed local and statewide staffing data to determine the areas of focus for the program. Program

options for current teachers seeking a master's degree will include special education, math, and science. Program options for paraprofessionals will include elementary education, special education, math and science.

The school district has budgeted funds to assist



teachers and paraprofessionals with tuition costs, and KSU waived application fees for participants and facilitated the enrollment of cohorts in the designated subject area courses. DAP programs began in January of 2024.



KSU Professor on Team Awarded \$3.5 Million Spencer Foundation Grant

In conjunction with an ongoing effort to address the dearth of Asian American studies in K-12 school curriculums, Kennesaw State University professor Sohyun An is among a group of researchers recently awarded a prestigious \$3.5 million Transformative Research Grant from the Spencer Foundation. The first of its kind awarded by the foundation, the grant supports a robust collaborative research effort focused on supporting the integration of Asian American studies in the classroom.

Through the grant, Dr. An will serve as a co-principal investigator on a multidisciplinary team that includes principal investigator Noreen Naseem Rodríguez of Michigan State University; and co-principal investigators Esther Kim of College of William and Mary; Soo-yong Byun of the Pennsylvania State University; Michael Brown of the University of Michigan; and Jennifer Higgs of the University of California, Davis. Together, they will conduct an extensive study across five states to explore how communities advocate for and implement policies mandating the teaching of Asian American studies in K-12 classrooms, and how these initiatives impact student learning.

Since joining KSU's Bagwell



College of Education in 2011, An has been a trailblazer in anti-racism social studies education and Asian American studies. Her contributions have earned her numerous accolades, including the 2023 Distinguished Researcher Award from the American Educational Research Association, the 2022 Distinguished Professor Award from Kennesaw State University, and two Spencer Foundation Small Research Grants to conduct research on anti-racist education.

"We are fortunate to have a researcher of Dr. An's caliber among our esteemed faculty," said Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College. "She serves as an inspiration for her commitment to building the educators of tomorrow and for her advocacy beyond the classroom. We very much look forward to seeing the impact her research has on educational practices across the nation."

Beyond her academic achievements, An is deeply committed to community engagement and grassroots activism. She co-founded Asian American Voices for Education, a grassroots collective in Georgia dedicated to advancing Asian American and ethnic studies in K-12 schools. An works with Asian American students, educators, and community members to transform schools to be a space where students can see themselves and others as whole human beings, examine race in connection to power, and dream and act for a different future.

"WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE A RE-SEARCHER OF DR. AN'S CALIBER AMONG OUR ESTEEMED FACULTY."

— DEAN ADRIAN EPPS

High School Students Create Research Designs via The IRML Air-Lab



A team of faculty members at Kennesaw State University is working on a product that would allow high schools to have an Interactive Research Methods Lab of their own, but without the need for physical space.

Founded by Bagwell College of Education Research Catalyst Associate Dean and Professor of Educational Research Iván Jorrín-Abellán, the award-winning lab aids novice researchers through the process of generating well-informed qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods designs.

On the fourth floor of the Bagwell Education Building, the Interactive Research Methods Lab features walls of dry erase boards outlining steps of the Hopscotch Model, a theoretical framework and web tool developed by Jorrín-Abellán. Accessed online by more than 150,000 users all over the world, Hopscotch begins with understanding the paradigmatic view of the researcher and ends in a review of ethical considerations.

"The key problem for students is, there are a plethora of elements that you need to take

into account when developing your research design," Jorrín-Abellán said. "What's innovative about Hopscotch is Step 1. We need to understand who we are as researchers because we are going to be the main instrument in the research process, and in many cases, we don't even consider that a step."

A portable, inflatable version of the IRML, the Air-Lab can transform any classroom into an interactive space to teach students how research works. It is part of a kit that high schools can purchase, containing the ball, designed by students in the College of Architecture and Construction Management, a pump, dry erase boards, markers, and a set of QR codes that can be attached with Velcro, which link to a newly developed web app.

"Our dream was to help every single high school have their own branch of the Interactive Research Methods Lab," Jorrín-Abellán said. "What we have here in the Bagwell College of Education, we wanted them to have the same, but in many cases, they just don't

have the space."

For the Air-Lab prototype, Jorrín-Abellán has also been collaborating with the College Board to adapt language from the Hopscotch Model, originally intended for undergraduate and graduate students, with Advanced Placement high school students in mind. It also adapts the interactive resources.

