



BAGWELL COLLEGE

of Education

2025 year in review



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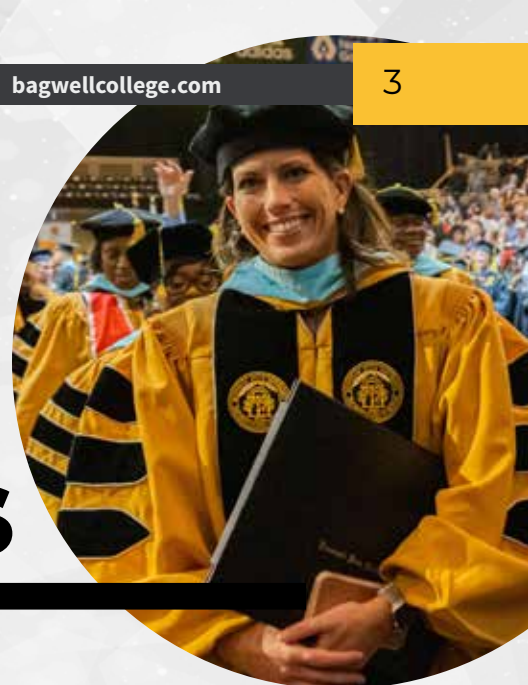
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2025 YEAR IN REVIEW MAGAZINE

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MEET THE DEAN

Bagwell College of Education welcomes new leadership



Long before he ever set foot on campus, Eric Moyen was already very familiar with Kennesaw State University.

As department head of educational leadership at Mississippi State University, he worked on introducing a new teacher leadership degree. He searched for nationally prominent models to emulate and the same name kept appearing: Kennesaw State University. Years later, when he needed inspiration for a practitioner-focused doctoral program, he again found himself looking to KSU's program as a model.

When the opportunity arose to lead the Clarice C. and Leland H. Bagwell College of Education, Moyen was ready. His interviews confirmed what the research had suggested: an innovative institution, and — most importantly — a community of professionals who matched the place's ambition.

"I wasn't just looking for a new role," he said. "I wanted to be at a place that was innovative, forward-thinking, not afraid to try different things."

Moyen's career in education began three decades ago as an eighth grade U.S. history teacher. He later moved to higher

education at Lee University, where his impact in the classroom earned him the Excellence in Teaching Award, the institution's highest faculty honor.

At Mississippi State, Moyen built an impressive record across multiple roles. As associate dean in the College of Professional and Continuing Studies, executive director of the Center for Teaching and Learning, and professor of higher education leadership, he helped transform the university's Educational Leadership programs, growing enrollment while strengthening the department's research output and funding. He was a driving force behind MSU's online Doctor of Education program for P-12 leadership and helped bring Teacher-Leadership graduate programs to life.

Outside of academics, he is a self-described sports fan who turned that passion into researching and writing the book "College Sports: A History," which documents the inception and evolution of intercollegiate athletics in the U.S.

Moyen sat for an interview recently with KSU's Summit Magazine.



What excites you most about leading the Bagwell College?

"The entrepreneurial spirit of this college. People here are genuinely asking hard questions about how we should educate future teachers, what curriculum should look like, and where our focus should be. We have world-class faculty with a lot of talent already in use, and they are even more eager to expand. That combination is rare, and it's exciting."

What has your approach been since starting your role in January?

"Mostly listening. I have been trying to identify faculty and staff who have a vision for something we are not yet doing, something they are passionate about, and then figuring out where that aligns with Bagwell's mission and KSU's strategic plan. The goal is to find those intersections and become a catalyst to make something special happen in these spaces."

What are your top priorities for your first year?

"We are spending this summer taking all the feedback I have gathered, from meetings with every single full-time faculty and staff member and using it to shape our strategic priorities. What I know already is that students must be at the center. Our students are future teachers and current teachers, and those teachers impact children's lives. That must remain our focus as we enhance our teaching, research and service."

With the ongoing teacher shortage, how do we attract more people to the profession

and to study at the Bagwell College?

"A few things are important in terms of our ability to turn that tide. One of them is to be relevant. Artificial intelligence is a reality, and it is not leaving. Rather than faculty being nervous about AI because it's easier to plagiarize or cheat, we need to go deeper and ask how we use AI to help us become better teachers and learners."

How do we incorporate that into our teaching and our leadership?

"You'll find that P-12 schools that have very little turnover have educators who love their principal and don't want to leave. So, if we can train great leaders in schools to be great superintendents, principals, and department chairs, then that helps make the profession better because people are happy when they are valued and being led well."

What aspects of KSU's culture have you enjoyed so far, and what are you looking forward to?

"I love that Scrappy is the name of our mascot because it just fits the student personalities that we have here. They're hardworking, and they simply get things done, even when that's a challenge. I wasn't here for football season when I started in January, but I've made it to basketball and baseball games. I love college sports and I love how they bring people together. It's clear that the administration places a priority on that, and I think that's important. Athletics really is a front porch to a university. This is where people are introduced to schools. And moving forward, I just love the beginning of a fall semester and all the things that will be involved with parents dropping kids off. I'm looking forward to that, because I know the work we do will transform their lives."

What kind of legacy do you hope to leave at Bagwell?

"I want to be part of building something that lasts, programs that continue to grow, ideas that take root, and a culture where innovation and collaboration are the norm. If people can look back and say we moved the Bagwell College forward in meaningful ways and created new opportunities for students and educators, that would be incredibly rewarding."

TRIO Upward Bound Programs prepare “first-generation students” for higher education and career success



TRIO Upward Bound is an intensive intervention program that prepares high school students for higher education through various enrichment courses and mentoring relationships.

Federal TRIO Upward Bound programs were signed into law in 1964 and began with the first summer cohort in 1965. Since then, Upward Bound has served high school students across the country. Targeting students from families whose parents do not have a bachelor's degree, Upward Bound programs work to increase the rate at which these high school students enroll in and graduate from institutions of post-secondary education. Upward Bound programs work with students year-round to ensure that they are prepared for the college experience, and that academic and financial needs are met.

Since 2017, Kennesaw State University has continuously been awarded three TRIO grants: Upward Bound at Hiram High School,

Upward Bound at Rockmart and Cedartown High Schools, and Upward Bound Math/Science at East Paulding High School. These three programs, totaling over \$9 million in funding during a 10-year span, serve 180 students per year at their target schools.

Students in these programs participate in activities such as ACT/SAT preparation, tutoring, academic advising, college and career readiness workshops, and educational enrichment. During the summer, they spend six weeks engaging in coursework to prepare for the next school year, exploring college campuses, and learning how to be a college student. KSU TRIO Program graduates have the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful college students, whatever college they choose.

More than 70,000 students across the nation are served by the Upward Bound programs. In addition to academic support, Upward Bound students receive mentoring

and support as they prepare to complete college admission applications and apply for financial aid and scholarships. The program also provides activities and instruction specifically designed for students who are limited in English proficiency, and all students who are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education, including students with disabilities, students who are homeless, and students who are in foster care or aging out of foster care. The overall goal for Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math/Science is for the participants to graduate high school prepared to enter the college of their choice, with the skills and knowledge necessary to graduate from college.

Data collected by Upward Bound affirms the success of the programs. More than 75% of Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math/Science students nationwide go to college, and over 34% of those students graduate within 6 years. KSU is proud to say that for the Class of 2025, 75% enrolled in college in the fall following their graduation from high school, with an average high school GPA of 3.46. Additionally, 44% of our program students graduated from college within



6 years of enrollment (Class of 2019). The KSU TRIO Programs also have a 98% rate of graduation, retention, and progression rate for students within the program at target high schools.

