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With a minimum investment of $15,000 (which can be pledged over multiple years), you can help fund a Terry Edge Scholarship and provide direct support to these students. This gift makes an immediate impact by easing financial burdens to help deserving scholars achieve.

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FOR MORE DETAILS, CONTACT NATALIE GLENN:
nglenn@uga.edu • 706-542-9670
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Elevating Terry’s departments and opportunities

Throughout our history, the Terry College of Business has been deeply impacted by the generosity of alumni and donor friends who helped us build Terry and enhance the college’s reputation. It’s my great privilege to share with you the naming of the John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics in honor of alumnus John Munro Godfrey, Sr. The naming recognizes John’s career as a leader in economics and his longstanding support of the university and the Terry College — including a transformational gift from John and his wife, Flavel, to endow the Department of Economics. Their generous support reflects a belief in the power of education and signals the profound effect our students, faculty and alumni will have on the world of business. We will feature the Godfreys in depth in the spring/summer issue of Terry magazine.

John and Flavel's support builds on the momentum carrying the Terry College forward. When the UGA Entrepreneurship Program started in 2015, the coursework centered on problem-solving and managing growth. Using faculty entrepreneurs and case studies, the goal was to take away the mystery of forming a startup and show what was possible. Eight years later, the possibilities, opportunities and successes are plentiful. The program, housed in the Terry College, has launched several thriving companies, with more than half of its accelerator pitch contest winners in business five years after their formation. Entrepreneurship students are winning national competitions and attracting millions of dollars in funding — all part of a dynamic ecosystem that is transforming dreams into reality (page 16).

As I approach my 10th year as dean of the Terry College, I am grateful for how much the college has changed, grown and achieved. We rank prominently among the nation’s best business colleges (page 11), bolstered by the number of top 20 programs, including Risk Management and Insurance, ranked No. 1 in the nation again. Our Full-Time MBA and Executive MBA programs rank among the top 10 public programs, and our undergraduate and graduate programs are attracting record enrollments of highly qualified students. This fall, we launched our Online MBA program (page 12), offering students the chance to earn a Terry degree from anywhere in the country and beyond.

Our commitment to analytics strengthens as we establish the Center for Business Analytics and Insights (page 10), a hub for the development and dissemination of analytics knowledge and skills. Dr. Chris Cornwell, Simon S. Selig Jr. Chair for Economic Growth, was named the center’s first faculty director.

By investing in these key areas — entrepreneurship, analytics and innovation — Terry remains on the leading edge of business education while maintaining our core commitment to teaching the foundational disciplines. Paired with the generosity of our prestigious alumni, Terry is paving the way for students to become leaders in the global business landscape.

Sincerely,

Benjamin C. Ayers, Dean
Earl Davis Chair in Taxation
busdean@uga.edu
Leading the charge

Meet Stacy Campbell, ILA’s new director
The Terry College of Business has named its economics department the John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics in honor of alumnus John Munro Godfrey, Sr. (BBA ’64, PhD ’76). The naming recognizes Godfrey's career as a leader in the field of economics and his long-standing support of UGA and the Terry College — including a transformational gift from Godfrey and his wife, Flavel, to endow the Department of Economics.

“We are grateful for John and Flavel's support of the future of the Terry College and honored to name our economics department for such a respected leader in the field,” said Dean Ben Ayers. “Their generous support has given Terry the resources to make significant strides in our mission to produce exemplary economists who will serve as leaders in their businesses and their communities.”

The endowment will establish seed funds and research grants to recruit and retain top faculty; create scholarships to attract premier undergraduate, graduate and PhD students; and provide programmatic funds to elevate the educational experience and career opportunities for students.

“Flavel and I feel this is the right opportunity,” said Godfrey. “I have always remembered Terry offered me the ability to pursue graduate economic studies with a challenging faculty and a bright professional future. I am grateful. After graduating, I deepened my Terry association. Over the years, Herman and Mary Virginia Terry provided us with a beautiful example of philanthropy.”