Over three sessions in February, Jorrín-Abellán and his team lead workshops with the Air-Lab at Fulton County Schools Innovation Academy, a magnet STEM school in Alpharetta. More than 300 10th grade students had the chance to use the tool in person, operationalizing their research interests in preparation for a required AP research course the following year.

"Research takes a long time," said Maren Reid, research department chair and math teacher at FCS Innovation Academy. "Choosing a topic even takes a long time. So, we were excited to have Iván and his Team come to our campus to help close that gap."

Bagwell's

team included i

A partnership with a school system in Georgia has provided a Kennesaw State University education program the opportunity to benefit from a grant to prepare students for careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.

As part of multi-year grants of up to \$8.6 million from the Toyota USA Foundation to Fulton County Schools (FCS), the iTeach program in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State will provide enhanced professional development for teachers around STEM topics.

"This is an exciting opportunity to strengthen our partnership with educators in the community," said Dr. Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College of Education. "We are grateful to Fulton County Schools and the Toyota USA Foundation for their efforts to build the next generation of STEM teachers."

The iTeach team has an existing partnership with Fulton County Schools, and when the Toyota USA Foundation chose Fulton County Schools as one of their districts to support through their Driving Possibilities program, Kennesaw State was included as part of the multi-year grant.

The project is designed as a long-term relationship to increase scholastic achievement focused on STEM, expose students to new ideas centered on STEM topics as they grow into a career path, and support vital instructional needs at a cluster of public schools that are historically underserved. The collaboration is part of Toyota's Driving Possibilities initiative and is a five-year phased rollout of programming in select schools.

"The KSU iTeach team is enthusiastic about enhancing STEM education in collaboration with Fulton County Schools," said Leigh Martin, iTeach project manager. "We are particularly excited to welcome Toyota into this partnership, which aims to create innovative opportunities for both students and teachers to engage with STEM subjects and explore related career paths."

In addition to conducting professional development for teachers, FCS and iTeach will also organize community events to increase STEM awareness and engagement.

A part of the initiative is to build the reach of the Fulton STEM Mobile Learning Experience in school-based events as well as Saturday community events. KSU iTeach has been instrumental in the design and implementation of the Mobile Learning Experience. The Toyota grant will also fund the development of curriculum and implementation of hands-on STEM experiences for students in two Fulton County middle schools in Zone 1 of the district.

iTeach, a service unit of the School of Instructional Technology and Innovation in the Bagwell College, regularly partners with schools, districts, and states to innovate teaching and learning through future-ready experiences that are



only possible at the intersection of teaching best practices and new and emerging instructional technologies.

The Toyota USA Foundation's Driving Possibilities initiative focuses on PreK-12 education and builds on existing programs across the country. The long-term initiative's aim is to close educational gaps for students through innovative, hands-on STEM programming while addressing the essential needs of students and families.

SciTeach

an funding for school system grant





BAGWELL COLLEGE FACULTY AWARDS

Each spring semester, the Bagwell College of Education's Faculty Council posts a Call for Applications designed to encourage, reward, and publicly recognize sustained excellence in teaching among all Bagwell College faculty members. Winners at the college level are encouraged to apply for the KSU Foundation Award in a comparable category.



Dr. Anna Arias

**Outstanding
Scholarship of
Teaching and
Learning Award**



Dr. Jason Harron

**Outstanding
Early Career Award**



**Dr. Lateefah
Id-Deen**

**Outstanding
Teaching Award**



**Dr. Albert
Jimenez**

**Outstanding
Service Award**



Dr. Jinhee Kim

**Outstanding
Senior Scholar
Research Award**



Dr. Soon C. Lee

**Outstanding
Junior Scholar
Award**



Dr. Jayoung Choi

**Outstanding
Partnership and
Community
Engagement
Award &
Outstanding
Student Success
Award**



Dr. Dabae Lee

**Outstanding
Innovation Award &
Outstanding Online
Teaching Award**



**Ms. Tracey L.
Borup**

**Outstanding
Part-time
Teaching Award**



BAGWELL COLLEGE STAFF AWARDS

Dee Rule was honored with the 2024 Distinguished Staff Award. She has been at KSU for more than 18 years where she served as office manager for the Teacher Resource and Activity Corner for 15 years before becoming the office manager in the Dean's Office. A mentor and resource person to all new employees and existing colleagues, Dee's tireless efforts, strategic thinking, and commitment to excellence make her a true role model for our campus community.