“Our programs bring together students from all walks of life with one common goal: to be the first in their families to attend college and graduate with a bachelor’s degree,” said KSU TRIO Programs Director Mary Turner. “Our students are often balancing jobs, helping to take care of siblings, participating in multiple extracurricular activities, and learning rigorous coursework, but still give us their time on weekends and during their summer breaks. From tutoring and assistance with high school class selection, to college tours, college application support and everything in between, our programs work hard to ensure each student gets a hand up in achieving their goals.”

Turner is passionate about helping students achieve their dreams. As a first-generation college graduate herself, she understands firsthand how impactful that support can be.

KSU Partners with ISTE and Microsoft to pilot teacher preparation on effectively integrating Generative AI into teaching and learning

The School of Instructional Technology & Innovation (SITI) at Kennesaw State University's Bagwell College of Education partnered with ISTE (International Society for Technology in Education) and Microsoft to equip preservice educators with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively integrate Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) into teaching and learning.

Last year, SITI was invited to pilot an innovative AI module designed by ISTE. A select group of 10 students, under the leadership of Dr. Tricia Frazier, Senior Lecturer in SITI, participated in the pilot, gaining valuable insights into the future of education.

international release.

This spring, this opportunity was expanded to preservice teachers enrolled in ITEC 3100, ITEC 3200, and ITEC 3300, and to master of arts in teaching students in ITEC 6200, ensuring they can complete the module and earn their AI certificates at no cost. Thanks to our partnership with ISTE and Microsoft, we are empowering future educators with essential skills to navigate and leverage AI effectively in their classrooms.

We are grateful to our partners at ISTE and Microsoft for their dedication to enhancing preservice teacher education. Their support allows us to remain at the forefront of preparing educators for the evolving landscape of teaching and learning!



The five-hour module, supported by a sponsorship from Microsoft, includes an introduction to AI, its ethical considerations, and practical applications for teaching and learning, along with hands-on activities and a certificate upon completion.

As part of the pilot, Dr. Frazier had the unique opportunity to collaborate with ISTE's course designers, offering feedback to refine the module before its wider



KSU researcher using VR to improve STEM education



Preethi Titu spent her adolescence preparing to become a doctor, but from a young age she knew she was more interested in teaching.

She enjoyed standing at the front of the classroom teaching small topics to her peers and was praised by her teachers in high school for that skill. Ultimately, all students learn differently, and all teachers teach differently.

Now, Titu is using advanced technology to equip future teachers with the skills needed to engage all learners in meaningful scientific discourse.

Dr. Titu, an Associate Professor of Science Education, is working on an NSF-funded project designed to use virtual reality (VR) to improve education in STEM education.

The main objective of this project is to provide experiential learning through VR and artificial intelligence (AI) simulations. These simulations will be accompanied by scaffolded peer teaching, focusing on scientifically relevant, real-world problem-based instruction.

"This research addresses the critical need in STEM education to equip future teachers with skills to engage students in meaningful scientific discussion," Titu said. The project, which is a collaboration between Kennesaw State University and four other universities (University of West Florida, Drake University, Texas A&M University and Southern Methodist University), aims to reach 250 undergraduate STEM education students over four years.

Titu and her team are currently working to develop scenarios for the VR-AI simulations. In the fall, they will begin recruiting and training participants to pilot the simulations and provide feedback. Through the testing process, they will improve the simulations based on the feedback they receive, eventually leading to measurable, technology-based teacher training.

These early steps will lay a foundation for scalable, technology-enhanced teacher preparation.

Titu described her willingness to embrace the growing role technology plays in education, saying immersive technologies like VR and AI have become essential in teacher education.

"With a growing emphasis on deliberate practice and authentic, problem-based learning, it is more important now than ever before that future teachers are prepared to face the realities of a classroom," Titu said.

Titu's research focuses on supporting both pre-service and in-service teachers integrating STEM pedagogy into their classroom practice. Working actively with students, Titu can see the results of her efforts firsthand.

"Engaging in research helps students develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills, which are essential for effective teaching," Titu said. "It also gives them first-hand experience in innovative approaches to STEM education."

As the project continues, its emphasis on immersive technology and peer-supported learning positions it to influence how STEM teachers are trained well beyond a single classroom or campus. By grounding teacher preparation in real-world problems, the research seeks to close the gap between theory and practice in science education.

"Those practices relate to those scientific real-world problems and science instruction," Titu said, "and that will help better prepare our teachers to facilitate learning in ways that are more engaging and effective."



Kennesaw State study shows cell phone ban improves teacher well-being

A new partnership between Kennesaw State University and Marietta City Schools is shedding light on how banning cell phones in classrooms can benefit both students and teachers.

Preliminary findings from a study led by Dr. Mei-Lin Chang, Professor of Applied Quantitative Research and Educational Analysis at KSU's Clarice C. and Leland H. Bagwell College of Education, suggest that restricting cell phone use during the school day has not only boosted student engagement but also improved teacher well-being and job satisfaction.

The research is part of a broader collaboration among Marietta City Schools, Emory University, and KSU. While Emory's research team examined how the cell phone ban affected students' mental health and learning, KSU's study focused on how it influenced teachers.

"The district initially set out to improve student focus and mental health," Chang said. "But they quickly noticed another unexpected outcome: teachers were reporting higher satisfaction and less stress."

Teacher burnout has long been a national concern. According to recent RAND surveys, more than half of U.S. teachers report symptoms of depression or hopelessness, and enthusiasm for teaching has dropped significantly since the pandemic. In Georgia, the situation mirrors national trends, with teacher attrition and shortages on the rise.

"For many teachers, constant cell phone use in class was a daily frustration," Chang said. "Imagine walking into a classroom where every student is looking at their phone instead of paying attention. Teachers feel they can't connect with students the way they used to, and that's incredibly discouraging."

For the study, Chang and her team, Dr. Rachel Gaines and Dr. Johari Harris, surveyed

teachers at two Marietta City schools — a sixth-grade academy and a middle school. At the sixth-grade academy, 100% of teachers agreed that the cell phone ban improved student engagement, classroom management, and peer interaction. Ninety percent reported feeling less stressed, more supported, and more fulfilled in their work. At the middle school, 80 to 92% of teachers echoed those positive outcomes.

"It's rare in research to see 100 percent agreement," Chang said. "That tells us this initiative made a real difference."

The findings have already sparked statewide discussions. In August,

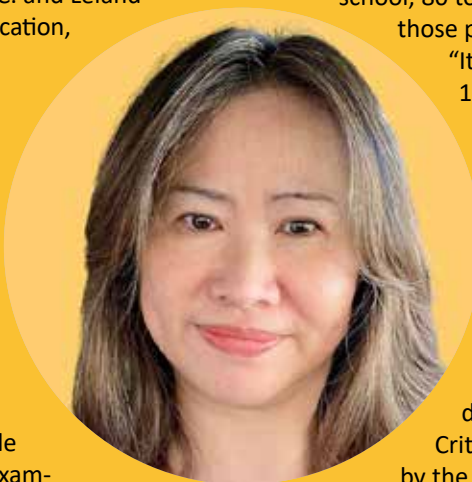
Chang was invited to be a facilitator to discuss the issue at a Critical Issues Forum hosted by the Georgia Partnership for

Excellence in Education at Emory University, where educators, policymakers, and students debated the role of cell phones in schools.

The project builds on a longstanding partnership between the Bagwell College of Education and Marietta City Schools, which have collaborated on literacy programs such as the Fast Start Academy summer reading initiative.

Director of Employee Relations Dayton Hibbs said the district values its partnership with KSU and believes collaborations like this study are crucial as school districts try to address teacher well-being.

"When making policy decisions, it's essential that we measure impact and effectiveness," Hibbs said. "Our partnership with KSU allowed us to apply high-quality research methods to evaluate whether the policy achieved its intended outcomes. The initial findings are promising, showing that informed policy decisions can strengthen learning environments and build trust among students, teachers, and families."