Godfrey's career as a business economist has spanned 40 years. From 1981 until 1995, he was Senior Vice President and Chief Economist for Barnett Banks, Inc. in Jacksonville, Florida. Before that, Godfrey was a Research Officer and Senior Financial Economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, and in the mid-1990s, he started Florida Economic Associates.

Godfrey served as president of the Terry College Alumni Board and was honored with the UGA Distinguished Alumni Award in 1994. He also served in the Building Terry National Campaign Cabinet, a group that was instrumental in raising funds to build the Business Learning Community.

Flavel McMichael Godfrey, a North Carolina native, is a graduate of Agnes Scott College. The Godfreys were inducted as members of the Terry College's prestigious Pinnacle Society in 2019.
Students tour birthplace of accounting
Italy trip offers exposure to new era in financial reporting
By Merritt Melancon (ABJ '02, MA '19)

Corporate reporting standards for environmental, social and governance issues are evolving in the United States. But in the European Union, ESG reporting is already a way of life for most big companies.

“Right now, it’s kind of like the post-Depression era was for financial reporting — like the Wild West,” said Jennifer Jones Rivers, a Terry senior accounting lecturer. “U.S. companies are trying to issue these sustainability reports, but there’s no consistency to the reporting across companies.”

Rivers led a group of 20 Terry College students on a tour of northern Italy over the summer to talk with accountants and executives who adapted to a new rhythm of bookkeeping and reporting. The trip allowed students to trace the history of financial reporting — from the original documentation of double-entry bookkeeping in northern Italy in 1494 to today.

The trip coincided with the EU’s adoption of standardized ESG reporting regulations that will impact the EU’s 11,000 largest businesses in January 2024 and all businesses with more than 500 employees in the near future. During site visits to Ferrari, EY’s Italian headquarters, fashion houses in Milan and distilleries, the students saw how the new reporting guidelines and adoption of non-financial reporting affected business operations in real time.

For Katy Carroll, an economics and international business major who studied Italian and is interested in international or intellectual property law, meeting with EY accountants and the other companies made her realize the value of understanding international cultural values and regulatory structures.

“I want to work with companies looking to expand their operations overseas,” Carroll said. “To go to a different country with that level of regulation and learn how to navigate all that — people have to be knowledgeable about it.”

In addition to the Italian companies, the students and Rivers toured the countryside and visited ancient Parmesan factories and lakeside villages.

They learned medium-sized businesses were stressed by the coming regulatory changes, but there was a cultural and consumer demand that companies release more of this information.

“The thing that really shocked me about Italy — they’ve already made such strides with environmentally friendly things and integrating it into business,” Carroll said. “There seemed to be a sense of pride about it there.”

No matter what company they visited, employees enthusiastically touted what they were doing to become more sustainable.

“Even if we didn’t ask those questions, they made sure to make a point to talk about what they’re doing to be sustainable,” Carroll said.
Researchers study AI impact

Whether the promise of artificial intelligence fills you with anticipation or dread, AI tools are here and only getting more powerful. As managers integrate these tools into everyday office life, Terry faculty are expanding their research into the impact of this fourth industrial revolution to understand the promise and peril of artificial intelligence.

“The most exciting area in our research nowadays is the use of AI in business,” said Ling Xue, Alumni Board Distinguished Professor in the Department of Management Information Systems. “It’s already transformed the way people do work now and the way we create value.”

Xue joined the UGA faculty in July. For the past two decades, he has investigated how businesses integrate new technologies into their management structures. Much of his research focuses on the implementation of new technologies in business and, more importantly, management decisions making some new technologies indispensable and others disposable.

He plans to use those frameworks to see how industries adopt AI technology into their business operations and what the managerial impacts will be.

“We have ongoing projects trying to update some of the theories in the management literature to look at the organizational tensions that can arise from this development and deployment of AI,” Xue said. “One of the biggest challenges is keeping up with the pace of this technology."

Xue joins management information systems researchers Gerald Kane — the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Chair of Business Administration — and assistant professor Aaron Schecter in tackling the emerging technology’s impact.