Amy Jordan

**Staff
Outstanding
Student Success
Award**



Kellie Johnson

**Staff
Outstanding
Innovation
Award**



Wakeeta Rosser

**Staff
Outstanding
Partnerships
& Community
Engagement
Award**

faculty

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION



DR. SOHYUN AN

Received the 2024 Innovations in Research of Equity and Social Justice in Teaching and Teacher Education Award from the American Educational Research Association and the Kipchoge Neftali Kirkland Social Justice Award from the College and University Faculty Assembly on the National Council for the Social Studies.



DR. JASON HARRON

Received the 2023 Distinguished Reviewer Award from the Australasian Journal of Educational Technology and won third-place honors in the 2024 Best Poster/Demonstration competition from the Society of Information Technology and Teacher Education.



DR. JINHEE KIM

Received the 2024 Philip C. Chinn Multicultural Book Award from the National Association for Multicultural Education [NAME]. She also received the KSU APEX Award from the KSU Office of Research.

DR. DABAE LEE

Received the 2024 American Educational Research Association Best Paper Award, selected by the SIG – Instructional Technology for Authoring Using an AI Conversational Agent to Enhance Responsive Teaching Skills of Preservice Teachers in Math Education. She was also awarded the 2023 Association for Educational Communications & Technology AECT Distance Education Best Practice Award for Modeling Personalized Learning in Online Graduate Courses for K-12 Educators.





PARTNERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS

In the 21st century, preparing quality-driven, inclusive, innovative educators has reached the pinnacle of importance. High quality education, mentoring, coaching, and induction support have never been more important for new teachers and leaders. We are fortunate to have established partnerships with many preschools, K-12 schools, corporate, and non-profit communities that support our students.

We publish "Partnership Spotlights" each month at our website that feature many ways collaborators help to provide a formidable and successful career path for new teachers and educational leaders.

Below you will find a list of the Bagwell College's VIPs... our **Very Important Partners!**

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Atlanta Public Schools
Barrow County Schools
Bartow County School District
Calhoun City Schools
Cartersville City Schools
Cherokee County School District
Cobb County School District
Columbia County School District
Commerce City School District
Dalton Public Schools
Decatur City School District
DeKalb County School District
Douglas County School District
Fayette County School District
Floyd County School District
Forsyth County School District
Fulton County School District
Gilmer County School District
Glynn County School District
Gordon County School District
Gwinnett Public School District
Hall County School District
Henry County School District
Houston County School District
Jackson County School District
Marietta City Schools
Newton County School District
Paulding County School District
Pickens County School District
Polk County School District

Rockdale County School District
Rome City School District
Walton County School District
Walker County Schools
Whitfield County School District

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

Academy of Scholars
Annunciation Day School
Archdiocese of Atlanta
Atlanta International School
Centennial Academy Charter School
Cherokee Charter School
DeKalb Preparatory School
Georgia Connections Academy
International Charter School of Atlanta
The Kindezi Schools
Mount Pisgah Christian School
The RISE Schools
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta
SAE School
Tapestry Public Charter School
The Walker School
Trinity Presbyterian Preschool
West Cobb Preparatory School

CORPORATE, GOVERNMENTAL & COLLEGIATE PARTNERS

Chantal and Tommy Bagwell
City of Atlanta Mayor's Office
Chick-Fil-A
Department of Defense
Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation
Georgia Aquarium
Georgia Department of Education
Georgia Power Company
Georgia Professional Standards Commission
Google
Kapor Center
Paderborn University, Paderborn, Germany
PNC Bank
UL-Fire Safety Research Institute (Underwriters Laboratories Solutions)
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Universidad del Rosario, Columbia

NEW



KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY

2
CERTIFICATIONS
IN 1 DEGREE

Master's of Education
**TEACHER
LEADERSHIP &
EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP**

TLEDL

WHY OUR PROGRAM?

No other program in Georgia is approved to offer this combination of certifications in a single master's degree. Candidates completing this degree program and the required state certification tests will earn certifications for Teacher Leadership (T5 and S5) and Tier I Educational Leadership (L5), along with all the promotion and pay opportunities that come with them in the district.

The unique program prepares educators to serve in various K-12 settings in Teacher Leadership roles such as Academic Coach, Instructional Coach, or Department Chair, as well as Educational Leadership Roles such as Assistant Principal or district positions that do not supervise principals.