Kennesaw State researchers developing a system to improve classroom discussion using AI

More than 200,000 middle and high school science teachers in the U.S. invest hours into planning lessons for students and spend even more time reflecting on how effective their teaching has been.

Few, however, can analyze live classroom discussion and make real-time changes to their teaching to help struggling students understand the subject matter, something that Kennesaw State University Associate Professor of Science Education Soon Lee and a fellow researcher are seeking to address.

"There are a lot of aspects to conversation," said Dr. Lee, who teaches in the Bagwell College of Education. "It involves people's emotions, knowledge, and attitude. So, if you focus on just one, you might miss other aspects in conversation, and that's where current tools are focused. I wanted to develop my own discourse system to analyze how those conversations between teachers and students work."

To that end, Lee and Assistant Professor of Computer Science Jiho Noh created the Automated Discourse Analysis System (ADAS), which uses artificial intelligence (AI) to analyze classroom transcripts and provide teachers with constructive, real-time feedback. The end goal of the project, funded in part by a \$10,000 seed grant through KSU's Office of Research, is to increase student engagement and scientific reasoning.

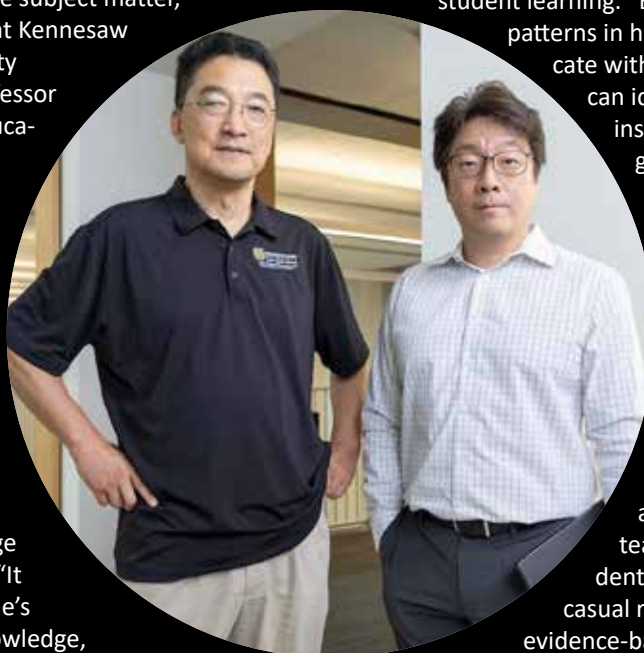
"We want to create a system that can accurately predict the discussion type," said

Dr. Noh, who teaches in the College of Computing and Software Engineering. "We can also evaluate the quality of the feedback or measure the quality of the discourse and the learning performance."

The project isn't just about evaluating teachers; it's about empowering them to reflect and make adjustments that support student learning. "By visualizing patterns in how they communicate with students, teachers can identify where their instructional strategies are or aren't promoting scientific reasoning," Lee said.

While other AI tools transcribe speech, ADAS is designed to add a layer of discipline-specific analysis, helping teachers move student discussions from casual reasoning toward evidence-based scientific thinking. "I'm trying to see what kind of discourse patterns occur in a class, and for each utterance spoken by teacher or student, it can be classified," Lee said. "I hope this analysis will help teachers see how they interact with their students and how they engage with them in conversation."

The tool features a dashboard that breaks down teacher and student interactions and helps educators visualize how the discussions evolved throughout the lesson. Soon, they hope to build a community of educators using the ADAS and share insights with colleagues. "We are transitioning from a traditional teaching approach to a modern, more personalized learning approach," Noh said. "I think this system's going to help by giving the tools to those who need it most. This could change practices in the educational field."



New Literacy Micro-Credential launches in partnership with KSU, Learn4Life, and Atlanta Speech School

A Micro-Credential—often represented as a digital badge—is a short, focused learning experience that certifies a participant has demonstrated a specific skill or competency.

Kennesaw State University (KSU), the Atlanta Speech School, and Learn4Life are proud to announce the launch of the Impactful Read Alouds in Early Literacy Micro-Credential, a first-of-its-kind professional learning opportunity designed to strengthen early literacy in Georgia communities.

This new Micro-Credential empowers families, civic leaders, volunteers, and community members with practical tools to foster a strong foundation in language and literacy development for young children. By focusing on effective read-aloud practices, participants will learn how to create meaningful story-sharing experiences that spark curiosity, strengthen vocabulary, and build the skills children need for long-term reading success.

A Micro-Credential—often represented as a digital badge—is a short, focused learning experience that certifies a participant has demonstrated a specific skill or competency. Unlike a traditional degree or certificate program, Micro-Credential can be earned quickly, shared digitally on résumés

or LinkedIn profiles, and recognized by employers and community organizations as evidence of practical expertise.

“Reading aloud is one of the most powerful ways to change a child’s trajectory,” said Malcolm Mitchell, Georgia Reads Coach, author, Founder of the Share the Magic Foundation, and a leading partner in the program. “When adults are equipped with strategies that make stories come alive, we not only build better readers—we build brighter futures.” If you recognize his

name, Mitchell was a wide receiver for the Georgia Bulldogs and subsequently played for the New England Patriots.

“Every interaction with a child is an opportunity,” said Comer Yates, Executive Director of the Atlanta Speech School. “We are excited to ensure that each read-aloud experience is meaningful and respectful, so children are affirmed in who they are and inspired to see themselves as readers and thinkers.”

“Kennesaw State is proud to leverage the reach and talent of the Bagwell College of Education to improve literacy across our community,” said Dr. Melissa Driver, Associate Dean for Curriculum Catalyst and Innovations. “This Micro-Credential reflects our commitment to equipping educators and community members with practical skills that will create lasting impact for children and families across Georgia.”

“This effort is foundational for Learn4Life. We are proud to bring these partners together to scale a proven bright spot, which will improve literacy across our region,” said Dr. Ken Zeff, Executive Director of Learn4Life.



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**READING IS THE MOST
SELF-EMPOWERING
TOOL A PERSON COULD
POSSESS.**

MALCOLM MITCHELL



Employers and organizations whose team members complete the Micro-Credential can be confident that participants have developed a strong understanding of how to engage young learners through storytime.

How It Works

To earn the Micro-Credential, learners will view the video “Introducing Reading With Children” featuring Malcolm Mitchell and Master Teacher Whitini Coleman of the Kenan Preschool at the Atlanta Speech School. At the end of the video, participants will be able to scan a QR code to download and complete the credential.

Why It Matters

The Impactful Read Alouds Micro-Credential introduces participants to the profound role language and literacy play, not only in children’s academic achievement, but also in the health and prosperity of entire communities.

Learning objectives include:

- Identifying effective read-aloud strategies for young children
- Understanding how to select and focus on key aspects of a book
- Recognizing the lifelong power of reading and conversation with children

About the Partners

Atlanta Speech School

Founded in 1938, the Atlanta Speech School is one of the nation’s most comprehensive centers for language and literacy. With a mission to help children reach their potential through the power of language,

the School includes four programs: The Anne & Jim Kenan Preschool, The Wardlaw School, The Katherine Hamm Center, and The Clinic. The Atlanta Speech School is also home to the Rollins Center for Language & Literacy, which works to extend the School’s impact by providing professional development and coaching to educators across Georgia and beyond.

Learn4Life

Learn4Life is a collective impact organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes across metro Atlanta. Bringing together leaders from business, education, nonprofits, philanthropy, and local communities, Learn4Life works to ensure that every child in the region has the opportunity to realize their full potential. Through collaborative partnerships and data-driven strategies, Learn4Life advances shared goals for student success from early childhood through career readiness.