“The thing I find exciting is we have these great opportunities to collaborate with each other,” Xue said. “Traditionally, people from different disciplines don’t always talk to each other. Now, we’re all seeing these big challenges and opportunities. We have to put together all of this knowledge and bring different perspectives together to develop frameworks to think about the impact of these new systems. I think it’s a great thing.”

Terry establishes analytics center

A new Center for Business Analytics and Insights has been established at the University of Georgia to lead the development and dissemination of analytics knowledge and skills for the Terry College of Business.

Christopher Cornwell, who most recently served as head of the Economics Department and holds the college’s Simon S. Selig Jr. Chair for Economic Growth, was named the interdisciplinary center’s first faculty director.

“No modern organization can be successful if its decision making is not data-driven,” said Dean Ben Ayers. “Establishing this center brings together the substantial efforts we’ve made in the past five years to strategically address the emerging field of data analytics for business. I’m grateful to Chris for leading our initiatives in this area.”

The center will serve as a forum for instructional and research collaboration across the Terry College’s academic units. Several graduate programs underscore the college’s breadth and depth in business analytics, including the Master of Science in Business Analytics, Master of Accountancy, Master of Marketing Research and doctoral programs across all seven academic departments.

The college recently launched an academic area of emphasis in analytics that’s open to all business undergraduates, while the MIS Department has offered its own area of emphasis in data analytics for years.

“Integrating analytics activity across all disciplines is essential to meet the market demand for these skills and provide state-of-the-art resources and training for empirical researchers,” Cornwell said. “The CBAI will provide a platform to connect our expertise to stakeholders who look to the Terry College for leadership in developing data-driven strategies.”

The center will enhance the learning experience in business analytics across the college’s curriculum, expand opportunities for experiential and project-based learning, and provide additional student support through initiatives like the Terry Analytics Lab, invited speakers and case competitions.

As a research center, the CBAI will be a hub for faculty collaboration through seed grants, industry partnerships and seminar speakers.

“Faculty members at Terry are actively engaged in quantitative research involving big data,” Cornwell said. “Giving these research activities clear direction and coordination will help us remain at the forefront.”
Alums elected to UGA Foundation leadership, board roles

Four Terry alumni were elected to leadership and board positions for the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees during its annual June meeting in Greensboro. These individuals' terms began July 1.

E. Howard Young (BBA ’82), of Atlanta (pictured below, far right), was elected vice-chair of the UGA Foundation. He is president of General Wholesale Beer Co. He previously served as chair of the Student Scholarships and University Initiatives Committee, and strategic vice-chair, which oversaw the Development Committee, Student Scholarships and University Initiatives Committee, and Special Projects. He earned a bachelor’s degree in marketing.

Bonney S. Shuman (BBA ’80), of St. Simons Island (pictured below, second from right), was elected secretary of the UGA Foundation. She co-founded Stratix Corporation in 1983 and served as president and then CEO. She previously held the treasurer position, chaired the Finance Committee and, from 2017 to 2019, was the UGA Alumni Association president. She earned a bachelor’s degree in finance.

James G. Cochran Jr. (Guyton) (BBA ’88), of Carrollton (pictured below, far left), was elected treasurer of the UGA Foundation. He is executive vice president and chief financial officer for Southwire Company, LLC. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting.

Mark A. Kauffman (BBA ’84), of Atlanta, was elected as an Advisory Trustee to assist foundation committees in defining and achieving their strategic goals. He is the retired founder and president of Kauffman Tire, Inc., and Treadmaxx Tire Distributors, Inc. He earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting.

The board also voted unanimously to elect Allison C. Ausband (pictured below, second from left) as chair for a two-year term running through June 30, 2025. She succeeds Neal J. Quirk Sr. (BBA ’82, JD ’87), whose term concluded June 30.

NEWS: IN BRIEF

College achieves top rankings

This fall, U.S. News & World Report ranked the Terry College of Business undergraduate program No. 21 overall and 11th among public business schools in the U.S. It matches Terry’s best ranking in the annual survey and marks the seventh straight year that the college is ranked among the top 15 undergraduate business programs at the nation’s best public universities.