PROGRAM ADVANTAGES

- Earn Teacher Leadership (T5 and S5) and Tier I Educational Leadership (L-5) Certifications
- Meet the GaPSC certification requirement (Tier I) to enter a Tier II ED.S. program in Educational Leadership
- Complete in 5 semesters – less than 2 years
- 100% Online
- 30 Semester Hours (10 Courses)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The M.Ed. in Teacher Leadership and Educational Leadership is a cohort experience designed to provide candidates with the content knowledge and credentials necessary to lead schools effectively through an integrated leadership lens. After completing the program, candidates will possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively lead educational organizations to higher levels of achievement for all students as both teacher leaders and building leaders.

MORE INFORMATION



For additional questions, please email the Program Coordinator, Dr. Jeff Robinson, at jrobi313@kennesaw.edu.



Bagwell College Partners with Jumpstart

The Bagwell College of Education is excited to partner with the nonprofit organization, Jumpstart, to advance equitable learning outcomes for young children in underserved communities. Shereen Zimmerman is the site manager for the Jumpstart partnership with Bagwell College. She is recruiting KSU students to deliver high-quality programming to preschool children.

Jumpstart began more than 30 years ago to help prepare children for kindergarten and set them on a path for lifelong success, breaking the cycle of poverty. The goals of Jumpstart are to:

- Serve students who

attend ECE centers and daycare centers in the KSU community through a lens of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

- Increase Kindergarten readiness for students in Pre-K programs using rich literacy learning sessions.
- Increase teacher readiness and expertise in the Birth through Kindergarten Program through training, planning, modeling, and delivering effective literacy assessments and instruction.
- Increase teacher workforce through successful acceptance, retention, transition, and progression through KSU Bagwell School of Education programs.

Bagwell College Partners with Campbell High School



The Department of Secondary and Middle Grades Education (SMGE) is proud to partner with Campbell High School to facilitate a Paired Placement model for student teaching. The goal of the paired placement partnership is to learn the most efficient ways to implement student teaching so that teacher candidates develop proficiency with implementing the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM, 2014) eight mathematics teaching practices, along with other equitable mathematics teaching strategies. In the mathematics paired-placement model—often referred to as co-teaching or collaborative student teaching—is a framework in which two secondary mathematics teacher candidates are placed together in the same classroom under the supervision of a single mentor teacher. The mentor teacher serves as a model and resource, facilitating the professional growth of both teacher candidates. The teacher candidates work closely together, planning and delivering

instruction. This trio of teachers works collaboratively to address student learning as a team (Leatham & Peterson, 2010).

There are opportunities for each teacher candidate to lead the class, create individual lesson plans, and manage different parts of the curriculum, but they consistently support each other's teaching. This model is designed to foster collaboration and peer learning among the teacher candidates. It proves beneficial because it mirrors real-world teaching scenarios where collaboration with colleagues is often essential. It also helps reduce the isolation that some teacher candidates feel during traditional, solo teaching placements.

The SMGE partnership, under the leadership of Dr. Belinda Edwards embodies a shared commitment to advancing teacher preparation models. Together Campbell High School and KSU are collaboratively shaping a brighter future in education.

PAGE and the Bagwell College of Education partner to host GAD

For almost 20 years, the Bagwell College of Education has collaborated with PAGE (Professional Association of Georgia Educators) to sponsor the Georgia Academic Decathlon. GAD is a high school academic competition where teams across the state compete in their region for the opportunity to come to the State Decathlon. Decathletes compete in the areas of Essay, Interview and Speech, and they are tested in seven areas: Art, Economics, Literature, Mathematics, Music, Science, and Social Science. There is also a team competition called Super Quiz where teams work together in rounds answering questions including all subject areas. Each team is comprised of 3-A, 3-B, and 3-C students. Top decathletes in each area and grade division receive medals at a banquet at the



end of competition. The winning team goes on to represent Georgia at the US Academic Decathlon. Each year there is a different theme. The season starts with the teams coming to KSU for fall workshop where KSU faculty host sessions on the various topics for the year.

GAD is held each year on the last weekend in February and relies on volunteers for judges, proctors, and speech timers. For more information and to volunteer, please go to: <https://www.pageinc.org/gad-volunteer-information-2>.



Partnership Spotlight



Board of Visitors

advocate on behalf of Bagwell College

In keeping with our university and college strategic plan, we have established a Board of Visitors to enhance and inspire our community [KSU Goal 3] and expand institutional influence and prominence [KSU Goal 4]. Members of the Board of Visitors are relevant stakeholders whose professional experiences and community knowledge are essential to the success of education now and in the future.