Share the Magic Foundation

Founded by Super Bowl Champion and children’s literacy advocate Malcolm Mitchell, the Share the Magic Foundation is dedicated to transforming the lives of young readers through innovative literacy programs. With initiatives such as Read with Malcolm, the foundation inspires children to develop a love of reading while equipping adults to serve as literacy champions in their communities. By fostering a culture of reading, Share the Magic helps open doors of opportunity for children everywhere.

DECAL announces 2025-26 Georgia Private School Pre-K Teacher of the Year



The Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) named its public-school and private-school Teachers of the Year in September of 2025. The private-school winner is KSU graduate Autumn Hart of Bundle of Joy Academy in Marietta.

As Georgia's Pre-K Private School Teacher of the Year, Hart received a \$3,000 personal award and a \$4,500 award for classroom and program use. She is serving as an ambassador for Georgia's Pre-K Program by public speaking, representing the program at various meetings, and modeling effective classroom practices.

Hart and Teresa Swaim, the Public-School DECAL Pre-K Teacher of the Year, were selected from six semi-finalists, each of whom submitted a video of small group instruction scored by outside judges, had a class observation, and a personal interview with a panel of professionals.

“Georgia’s Pre-K Program owes its success and effectiveness to the dedicated individuals working with our four-year-olds every day,”

said DECAL Commissioner Amy M. Jacobs. “These awards are a small token of our appreciation for their professionalism and commitment to Georgia’s children and families. Thanks to the outstanding efforts of our Pre-K teachers, our children are entering kindergarten better prepared to thrive.”

More than two million children in Georgia started kindergarten well-prepared because they attended effective Pre-K programs. This school year, more than 71,000 four-year-olds are attending Georgia’s Pre-K program. The voluntary, lottery-funded Pre-K program has been recognized as one of the top programs in the nation, based on quality standards, teacher qualifications, and enrollment.

BAGWELL GRADUATE IS COBB COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR



In his fourth year of teaching mathematics at Compton Elementary School in Powder Springs, fifth grade teacher Caleb Garrett was chosen as the school's Teacher of the Year.

There are 68 elementary schools in Cobb County School District, so it was an immense honor when Garrett was also named the Cobb County Elementary School Teacher of the Year. A '22 graduate of the Bagwell College Elementary Education program, Garrett has worked with gifted students and spent two years as co-teacher of the inclusion classroom.

During that time, Garrett and special education teacher Elizabeth Evans created the Compton Coffee Café. It is a student-run coffee cart designed to teach far more than how to make a good drink. Through the program, fifth graders work alongside special needs students to prepare and deliver iced coffee orders to teachers throughout the school, building meaningful friendships and a stronger sense of community along the way.

The café gives students hands-on experience with communication, teamwork, responsibility, and problem-solving. From taking orders and preparing drinks to delivering them across campus with a smile and a pleasant greeting, students practice real-world life skills in a supportive environment. Garrett and Evans also use everyday challenges as opportunities to teach resilience and confidence, reminding students that mistakes are part of life and simply chances to learn and grow.

More than a coffee cart, the Compton Coffee Café is helping students discover their potential while fostering kindness, inclusion, and independence. The program shows students that with encouragement and opportunity, they are capable of exceeding expectations both inside and outside the classroom!

"Give them the opportunity, and they will crush what you had set as an expectation for them," Garrett said. "This is our next generation, and we have to not only treat them with kindness but inspire them to be the best versions of themselves."

Funds raised from the coffee cart help fund field trips for fifth grade and special needs students who otherwise may not be able to attend. The overall goal is to support not only the students making the coffee but the school community as a whole, one cup and one student at a time.

When Mr. Garrett is not busy teaching mathematics and brewing iced coffees, he enjoys personal time with colleagues, reading a good suspenseful novel, and making TikTok's about education that you can check out at @grade5withgarrett.



From criminology to the classroom, Kennesaw State graduate finds purpose in special education

Raised by a mother and stepfather who were therapeutic foster parents, Corey Creek

'25 has always seemed destined to impact the lives of those in need. In fact, his mother long ago had a premonition that he would follow in her footsteps teaching special education.

Fifteen years later, Creek would go on to earn his Master of Education in Special Education in May from Kennesaw State University's Clarice C. and Leland H. Bagwell College of Education, bringing his mother's dream to fruition. He credits his nurturing home environment for exposing him to children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and inspiring him to carve his own path in special education.

"They're doing the same work every other kid does," Creek said. "They're on the same level as others. They just need a little bit more help and time."

Before pivoting to education, Creek studied criminology and earned his bachelor's degree in the field before advancing to graduate research at Georgia Southern University. It was during his research that he learned childhood instability plays a key role in development and criminal behavior. It was this revelation that caused him to consider how he could make a difference earlier in people's lives.

"What I've seen is that there's not enough stability in people's lives, especially young men," Creek said. "I started looking for alternate paths to teaching so that I could be that stable person in someone's life, because I never saw a male teacher until eighth grade."

After he shadowed his mother, a veteran

teacher of 24 years, Creek's new path was set.

Creek discovered the IGNITE (Inspiring Greatness and Normalizing Innovation in Teacher Education) Teacher Residency Program, which aims to bolster retention and combat a shortage of educators while providing them with no-cost professional development. DeKalb County School District launched IGNITE in January 2024, and a partnership with KSU has supported their efforts to specifically address the need for more special education teachers, along with secondary science and mathematics teachers.

Through the program, Creek completed a residency at Pleasantdale Elementary School in Doraville, Georgia. He considers his time there as the most rewarding and challenging experience in his life. "I feel complete," Creek said. "It gave me purpose that I didn't know I was missing. The only drawback was leaving the students at the end of the year."

After graduation, Creek began working full time as a kindergarten co-teacher at Laurel Ridge Elementary School in Decatur, Georgia.

"His ability to think creatively and develop innovative solutions sets him apart, making him a valuable asset to any team or project," said Natasha Griffin, a limited-term assistant professor of special education who earned her Ed.D. in the Bagwell College of Education.

Regarding the partnership, Griffin emphasized the importance of collaboration between school systems and higher education, stating, "Teamwork makes the dream work, and here at KSU, we are intentional about being innovative and serving as a valuable asset to our ever-evolving education system."



KSU alumnus nominated for National Superintendent of the Year honor

Kennesaw State University alumnus Marc Feuerbach '07, who is Cartersville City Schools Superintendent, represented Georgia at the national level at the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) meeting in Nashville.

Named 2026 Superintendent of the Year by the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) and Georgia School Superintendents Association (GSSA), Feuerbach is the state's nominee for National Superintendent of the Year.

Under Feuerbach's leadership since 2018, Cartersville City Schools has achieved record-high graduation rates, strengthened community partnerships, and expanded student support systems. His tenure has been marked by a commitment to innovation, trust-building, and providing hope for students and families.

Feuerbach expressed gratitude for the statewide recognition and reflected on the role his education played in his success. He earned a Master of Education degree from the Clarice C. and Leland H. Bagwell College of Education at KSU in 2007 and serves on the college's Board of Visitors.

"I am deeply honored to receive this award," he said. "My time at Kennesaw State University was instrumental in shaping my approach to leadership and education. The experiences and mentorship I received there gave me the tools to think critically, lead with purpose, and always keep students at the center of every decision."

Traci Redish, Associate Dean for Strategic Partnerships and Priorities and Professor of Instructional Technology, praised Feuerbach's achievement and the impact on Georgia's schools. "Marc exemplifies the values we strive to instill in our graduates—innovation, integrity, and a student-first mindset," Redish said. "His recognition as Superintendent of the Year is a testament to his dedication and the transformative leadership he brings to his district and community."