“We aim to help our students reach their full potential by engaging them in challenging coursework, meaningful internships and encouraging a sense of responsibility to improve their companies and communities,” said Dean Ben Ayers. “This ranking and others like it continue to show that we’ve never been in a better position to fulfill our mission and support our students in accomplishing their goals.”

Five of the college’s academic majors ranked among the nation’s top 20 public programs in their respective fields of business.

Terry’s Risk Management and Insurance program once again led all insurance programs in the country, ranked No. 1 overall. It's the fourth straight year and the sixth time since 2014 that Terry’s insurance program has been judged to have the best reputation in the country by U.S. News.

The Real Estate program rose one spot to No. 2 among U.S. public business schools and No. 4 overall, while Management Information Systems maintained its top 10 status among public business schools (No. 10 public and No. 12 overall). The J.M. Tull School of Accounting ranked No. 11 among publics in its field, and the Management Department ranked in the top 20 public programs at No. 19.

In addition, Financial Times ranked Terry’s Executive MBA program No. 8 among public institutions, Bloomberg Businessweek ranked Terry’s Full-Time MBA program No. 8 among public institutions, and Niche’s survey of the best business colleges ranked Terry No. 5 overall and the No. 1 public business school in the nation. Niche also ranked Terry No. 6 overall and No. 2 among public schools in its survey of the best colleges for accounting and finance.
The value of an MBA is clear. In addition to preparing students for leadership roles in their organizations and opening new career opportunities, a 2022 study found MBA graduates earn higher salaries on average.

However, many working professionals are unable to commit the time and resources necessary to complete an in-person MBA program. Beginning this year, the Terry College of Business is responding to strong demand for MBA programs by meeting prospective students where they are — online.

The UGA Online MBA, a part-time program modeled after the Terry College’s Professional MBA and operated from its Atlanta campus, welcomed its first cohort of students this fall.

“The Online MBA represents an important step forward for the Terry College,” says Dean Ben Ayers. “Now students can experience our rigorous and dynamic business education from anywhere while maintaining the flexibility to balance their personal and professional lives.”

The program’s inaugural cohort of more than 50 students includes professionals hailing from multiple states and representing a variety of industries.

“There’s a huge population of UGA alums or people connected to the university who want to get a Terry MBA, but they can’t attend classes in Athens or Atlanta,” says Susan Brown, director of Terry’s Executive MBA, Professional MBA and Online MBA programs. “This opens that up for them. We’ve got students from Maine, Washington, and others from Atlanta who wouldn’t have been able to do an in-person program because of their jobs.”

The format allows professionals to earn a graduate degree while continuing to work full-time. It also allows Terry to cast a wide recruiting net, attracting high-caliber students who might otherwise opt for a program in another state.

“Online education in general is growing for master’s programs, and MBA hiring is growing,” says Brown, who cites an expected 14% increase in Georgia for MBA-related employment opportunities over the next eight years. “We saw an opportunity to expand and recruit students we would never have attracted before.”

Initial demand exceeded expectations, says Brown, allowing her team to be highly intentional during the admissions period.

“We had an amazing pool of candidates,” she says, “but it was important to us that we selected students who feel connected to UGA in some way. We have one student whose husband is an alum, and she wanted a Georgia MBA, but they moved to Chicago. We have students who are from UGA alumni families. We have a student who plans to move to Atlanta for work down the road and knows a Terry diploma is valuable for their network.”

Likewise, designing the program’s format was a deliberate process, says Brown. While it follows the same module-based approach as the Professional MBA, the curriculum is self-paced, allowing students to access course content when and where they prefer.

Students can complete the program in as few as 17 or as many as 23 months. “We’re really proud of our faculty and our curriculum,” says Brown.

Importantly, Online MBA students have access to the same resources as those enrolled in the Professional MBA, including access to Terry instructors, an option to complete domestic and international residencies and a series of networking events, among other opportunities.

And the program clearly fills a niche, says Brown, noting admissions numbers for the Executive MBA and Professional MBA remain very strong. She expects the Online MBA will continue to evolve to meet its students’ unique needs but will achieve the same outstanding outcomes as the college’s other MBA programs. “We’re excited for this next chapter for our new MBA students and the Terry College,” says Brown.
Playing the long game

Led by alumnus Brandon Mintz, Bitcoin Depot goes public

By Merritt Melancon (ABJ ’02, MA ’19)

Ten years ago, Brandon Mintz and his friends were sweating in his student apartment before heading out for a Friday night in downtown Athens.