The Bagwell College of Education Board of Visitors (BOV) was founded in 2024 to:

- Champion 21st century growth and innovation within the education profession by providing input and sharing ideas to advance all levels of education.
- Increase community awareness of educational complexities to influence the promotion of education as a professional, highly regarded and sought-after career.
- Advocate on behalf of Bagwell College in a public relations and/or fund-raising capacity to

encourage partnerships and donations.

With feedback from BOV members, the BOV chair and college administrators work collaboratively to shape strategic BOV meeting agendas and takeaways. Recent BOV meeting themes included Teacher Recruitment and Retention, Educator Burnout and Wellness, Literacy Innovations, AI in Education, Educator Preparation, Student Success and Student Affinity Groups.

"We are honored to have well-known civic leader and volunteer Ann Cramer leading our efforts as the first Chair of the Board of Visitors," said Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College of Education. "Cramer retired from IBM where she was Director for Corporate Citizenship for the Americas, and we are equally excited to share the names of the leaders who comprise our inaugural Board of Visitors."

Inaugural Board of Visitors Leaders

Ann Cramer, Chair
Senior Consultant
Coxe Curry & Associates

Tauheedah Baker-Jones
Regional Director,
Southeast
NCEE

Julia Bernath
Board Development
Specialist

Georgia School Boards
Association

Lily Berrios
President
Sizemore Group

Kali Boatright
President & CEO
North Fulton Chamber

Mary-Kay Boler
Chief Development Officer
Communities in Schools

Maranie Brown
V P of Data Platforms and
Solutions
Blackrock

Sandy Bryan
Bagwell Faculty Emerita
Gay Construction

Leslie Bussey
CEO & Executive Director
Georgia Leadership
Institute for School
Improvement

Katie Dempsey
State Representative
Early Learning Foundation

Beverly Ferguson

Senior Director
Community Affairs
Georgia Pacific

Marc Feuerbach

Superintendent
Cartersville City Schools

Tom Gay

President
Gay Construction

Betsy Green

President
BG Consultants, LLC
Perimeter Community
Improvement District

Ann Hanlon

Executive Director
Perimeter Community
Improvement District

Sherri Hill

Chief of Staff
Cobb County School
District

Dave Howland

Executive Director
Teach for America – Atlanta

Rich Johnson

Asst. Vice Pres. Legislative &
Regulatory Affairs
AT&T

Don Johnson

Trustee
KSU Foundation

Lauren Kalen

Senior Philanthropy
Manager
The Lumistella Company

Jo Kirchner

Chief Executive Officer
Primrose Schools

Shari Martin

President & CEO
Cobb Community
Foundation

Borja Olano

Trustee
KSU Foundation

Tolton Pace

Senior Program Officer
Arthur M. Blank Family
Foundation

Stephen Pruitt

President
Southern Regional
Education Board

Veronica Punch

Associate Executive
Director
Georgia Power Corporate
Responsibility

Denise Quarles

Chief City Executive
Siemens

Dana Rickman

President
Georgia Partner for
Excellence in Education

Grant Rivera

Superintendent
Marietta City Schools

Jai Rogers-Thomas

Vice President, Business &
Community Development
Delta Community Credit
Union

Chris Sizemore

Chief Executive Officer
INCISIVE

Courtney Smith

Senior Vice President,
Market Manager
The PNC Financial Services
Group

Erika Smith

Manager, TechSpark Metro
Microsoft Philanthropies

Rubye Sullivan

Senior Associate
Annie E. Casey Foundation

Carol Waddy

Director of Corporate
Social Responsibility and
Community Affairs
Chick-fil-A, Inc.

Jennie Welch

Vice President, Strategy &
Finance
GLISI (GA Leadership
Institute for School
Improvement)

Comer Yates

Executive Director
Atlanta Speech School

Ken Zeff

Executive Director
Learn4Life

2023-2024

PINNING & HONORS CELEBRATION AWARDEES

Every year, faculty in the Clarice C. and Leland H. Bagwell College of Education select an outstanding student from each program based on distinguished achievements in their major field (including having earned an exceptional GPA), extraordinary leadership, and notable accomplishments in extra-curricular, civic, or professional activities.

Each student honoree selects a faculty member to honor who has encouraged his/her professional growth and inspired his/her passion for education.

The Honors Celebration takes place in the spring where we honor these stellar students and educators.

