NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

After navigating the challenges of the last year, the beginning of a new academic year brings hope and promise for what we can accomplish together.

Thank you to all of those who contributed their time, talent and treasure to the Institute for Leadership Advancement (ILA) this past year. We are immensely grateful.

As we look ahead, we are particularly enthusiastic about growing ILA and expanding on our mission of creating values-based, impact-driven leaders. In this fall’s newsletter, we are excited to share with you our plans and our progress.

Thank you,
Dr. Laura Little
Synovus Director, Institute for Leadership Advancement

THE NEXT CHAPTER OF ILA

In Fall 2020, Chick-fil-A Inc. committed a record-breaking $10 million pledge to ILA. Commitments like these demonstrate that the business industry recognizes the caliber of talent that ILA students and alumni bring to the table. This gift has allowed the program to enhance the depth and breadth of its offerings—for Terry College students and beyond.

One of the most notable developments includes doubling the size of the Fellows class, which now accepts new cohorts each semester instead of only once a year. Similarly, the ILA staff and faculty have almost doubled themselves. This internal growth ensures that Fellows and Scholars continue to receive the same personalized support and guidance through the program, a trademark of the ILA experience. As another impact of Chick-fil-A’s gift, ILA will also develop new course offerings that will be available to all UGA students.

ILA and Chick-fil-A are firm in their beliefs that leaders worth following can be developed. As such, Chick-fil-A’s gift will also support the development of an alumni-focused leadership symposium in the Spring of 2022. The symposium will invite graduates from all of UGA’s schools and colleges to learn and practice the steps of becoming a values-based, impact-driven leader.
THE NEXT CHAPTER OF ILA

This summer, the team welcomed a new lecturer, Onyedikachi “Kachi” Ekwerike, Ph.D., student services specialist, Samantha Murphy, and public relations specialist Lauren Miller. Dr. Ekwerike will join Dr. Addison and Dr. Little in instructing Fellows and Scholars in their core leadership courses. He will also help develop the content for the new ILA alumni symposium.

Onyedikachi Ekwerike
PhD, Lecturer [ENF]

Dr. Ekwerike earned his doctoral degree in Leadership Communication from Kansas State University. He is a teacher–practitioner with 7+ years of global leadership experience leading change in the mental health sector. Dr. Ekwerike is the founder of Postpartum Support Network (Africa), a maternal mental health organization that provides screening and support for mothers and families struggling with postpartum depression and related illnesses.

Dr. Ekwerike will join Dr. Addison and Dr. Little in instructing Fellows and Scholars in their core leadership courses. He will also help develop the content for the new ILA alumni symposium.

Dr. Ekwerike is talented, innovative and passionate about helping people develop the capacity to mobilize groups to make progress on tough challenges.

Lauren Miller
Public Relations Specialist [INFJ]

Lauren (Grady College of Journalism, ’18) began her PR career in healthcare communications providing strategic counsel, media outreach, campaign development and day-to-day account support for B2C and B2B healthcare brands. She has managed global brand awareness campaigns, utilizing paid and unpaid social media, specialized media outreach and content development to support the message of each campaign. She held relationships with key healthcare outlets and has garnered coverage in outlets such as Modern Healthcare, the Associated Press and more. Lauren returned to Athens in May of 2021 to drive social media and communications strategies to help increase the presence of the ILA name on UGA’s campus and beyond.

Samantha Murphy
Student Services Specialist [INFP]

Samantha specializes in data management and enjoys working closely with students to ensure they are accurately registered for classes and on track to graduate. She previously worked as an Assistant Coordinator in the Division of Academic Enhancement and helped coordinate the Peer Tutoring program at UGA. She is currently pursuing her degree in Computer Science from the University of North Georgia.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS*

Fall 2021 – Spring 2022

30+ STUDENTS participated in a virtual corporate site visit with Chick-fil-A

4 C-SUITE OR EXECUTIVE LEADERS participated in Executive of the Day or Terry Leadership Speaker Series to network and answer students’ questions

14 SPEAKERS & ALUMNI participated in speaking engagements with ILA

10 ALUMNI & EXECUTIVES participated in small group meetings with ILA students, allowing students to develop a more personal connection with industry leaders

* These numbers depict only virtual activities and opportunities
STUDENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS & AWARDS

**Students of the Year Finalists**
- Amanda Arboleda (2020 Fellow)
- Cameron Falk (LLSP 2021)
- Brennan Cox (2020 Fellow)

**Students of the Year**
- Jan Joho (2019 Fellow)

**Sea Island Scholars**
- Amanda Arboleda (2020 Fellow)
- Allison Fine (LLSP 2021)

**Blue Key Initiates**
- Allison Fine (LLSP 2021)
- Kiana Powers (2020 Fellow)
- Rachel Yuan (LLSP 2021)

**Deer Run Fellows**
- Garrett Williams (2020 Fellow)
- Andrew Corn (LLSP 2021)
- Haley Harvard (LLSP 2021)
- Allyson Peppenhorst (LLSP 2021)

OVERVIEW OF OUR NEW STUDENTS

2021 Fall–Fellows and Scholars Class of 2023

- **95 NEW STUDENTS**
- **8 SCHOOLS/COLLEGES REPRESENTED**
- **28 VARYING MAJORS**
- **3.81 AVERAGE GPA**