Feuerbach's career spans 23 years in education, including roles as a special education teacher, assistant principal, and principal. He has previously earned the President's Award from GSSA in 2022 and the Impact Award from the Cartersville-Bartow Chamber in 2019.

INTERACTIVE RESEARCH METHODS LAB



Hopscotch 4-All: An AI Recommender System for advancing research literacy in secondary STEAM education

Hopscotch 4-All (H4-All) is an interdisciplinary educational technology initiative focused on expanding equitable access to research literacy in secondary STEAM education, including AP Research. Through an open, AI-powered recommender system, H4-All provides personalized support for students' development of research design and inquiry skills.

Led by the Interactive Research Methods Lab (IRML) at Kennesaw State University in collaboration with faculty from the Bagwell College of Education, the College of Computing and Software Engineering, and the university library system, the project seeks to improve college readiness and research literacy among high school students, particularly those from underrepresented groups.

Building on the award-winning Hopscotch suite of educational tools for higher education, and Hopscotch 4-AP Research Toolkit (for high schoolers), H4-All leverages Large Language Models (LLMs) to provide adaptive guidance and scaffolded support for



students conducting research projects. The system is being co-designed with community and educational partners, including members of the College Board AP Research Development Committee, and AP Research teachers from Bartow, Cobb, and Cherokee school districts.

The project included an initial pilot study to evaluate the usability, effectiveness, and

accessibility of the H4-All prototype with 15 research experts, and AP Research teachers. Data collection included cognitive walk-throughs, surveys, and focus groups. Expert evaluators and teachers responded very positively to Hopscotch 4-All, highlighting its ease of use, engaging design, and potential to support research learning.

They described the platform as intuitive, visually appealing, and especially helpful for students who are new to research. Evaluators praised the AI-powered assistant for providing timely guidance, appreciated the step-by-step structure that helps learners navigate the research process, and noted the

platform's ability to make complex research concepts more accessible and understandable.

By supporting students in developing research, analytical, and critical thinking skills, Hopscotch 4-All aims to reduce disparities in AP Research participation, enhance STEAM and college readiness pathways, and contribute to more inclusive and equitable AI-enhanced educational practices. The project also positions the interdisciplinary team for future large-scale external funding opportunities focused on AI, learning sciences, and educational innovation.



Participating IRML Team Members:

Drs. Iván Jorrín Abellán, Anete Vásquez, Mei-Lin Chang, Olga Koz, Juliann Noble-Healy.

Collaborators from the College of Computing and Software Engineering:

Drs. Nasrin Dehbozorgi & Xinyue Zhang, and Mourya Teja Kunuku (Ph.D. Student - GRA)

Sponsor:

KSU - Grand Challenges Interdisciplinary Seed Grant by the Office of Research.

Budget: \$200,000

The Evolution of Hopscotch Interactive Research Software

Fall 2014 – Development of Hopscotch

Spring 2015 – Hopscotch 1.0

Fall 2019 – Hopscotch 2.0

Fall 2019 – Interactive Research Methods Lab Opens

Spring 2025 – Hopscotch 4-AP Research

Fall 2026 – Hopscotch 4-All

IRML.kennesaw.edu



Lee County's Tracey Lynn Woodcock is a Top 10 Finalist for Georgia Teacher of the Year

Tracey Lynn Woodcock will begin her 20th year as a teacher this fall. A Bagwell College graduate and current doctoral degree student, she was selected as one of the 2026 Top 10 Finalists for state of Georgia Teacher of the Year.

Woodcock teaches biology and ecology at Lee County High School's Ninth Grade Campus in Leesburg, Georgia. By connecting science to local and real-world phenomena, she creates student-centered learning experiences that foster curiosity, encourage confidence, and help students see themselves as future scientists.

Woodcock earned her Education Specialist degree in Secondary and Middle Grades Education – Science from Kennesaw State University and is currently pursuing her doctorate in Secondary and Middle Grades Education with a concentration in Biology, with an anticipated graduation

date of Spring 2027. Her doctoral research focuses on how teachers collaboratively design phenomenon-anchored instruction and integrate literacy supports to strengthen student learning outcomes.

Her recognition as a 2026 Georgia Teacher of the Year Top 10 Finalist reflects her commitment to students, science education, and the teaching profession.

"What I love most about teaching is helping students connect science to the world around them in meaningful ways," Woodcock said. "Exploring local and real-world phenomena sparks curiosity, builds confidence, and gives students opportunities to see themselves not only as learners, but as the future of science."

She is pictured alongside State Superintendent Richard Woods, also a graduate of Bagwell College of Education, and LCHS-9 Principal Ginger Lawrence.

Assistant principal sharpens leadership skills through KSU doctoral program

Work didn't end for Jennifer Wilson after the last bell rang at Red Top Middle School in Emerson, Georgia.

While enrolled in the educational leadership doctoral program in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University, the full-time assistant principal and mother of two had research papers and discussion posts to write and classes to take. Wilson and her husband took turns cooking dinner for their daughters, and she attended their golf matches and tennis tournaments when she could.

Graduating in May '25, Wilson became the first person in her family to earn a doctorate. "This was a huge accomplishment for me personally," she said. "I just couldn't quit."

Before spending the last two years at Red Top, Wilson had spent 17 years at White Elementary School, first as a teacher and then as an instructional lead teacher, all while continuing her education. In 2021, Wilson earned her specialist degree in educational leadership from KSU, and before then, a master's in brain-based learning from Nova Southeastern University.

"I knew I wanted to earn a master's and a specialist degree, but I never really thought I could achieve a doctorate," Wilson said. "Everyone is scared of the dissertation. You hear horror stories."

For her dissertation, she chose a topic that hits close to home, professional learning communities (PLCs) and teacher efficacy in rural Title I schools across Bartow County. PLCs are a framework that calls for collaboration among teachers to improve student learning. Twice a week at Red Top, teachers from the same grade level and subject matter met to discuss recent class performance and daily instruction.

In addition to managing staff concerns, overseeing standardized testing, and addressing facility issues like malfunctioning air conditioning, Wilson also attends weekly PLC meetings. Her research emphasizes the

importance of creating a safe and supportive environment in these meetings — one where teachers feel comfortable being vulnerable, a challenge that is particularly relevant in rural Title I schools, which often have a higher number of veteran educators. "I don't care if you've taught for 45 years — if we have a second-year teacher who is blowing test scores off the charts, we have got to investigate what she's doing," Wilson said.



PLCs began to roll out across the county about five years ago. It happened in phases, allowing the teachers time to adapt. "With professional learning communities, you have to eat the elephant one bite at a time," Wilson said.

Somebody asked Wilson if she regrets going for her doctorate. In response, she said, "Absolutely not."

"I would do it all over again in a heartbeat," Wilson said. "It was a lot, but it wasn't just busy work. It involved a lot of practical discussion, practical things to implement in our buildings, and then bringing them back and evaluating what worked and

CONTINUED ON P.22

CONTINUED FROM P.21

what didn't."

Arvin Johnson, Professor and Chair of the Department of Educational Leadership in the Bagwell College of Education, mentored Wilson throughout the program. With relevant research expertise and experience as a middle school principal, he served as the chair of Wilson's dissertation committee.

"Jennifer was a quintessential doctoral student," Dr. Johnson said. "She was quick

to take instruction, and she did excellent on her comprehensive exams and wrote an outstanding dissertation, which added to the field with its focus on rural schools." Johnson said that rural schools are often overlooked.

"Jennifer was very positive, and extremely hyper-focused on getting the job done and getting the job done well," Johnson said.