UNDERGRADUATE



Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood
Education B-K

Angela Yi

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Douglas Bell**

Bachelor of Science in Elementary
Education, P-5

Josiane Hardin

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jessica Hale**

Bachelor of Science in Elementary
Education, P-5

Janell Lee

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jennifer Ward**

Bachelor of Science in English
Education

Joanie Cox

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Rob Montgomery**

Bachelor of Science in Learning,
Design & Technology

Katelyn Brown

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Yvonne
Earnshaw & Helen Maddox**

Bachelor of Science in Health &
Physical Activity Leadership

Reagan Poteet

Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Monica Gerda**

Bachelor of Science in History
Education
Jacqueline Techau
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Caroline Conner**

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics
Education
Dylan Hewitt
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Vince Kirwan**

Bachelor of Science in Chemistry Edu-
cation
Jordyn Carney
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Mike Dias**

Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades
Education
Kaci Queen
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Raynice
Jean-Sigur & Kellie Hebblethwaite**

Bachelor of Science in Arts, Modern
Language and Culture
Kim Amaya
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Brian Olovson**

Bachelor of Science in Music Education
Jenna Wagner
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Todd Wedge**



GRADUATE

Master of Arts in Secondary
Mathematics
Carol Smith
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Vince Kirwan**

Master of Arts in Secondary English
Anna Andrel
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Michelle
Devereaux**

Master of Arts in Secondary Science
Nicole Freeman
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Mike Dias**

Master of Arts in Teaching English to
Speakers of Other Languages
Maria Uquillas de Kangas
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Zurisaray
Espinosa**

Master of Education in Educational
Leadership
Bob McNeely
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Sheryl Croft**

Master of Education in Elementary
& Early Childhood Education
Katherine Rinderle
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Roberta Gardner**

Master of Education in Educational
Leadership: Higher Education and
Student Affairs
Garrett Campbell
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jen Wells**

Master of Education in Instructional
Technology
Michael (Chad) Moore
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Tiffany Roman**

Master of Education in Secondary
& Middle Grades Education
Holly Davis
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Nichole Guillory**

Master of Education in Special
Education
Kim Buell
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Vidya Munandar**

Master of Education in TESOL
Whitney Sutherland
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Nihal Khote**

Master of Education in Teacher
Leadership
Cora Vette Rountree
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jen Wells**

Education Specialist in Curriculum
& Instruction
Kira Coats
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Erik Malewski**

Education Specialist in Educational
Leadership
Sapph Espinoza
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jeffrey Robinson**

Education Specialist in Instructional
Technology, Certification Track
Cindy Aldridge
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Tiffany Roman**

Education Specialist in Instructional
Technology, Advanced Track
Joy Gaines
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jo Williamson**

Education Specialist in Secondary &
Middle Grades Education, Language
Arts
Steven Ramsey
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Jennifer Dail**

Doctorate of Education in Instructional
Technology, Certification Track
Molly Bowden
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Julie Moore**

Doctorate of Education in Instructional
Technology, Advanced Track
Sean Bowden
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Matthew L.
Wilson**

Doctorate of Education in Educational
Leadership
Karey Williams
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Sheryl Croft**

Doctorate of Education in Secondary
& Middle Grades Education
Ashley Lamar
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Megan Adams**

Doctorate of Education in Teacher
Leadership
Heather Hodge
Faculty Honoree: **Dr. Albert Jimenez**



Many of our graduates return to KSU for their master's, specialist, and doctoral degrees because their undergraduate experience was so positive, and they were so well prepared for their careers. But why should future teachers select KSU's Bagwell College of Education as their school of choice?

It's that EXTRA dose of innovation, preparation, and celebration that combine to

We call it the Bagwell Advantage.

make our graduates sought after by local, state, and regional school districts. We believe in the intrinsic long-term value of the relationship aspects of education because they create a sense of belonging that becomes part of the culture and is as important as the learning.

The Bagwell Advantage is about building connections that result in lifelong friendships and professional networks. Our student organizations are essential to the overall undergraduate experience, and this section of the magazine will give you an inside look at Educators of Tomorrow, Black Teachers Matter, Student Ambassadors, Pláticas con Maestr@s, Call Me Mister, and BLOOM, all of which help shape our students into elite teachers and educational leaders.

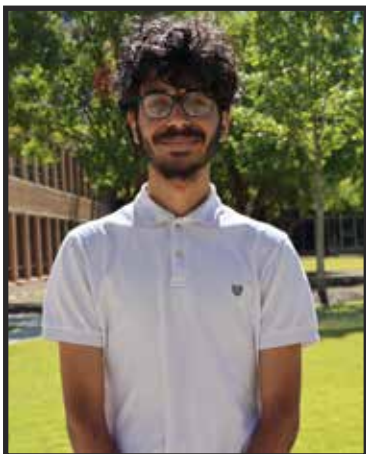
DID YOU KNOW...

The National Study of Millionaires done by Ramsey Solutions* in 2017-2018 revealed that teaching is one of the top five professions that produces millionaires! The research study of more than 10,000 millionaires was done to gain an understanding of personal finance behaviors and attitudes that factored into financial success.

Ramsey Solutions. (2018). *The national study of millionaires* [White Paper]. Ramsey Press. https://ramseysolutions.com/search/results?q=nationalstudyofmillionaires&size=n_10_n



educators of tomorrow



Bagwell College of Education student Munawar Sheikh was looking for a way to get involved and feel at home in his first year at Kennesaw State. He found it in the student organization Educators of Tomorrow.

EOT is open to all education majors and education-interest students at KSU, connecting them with each other and with education professionals. The

future educators develop applicable skills and build their education network through on-campus events, guest speakers, and monthly meetings.

Now a sophomore, Sheikh already is in a leadership role with EOT as its treasurer. He is active in the organization's events to promote education as "one of the best possible careers you can have," he said. "Educators of Tomorrow gives students a chance to be leaders," said Dr. Raynice Jean-Sigur, an early childhood education professor and the EOT faculty advisor. "It's also a great avenue for students to have a voice, because a lot of times they're trying to find

their voice."

Through EOT, Sheikh connects with students from all the majors in Bagwell College and even students from other education programs, like art or history education. He also meets students who are undecided on their career paths and helps spark an interest in education for some of them.

"People tell me, 'This program is amazing,'" Sheikh said. "I'm able to help future educators feel that Bagwell is where they should be."

Educators of Tomorrow aligns with key elements of KSU's mission – chief among them, providing an inclusive environment and keeping students engaged and enrolled until they graduate.

"EOT exemplifies education being a lifelong process that can influence lives in profound ways," said Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College of Education. "Our vision is to maintain a community of teachers and teacher candidates who are a lifelong support network for our graduates."

**SHEIKH SUMMED IT BEST:
"THE BAGWELL COLLEGE
REALLY FEELS LIKE A FAMILY."**



Black teachers matter



Black Teachers Matter [BTM] is a local KSU student organization that was inspired by Dr. Jillian Ford in the fall of 2018, and now, is championed by six African American professors who meet with and mentor members of this very active group.

The BTM vision is "a world where Black education is acknowledged, explored and celebrated."

The group's mission is "to help educators navigate and center a variety of Black perspectives in the field of education as well as challenge system norms. BTM strives to provide opportunities to build community, engage in productive dialogue, and conduct research while examining critical issues pertaining to Black Education."

Since its inception, BTM has sponsored fundraisers; supported student success through book clubs, study sessions, and career coaching; and won a national award for their "Rosa Parks: Activist, Advocate, Advisor" two-day event that was inspired by the Zinn Education Project's Rosa Parks teaching guide.

BTM members have shared that this group has had a positive impact on their college experience. One member, who never had an African American teacher growing up, said she joined BTM because "I felt like I can relate to it because it promotes Black educators." Another member said "I like that BTM is very inclusive. I definitely felt heard, which made me keep showing up, because I didn't feel ignored anymore. So that was probably the greatest thing that BTM gave me."

BTM holds a Sankofa Celebration every year to honor graduating seniors and revere African traditions that honor ancestors and commemorate the triumphs and achievements of our Black teacher candidates.





Pláticas con Maestr@s

More than five years ago, a student reached out to Dr. Sanjuana Rodriguez with an interest in creating a group that would focus on supporting Latinx students in the college as they progressed through teacher education programs. At that time, more than 150 students in the Bagwell College of Education were enrolled as Latinx.

Pláticas con Maestr@s has become an important community within the college. As reflected in their goals, the group has created a space in which the

experiential knowledge of Latinx students is honored and valued. Whether engaging in monthly meetings; undergraduate research; forming mentoring relationships with Latinx teachers; presenting at professional conferences; planning events and retreats; or providing culturally relevant support through book studies, workshops, scholarship information, etc., the Pláticas con Maestr@s community has experienced significant growth and is establishing traditions that the members enjoy.