2025 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR WHO ARE KSU ALUMNI

STATE AND DISTRICT LEVEL

Tracey Lynn Woodcock - Lee County School District Teacher of the Year, One of Ten Finalists for State of Georgia Teacher of the Year

Caleb Garrett - Cobb County School District Elementary Teacher of the Year, Compton Elementary School Teacher of the Year

LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL

BARTOW COUNTY

Whitney Crumley, Euharlee Elementary School

Rebecca Eubanks, Allatoona Elementary School

Michael Herndon, Bartow County College and Career Academy

Kelly McGaha, Pine Log Elementary School

Lindsey Nasworthy, Emerson Elementary School

Torre Ray, Cass Middle School

CLAYTON COUNTY SCHOOLS

Marcus West, North Clayton Middle School

COBB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Carolyn Asher, Tapp Middle School

Suzanne Clay, Sedalia Park Elementary School

Natalie Cornwell, Dickerson Middle School

Skyler Curtis, McEachern High School

Brittany Duckworth, Cheatham Hill Elementary School

Karyn Eveler, Due West Elementary School

Taniya Ganguli, Simpson Middle School

Caleb Garrett, Compton Elementary School

Leandra Hofmeister, East Valley Elementary School

Saysha Jackson, Clarkdale Elementary School

Jasenda League, Walton High School

Barbara McClure, Hillgrove High School

Eric Martin, Palmer Middle School

Alison Palen, Sprayberry High School

Megan Peterson, Vaughan Elementary School

Aileen Pruitt, Hayes Elementary School

Lauren Puckett, Lost Mountain Middle School

Katie Roberts, Lewis Elementary School

Elizabeth Rogers, Sope Creek Elementary School

Kristen Schell, Dowell Elementary School

Annette Simpson, McCleskey Middle School

Michelle Yoo, Keheley Elementary School

DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOLS

Dr. Landra Jeffries, McNair Middle School

MARIETTA CITY SCHOOLS

Andrea Gutierrez, Sawyer Road Elementary School

Hannah Norton, Lockheed Elementary School

Tiffany Samimi, Marietta Middle School

Rachel Vick, West Side Elementary School

Jame Ziemian, A. L. Burruss Elementary School



PARTNERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS

Preparing quality-driven, innovative, inclusive educators is of critical importance to the profession. High quality education, mentoring, coaching, and induction support have never been more important for new teachers and educational leaders. We are fortunate to have established partnerships with many preschools, K-12 schools, corporations, and nonprofit organizations that support our students. We publish Partnership Spotlights every month at our website that feature the many ways collaborators help to provide a formidable and successful career path for new teachers, career teachers, and educational leaders. Below is a list of the Bagwell College's VIPs... our **Very Important Partners!**



Dr. Traci Redish
Associate Dean For Strategic Partnerships & Priorities

SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Bacon County Schools
Banks County Schools
Barrow County School District
Bartow County School District
Broward County Schools
Burk County Schools
Calhoun City Schools
Carroll County Schools
Cartersville City Schools
Catoosa County Schools
Cherokee County School District
Clarke County School District
Cobb County School District
Colquitt County Schools
Columbia County School District
Commerce City School District
Dalton Public Schools
Dawson County 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
Grady County Schools
Gwinnett Public School District
Hall County School District
Harris County School District
Henry County School District
Houston County School District
Jackson County School District

Jasper County School District
Jones County School District
Liberty County Schools
Lincoln County Schools
Lowndes County Schools
Marietta City Schools
Monroe County Schools
Morgan County Schools
Muscookee County Schools
Newton County School District
Oconee County School District
Paulding County School District
Pickens County School District
Polk County School District
Richmond County School District
Rockdale County School District
Rome City School District
Savannah-Chatham Schools
Spalding County School District
Walker County Schools
Walton County School District
Whitfield County School District

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

Academy of Scholars
Annunciation Day School
Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School
Atlanta Speech School
Brighten Academy
Centennial Academy Charter
Cherokee Charter School
Core Community Schools
First Baptist Christian School
Georgia Cyber Academy

Holy Innocents Episcopal School
SAE School
St. Benedict's Episcopal School
Tapestry Public Charter School
The Boyce Ansley School
The Ferguson School
The Haven Academy
The Howard School
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta

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
Learn4Life
Paderborn University, Paderborn, Germany
PNC Bank
Share the Magic Foundation
UL-Fire Safety Research Institute (Underwriters Laboratories Solutions)
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Universidad del Rosario, Columbia

BECOME A TEACHER



BAGWELL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

BACHELOR'S DEGREES

EARLY CHILDHOOD
(BIRTH-KINDERGARTEN)

ELEMENTARY
(P-5)

MIDDLE GRADES EDUCATION (4-8)

SELECT 2 CONCENTRATIONS:

LANGUAGE ARTS
MATHEMATICS
SCIENCE
SOCIAL STUDIES

SECONDARY EDUCATION (6-12)

SELECT 1 CONCENTRATION:

BIOLOGY
CHEMISTRY
ENGLISH
HISTORY
MATH
PHYSICS

P-12 EDUCATION

ART
HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION
MUSIC

WORLD LANGUAGES:

CHINESE
FRENCH
GERMAN
SPANISH

NON-CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS:

EARLY CHILDHOOD
(BIRTH-KINDERGARTEN)

**LEARNING, DESIGN,
AND TECHNOLOGY**



**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**
BAGWELL COLLEGE
OF EDUCATION



UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

Want a supportive, inclusive, and technology-savvy learning environment where you can grow academically and personally? Consider applying for admission to Kennesaw State University (KSU). Explore the programs offered by KSU's Bagwell College of Education and reach out if you have any questions or need assistance completing the application process. Learn more about why our students, faculty and staff say, "I belong in Bagwell," our slogan for the friendships and support you will experience in our community. Consider a fabulous career in education! Become a teacher!



LEARN MORE AT:

**BAGWELLCOLLEGE.COM
OR CALL 470-578-6105**

BecomeATeacher@Kennesaw.edu

2024-2025 BAGWELL SCHOLARS

Every year, faculty in the Clarice C. & Leland H. Bagwell College of Education and Educator Preparation Providers in other KSU colleges select one outstanding student from each program to receive the Bagwell Scholar Award. Each Bagwell Scholar then selects a faculty member to honor who has encouraged their professional growth and inspired their passion for education. The Bagwell Scholars and their faculty honorees are recognized at the annual Bagwell College Awards Ceremony at the end of the spring semester. The 2025 honorees are listed below, and we congratulate them once again.

UNDERGRADUATE HONOREES

Bachelor of Arts in Modern Language & Culture, Spanish

Maria Arias Ornelas

Faculty Honoree: Ms. Nilofer Bharwani

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Art Education

Wren Whiteside

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Donna Jones

Bachelor of Music in Music Education

Natalie Letalien

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Rachel Sorenson

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education, B – K

Mary Beth Ivey

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Douglas Bell

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education

Anna Warwick

Faculty Honoree: Ms. Kimberly Harrison

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education

Stacy Usery-Blakley

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Deanna McAleer

Bachelor of Science in History Education

Amanda Wnek

Faculty Honoree: Mrs. Angela Deangelo

Bachelor of Science in Learning, Design & Technology

Nelayna Edwards

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Yvonne Earnshaw

Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education, Mathematics

Chiann Suggs

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Vince Kirwan

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education, Biology

Kamryn Arzillo

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Mike Dias

Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education, Mathematics

Dylan Sellers

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Vince Kirwan





**KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY**
BAGWELL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

DEGREEUP

BAGWELL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

MASTER OF ARTS

Elementary Education (P-5)
Pedagogy Only (P-12)*
Secondary English, Mathematics
Secondary Biology, Chemistry, Physics
Special Education (General Curriculum)
Teaching English to Speakers of Other
Languages (TESOL)

MASTER OF EDUCATION (M.Ed.)