Every semester, the members plan a Saturday retreat that focuses on various areas of interest. The spring 2024 theme was Telling Our Stories, and the topics were "Where Do I Want My Path to Take Me" and "How Will I Make It There?" Guest speakers included Dr. Carla España, one of the authors of *En Comunidad: Lessons for Centering the Voices and Experiences of Bilingual Latinx Students*. She is a New-York based, bilingual education expert, educator, researcher, writer, and co-founder of the En Comunidad Collective.

In the spring of 2023, a Graduation Ceremony was held that has become an annual event. The families of Latinx graduates are invited to attend, and several parents and grandparents have been asked to speak at this event, which is now an established tradition.





Bloom

The mission of Bloom (Bagwell Ladies Organization of Mentoring) is to promote sistership and connection among elementary education majors. The newest Registered Student Organization within the Bagwell College, Bloom was launched in the summer of 2024 to create a safe and welcoming community for teacher candidates to grow personally and professionally, share best practices, and advocate for educational equity and innovation.

Bloom is dedicated to empowering, inspiring, and supporting its members along the journey toward excellence in teaching and learning. Through collabo-

ration, mentorship, and lifelong learning, the members of Bloom strive to elevate each other in sistership.

Active members of Bloom are required to attend meetings, and maintain a 2.75 grade point average. Active members may serve in leadership roles and have access to organization events, teaching materials and ideas, and study resources. While the "L" in the name of the group stands for "Ladies," Bloom is open to all students as stated in the KSU Non-Discrimination Statement, which is based on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.





call me mister®

Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models) is a national program designed to increase the pool of highly qualified teachers from broader, more diverse backgrounds, particularly from rural, economically disadvantaged and underserved communities. While the program was originally intended to recruit Black males to teach in early childhood and elementary schools in South Carolina, Call Me MISTER has expanded to include females and other prospective PreK-Grade 12 teacher candidates from these communities. In the Bagwell

College of Education, we are committed to cultivating a broader, more inclusive field of teachers by enhancing our recruitment efforts. To that end, we launched the Call Me MISTER program in the fall of 2021.

Call Me MISTER originated in the Clemson University College of Education in 2000 in collaboration with three private Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and has grown to include a total of 28 two- and four-year colleges and universities in South Carolina and an additional 18 colleges and universities in 10 states. The state's two land-grant institutions — Clemson University and South Carolina State University — matriculated their first cohort of students in Fall 2005. Ninety percent of the MiSTERS currently in the teaching force are graduates of South Carolina colleges and universities.

The Call Me MiSTER program at Kennesaw State University offers financial support through stipends, along with a strong academic support system and a community-based cohort model that fosters personal, social, and academic development. to <https://www.kennesaw.edu/bagwell/units-centers/call-me-mister/index.php>

The Call Me MiSTER program at Kennesaw State University is made possible through the generosity of the Georgia Power Foundation, the Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation, PNC Bank, and Chick-fil-A.





bagwell student ambassadors

Each year, outstanding undergraduates are chosen to be the primary student communicators for the college. The mission of the Student Ambassadors program is to develop student leaders who serve as official hosts of the Bagwell College of Education facilitating events, promoting student engagement, and supporting student success through community outreach and recruitment.

Students selected to represent the Bagwell College of Education as Student Ambassadors serve as hosts at a variety of college and university-sponsored events, such as career days, recruiting activities, alumni functions, special visitation days, high school student activities, seminars, and receptions. Student Ambassadors engage with potential students, alumni, donors, and community members and play a key role in fostering relationships and promoting a positive, caring, diverse, and inclusive culture in the Bagwell College of Education.

- Facilitate Bagwell College of Education orientation activities
 - Give building tours in the Bagwell College of Education
 - Meet with prospective students
 - Support outreach and recruitment initiatives
 - Provide support at Bagwell events such as open houses, welcome-back events, and other honors and recognition ceremonies
 - Engage in promotional social media projects
- Student Ambassadors are required to attend

monthly meetings during fall and spring semesters, attend a fall retreat in August to plan for the year, and assist with various events throughout the year. They develop leadership, communication, and networking skills that will serve them well throughout their careers. For information on how to apply, go to <https://bagwell.kennesaw.edu/units/bassc/student-ambassadors.php>.



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MORE INFORMATION



For more information, contact the
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