Educational Leadership: Higher Education and
Student Affairs
Educational Leadership: Tier I
Elementary & Early Childhood Education
Instructional Technology
Literacy Education
Secondary & Middle Grades Education*
Special Education (General Curriculum)
Teacher Leadership & Educational Leadership Tier I
Teaching English To Speakers of Other
Languages (TESOL)

EDUCATION SPECIALIST (Ed.S.)

Curriculum and Instruction
Educational Leadership Tier II
Instructional Technology (Certification Track)
Instructional Technology (Advanced Track)
Secondary & Middle Grades Education*
Special Education - General Curriculum
Special Education Leadership - Tier I

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION (Ed.D.)

Educational Leadership
Instructional Technology (Certification Track)
Instructional Technology (Advanced Track)
Secondary & Middle Grades Education*
Teacher Leadership (Certification Track)
Teacher Leadership (Advanced Track)

* Multiple disciplines are offered in these degree categories.

LEARN MORE AT:



bagwellcollege.com
degreeup@kennesaw.edu



470-578-5754



ENDORSEMENTS & CERTIFICATES

Autism Spectrum Disorder	Online Teaching
Coaching	Personalized Learning
Computer Science	Reading
ESOL	STEM Education
Dyslexia	Teaching English in
Gifted	Global/Local Contexts
Higher Education	Urban Education
Administration	

GaPSC CERTIFICATION-ONLY

Curriculum & Instruction
Educational Leadership Tier I
Educational Leadership Tier II
Teacher Leadership



GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Leverage your educational opportunities with a graduate degree from the Bagwell College of Education. Most of our graduate programs are fully online and designed for busy teachers and leaders. To learn how we can help you develop your potential and achieve your professional goals, please visit our graduate programs website or send us an email.

GRADUATE HONOREES

Master of Arts in Teaching in Secondary Mathematics

Brianna McGhee

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Vivian Stephens

Master of Arts in Teaching in Special Education

Sarah Boyd

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Joy Broughton

Master of Arts in Teaching – Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Allison Brice Grasso

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Zurisaray Espinosa

Master of Education in Educational Leadership – Higher Education & Student Affairs

Naomi Chance

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jen Wells

Master of Education in Educational Leadership – Leading Independent & Charter Schools

Jennifer Steele

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Grant Rivera

Master of Education in Elementary & Early Childhood Education

Tyra Hightower-Smith

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Theresa Alviar

Master of Education in Instructional Technology

Kathy Reyes-Barahona

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Tricia Frazier

Master of Education in Secondary & Middle Grades Education

Erin Keeney

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Tris Utschig

Master of Education in Special Education

Marti Webb

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Vidya Munandar

Master of Education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

Ericka Haddock

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Nihal Khote

Education Specialist in Curriculum & Instruction

Deonte Moore

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Erik Malewski

Education Specialist in Educational Leadership

Blake Rogers

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jeffrey Robinson

Education Specialist in Instructional Technology – Initial Track

Kara Moody Bryant

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jason Harron

Education Specialist in Secondary & Middle Grades Education

Sladjana Ray

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Tom Okie

Education Specialist in Special Education – Educational Leadership

Ayasha Chambers

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Joya Hicks

Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership

Heather Mitchell

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Albert Jimenez

Doctorate of Education in Instructional Technology – Advanced Track

Alicia Curles

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Tiffany Roman

Doctorate of Education in Instructional Technology – Initial Track

Jennifer Trail

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Dabae Lee

Doctorate of Education in Secondary & Middle Grades Education

Mandy Prior

Faculty Honoree: Dr. David Glassmeyer

Doctorate of Education in Teacher Leadership

Deshonda Wolfe

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Chinasa Elue



2025 Bagwell College Faculty Awards



Dr. Tricia Frazier
Outstanding
Teaching Award



Dr. Matthew Wilson
Outstanding
Service Award



Dr. Lateefah Id-Deen
Outstanding
Senior Scholar
Research Award



Dr. Preethi Titu
Outstanding
Early Career Award
and
Outstanding
Scholarship of
Teaching and
Learning Award



Dr. Johari Harris
Outstanding Online
Teaching Award
and
Outstanding Junior
Scholarship Award



Dr. Tiffany Roman
Outstanding
Innovation
Award



Dr. Dabae Lee
Outstanding
Partnership &
Community
Engagement Award



Dr. Paula Guerra
Outstanding
Student
Success Award

OUTSTANDING DISSERTATION AWARD



Dr. Jennifer Trail (left)
and
Dissertation Chair,
Dr. Tiffany Roman (right)

The Bagwell College of Education Outstanding Dissertation Award is presented annually to a former doctoral student who has earned the Ed.D., and whose dissertation exemplifies high-quality empirical education research, informs educational policy and/or practice, and embodies the purpose of Bagwell's highly respected Ed.D. degree. The 2025 award recognized an outstanding dissertation completed during the two previous calendar years.

Dr. Jennifer Trail's dissertation titled *How Teachers and Students Create and Experience Social Presence through Community Building and Self-Disclosure in Middle School Synchronous Online Learning Environments: A Qualitative Case Study* received this honor in 2025.

2025 Bagwell College Staff Awards

BONNIE HOWLAND DISTINGUISHED STAFF AWARD



Bonnie Howland was the recipient of the 2025 Bagwell College Distinguished Staff Award. She joined KSU in 2021 as office manager in the Elementary and Early Childhood Education department, and in 2023, transferred to the Teacher Resource and Activity Corner where she continues to elevate daily operations. Bonnie models quality customer service and teamwork, often stepping in wherever she is needed. Her resilience, cheerful presence, and commitment to excellence serve as an inspiration to colleagues across the college.



**OUTSTANDING
STUDENT SUCCESS**
Amanda Franks



**OUTSTANDING
INNOVATION AWARD**
Christen Knight



**OUTSTANDING PARTNERSHIP
AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
AWARD**
Dee Rule



NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FACULTY



Dr. Marrielle Myers

was recently elected president of the Association of Mathematics Teacher Educators (AMTE), the largest professional organization devoted to improving mathematics teacher education. AMTE includes more than 1,000 members, including professors, researchers, and policy experts, who focus on the professional development of K–12 mathematics teachers.

As a young girl, she loved solving puzzles, in particular, mathematical problems. That fascination grew into a career dedicated to shaping how mathematics is taught and has now earned her a national leadership position.

A former classroom teacher and now tenured Professor of Mathematics Education at Bagwell College of Education, Myers will shadow the current president for a year as president-elect, then serve as president for two years. She sees the role as an opportunity to elevate mathematics teacher education as well as Kennesaw State University's national and international profile.

"This appointment will help elevate KSU's national and international visibility by provid-

ing leadership in mathematics teacher education and shaping research, policy, and practice conversations across higher education," Myers said. "There will also be opportunities to foster collaborations and expand our research networks and also position the university as a thought leader in teacher preparation."

Dr. Jennifer Hauver, Professor and Goizueta Endowed Chair of Elementary and Early Childhood Education, praised Myers' dedication and impact on the profession. "Dr. Myers has established herself as an important voice in the field of mathematics teacher education," Hauver said. "Her passion for making mathematics accessible and engaging for all young people is evident in all she does. I'm thrilled to see her assume this leadership role."

One of her priorities as president will be to advance AMTE's commitment to social issues in mathematics education. "One of the reasons I'm most excited to step into this role is to continue the work of our organization as outlined in our long-term goals," she said. "AMTE is committed to advancing social justice in mathematics teacher education while strengthening research and research-based practices that respond to the evolving needs of students, educators, schools, and communities."

That mission is rooted in Myers' own experience as a student, where sometimes she encountered experiences that made her question whether she truly belonged in the field.

"My goal is to ensure that the teachers I prepare are ready to embrace, elevate, and empower every student they serve," she said. "As we work to improve mathematics teacher education, we must have open hands and open hearts to the diverse needs of students, teachers, schools, communities, and other partners. I hope to do this work in a way that centers humanity, community, and flexibility."



Dr. Sohyun An

Dr. Sohyun An, Professor in the Elementary and Early Childhood Education Department, earned the Mid-Career Award from the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the nation's largest and most prestigious organization dedicated to advancing rigorous educational research.

The award from AERA's Division K Teaching and Teacher Education honors an outstanding mid-career researcher whose body of work addresses critical issues in teaching or teacher education. Recipients are evaluated on the impact and trajectory of research, contributions to advancing knowledge in the field, commitment to justice for students, educators, and communities, and overall scholarly excellence.

An's research centers on K-12 Asian American Studies and social studies education. "Receiving this award is a deeply humbling and meaningful honor," said An. "I see it not as an individual achievement, but as a recognition of the collective efforts of educators, scholars and community advocates working toward equity and justice in teaching and teacher education."

Dr. Yvonne Earnshaw, Assistant Professor of Instructional Design and Technology in Bagwell College's School of Instructional Technology and Innovation, along with colleagues from other universities, received the 2025 Design and Development Outstanding Book Award from the Association for Educational Communications and Technology for the book, "Transdisciplinary Learning Experience Design: Futures, Synergies, and Innovation."

The book explores the evolving field of Learning Experience Design (LXD). It provides a multifaceted view of LXD, incorporating perspectives from instructional design, educational technology, and beyond, reflecting the transdisciplinary nature of this design approach.

LXD is a field integrating multidisciplinary knowledge and techniques to create effective, enjoyable, and meaningful learning experiences. It delves into participatory and co-design, innovative LXD methods, learning-focused usability research, and theoretical and conceptual advancements in the field. It features design cases that provide real-world insights and applications, making the content rich and relatable for researchers and practitioners alike.



Dr. Yvonne Earnshaw



Dr. Darolyn Flaggs

Dr. Darolyn Flaggs, Associate Professor, Secondary and Middle Grades Education, was named one of 14 Emerging Scholars who are changing institutions of higher education for the better by The EDULedger.com. These educators have distinguished themselves in their academic disciplines and are actively working to make our society more equitable and just.

Her research explores how campus racial climate and a student's sense of belonging can impact their persistence. As an African American female in a predominately white, male-dominated field like mathematics, she experienced firsthand how important fostering a sense of belonging can be.

When asked for advice for new faculty, Flaggs said, "Toni Morrison teaches us that joy is something we must claim for ourselves. In academia – where urgency, scarcity and comparison often dominate – choose to cultivate joy as a grounding practice. Trust that you belong, not because the institution grants you permission, but because you carry a wisdom and purpose that no one else can replicate ... You are not here by accident. Lean into the joy that brought you to your field, and let it illuminate your teaching and research path ahead."

As a faculty advisor for Black Teachers Matter, Flaggs co-leads a community that provides mentorship, support, and advocacy for Black teacher candidates. She works to redesign the systems around us to make opportunities meaningful, sustainable, and accessible to everyone.

Dr. Lateefah Id-Deen, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education, was appointed to the U.S. National Commission on Mathematics Instruction, which is housed within the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine in Washington, DC. She is one of nine members on the commission, and the only appointee from Georgia. She is serving a three-year term. The commission focuses on promoting effective teaching practices through research and collaboration, developing high-quality mathematics curricula, advocating for equitable access to mathematics education, and fostering partnerships between schools, communities, and higher education institutions.

"This appointment connects me to global conversations on mathematics teaching and learning, fosters collaboration with international colleagues, and deepens my scholarship while informing how I support Kennesaw State's programs," Id-Deen said. "More importantly, it's an opportunity to listen and learn with colleagues worldwide and to keep my work focused on what best supports mathematics teaching and learning."

A sought-after speaker at national conferences, Id-Deen has a passion for incorporating culturally responsive practices into mathematics instruction and creating math learning environments where all students feel seen, supported, and capable of achieving success. Her approach emphasizes strong student-teacher relationships, affirmation of diverse math identities, and trauma-informed practices that foster belonging.



Dr. Lateefah Id-Deen

OUR PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHTS



Asian American and Latinx studies professional development for Gwinnett County teachers

Dr. Sohyun An, Professor of Social Studies Education, and Dr. Theresa Alviar-Martin, Professor of Curriculum and Instruction, are co-founders of Asian American Voices for Education, a grassroots nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting inclusive education in Georgia's K-12 schools. Collaborating with Latinx studies scholars and K-12 educators, this initiative supports teachers across Georgia in developing leadership skills and instructional practices that deepen students' understanding of Asian American and Latinx history and culture.

Backed by a \$65,000 grant from the National Education Association (NEA), the team launched a year-long professional development series specifically designed for educators in Gwinnett County Public Schools. This vital work represents an exciting step forward in equipping Georgia teachers to deliver a more humanizing, accurate, and inclusive education that mirrors and honors the state's increasingly diverse student communities.



Educational Leadership Department partners with Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School to prepare teacher-leaders

The Department of Educational Leadership has launched an innovative partnership with the Atlanta Neighborhood Charter School (ANCS) to prepare the next generation of teacher-leaders. This collaboration is anchored by KSU's first-of-its-kind in Georgia Dual Certification Master's program in Teacher Leadership and Educational Leadership.

ANCS leaders have worked closely with KSU faculty to align aspects of the ANCS aspiring leaders program curriculum with three KSU courses, which makes ANCS program graduates eligible for credit for prior learning at KSU. The program also leverages candidates' on-the-job experience offering significant time and financial savings.

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. Additionally, the ANCS offers employees a stipend to enroll in the M.Ed. in TLEDL at KSU. This partnership is expected to serve as a model for similar collaborations across the state.



Empowering New Educators: KSU iTeach and Paulding celebrate induction success

KSU iTeach has partnered with the Paulding County School District to provide targeted support for new educators through the NEST (Novice Educators Support Training) program.

Launched in fall 2024, the NEST program offers new teachers and their mentors a comprehensive induction experience that includes professional development sessions utilizing the Bagwell College of Education's specialized lab spaces, embedded coaching, and collaborative professional learning communities. These efforts aim to build teacher confidence, support retention, and foster long-term success in the classroom.

KSU iTeach is proud to share that Paulding County School District has earned

Induction Certification from the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE)—a recognition of the district's commitment to high-quality, sustainable support for novice educators. This rigorous certification process required the district to meet standards in seven key areas: roles and responsibilities, leadership and organizational structures, mentoring, orientation, ongoing performance assessment, professional learning, and program evaluation.

iTeach offers sincere thanks to Dr. Cynthia Davies and Ms. Trina Williams, whose leadership and vision helped launch this partnership. We look forward to continuing and expanding our work together in the years ahead.



University of Paderborn, Bagwell College of Education, and Marietta City Schools

The University of Paderborn, in Paderborn, Germany, has partnered with the Bagwell College of Education and Marietta City Schools to expand exchange opportunities for students in both countries.

In 2025, three BCOE students spent five months in Paderborn working in schools to complete their clinical experiences in education. In November 2025, three University of Paderborn students spent six weeks completing an internship in Marietta City Schools while completing research projects in the Bagwell College's Interactive Research Methods Lab. Additionally, the partnership provided an opportunity for 12 Marietta High School teachers to complete a week of professional development in

Paderborn schools and the University of Paderborn, bringing together teachers and faculty from both communities. BCOE offers sincere thanks to Drs. Sabine Smith and Jeannette Bottcher, who created this partnership many years ago. Special thanks to the Halle Foundation, which offers financial support to both Bagwell College and Paderborn students to fulfill these exchanges.

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