The air conditioner worked, but the improvised system of dozens of graphics cards and other computer components mining bitcoin in the spare room kept the apartment at 80 degrees or more around the clock in December 2013.

“A couple of people have stories of coming over before going out and just being incredibly hot by the time we went out,” says Mintz (BBA ’16). “I had to start putting my bitcoin mining machines in other people’s apartments to get the A/C working well enough to get my apartment back to room temperature.”

That apartment, where the circuit breakers kept tripping and everyone complained it was too hot, is a world away from the Times Square studio in New York City where Mintz rang the opening bell for the Nasdaq Stock Market on July 24. Mintz was there to celebrate his company, Bitcoin Depot, going public, but the moment was affirmation of a new era. Bitcoin, once thought of as a fringe financial product, has moved into the mainstream.

People think of crypto as a nascent industry with lots of risk, but studies show 20% to 30% of Americans invested in or used cryptocurrencies. Mintz’s platform, which allows users to buy bitcoin with cash, debit cards and credit cards, seeks to increase that number in the coming years.

“Compared to many other crypto companies, we have delivered consistent year-over-year financial growth and profitability in an industry where that can be quite difficult to find,” he says.

A Woodstock native, Mintz came to the University of Georgia in 2012. During his sophomore year, he wrote a paper on alternative financial services for a class. It surprised him that more than a quarter of the U.S. population relied on these services for bill payments, money transfers and online purchases, and this segment of the population rarely used or had access to traditional bank accounts or credit cards. He thought technologies such as bitcoin could solve many problems faced by the unbanked and underbanked.

He was eager to see how the technology worked in practice, but when he initially tried buying bitcoin, the systems were confusing and off-putting.

“I tried to buy bitcoin on an online exchange, and it was extremely difficult. After weeks, I left with nothing to show for all the effort I put in,” he says. “I found a website that allowed you to buy with cash using bank deposits. It took a few minutes versus spending three weeks on the online exchange and not getting my bitcoin.”

An entrepreneurial kid, in high school Mintz started a side hustle buying, refurbishing and upselling boats and Jet Skis at Lake Allatoona while working at an Italian restaurant. He could spot a value proposition when he saw one.

In 2013 Mintz launched Cash to Crypto, which helped people interested in buying cryptocurrencies using physical cash with a straightforward way to do so. It was successful enough that Mintz was able to pay back his student loans before he graduated, but it wasn’t built for scale. After graduation, Mintz wound Cash to Crypto down and used his savings to launch Bitcoin Depot in the summer of 2016.

In addition to offering simple step-by-step instructions for those new to the world of crypto, Bitcoin Depot operates the nation’s largest network of BTMs (bitcoin ATMs). Its mission is to make buying bitcoin easy, quick, secure and convenient while bringing bitcoin to the masses.

“We’ve kept the business simple because that’s what our users want,” Mintz says. “Our business serves consumers who value convenience, speed and fantastic customer support.”

That easy-to-understand business model has been enormously successful. The Atlanta-based company has more than 100 full-time employees and was celebrated as the fastest-growing alumni-owned business in 2023 on the UGA Alumni Association’s Bulldog 100. Mintz was also named to the Forbes Atlanta 30 Under 30.

Going public, Mintz says, allows Bitcoin Depot to grow with greater access to capital and strategic initiatives.

“A lot goes into the public process — from the legal work to the financial audits and the capital raise throughout the process,” he says. “It was really rewarding, and ringing the bell was an amazing experience.”

Today, Bitcoin Depot has become vertically integrated, enabling the company, which owns its own BTM software platform, to reduce costs. It expanded its network of BTMs primarily at convenience stores and gas stations to more than 6,000 locations through partnerships with chains such as Circle K.

The last decade was a wild ride and an incredible learning experience, Mintz says. He doesn’t plan on changing course, as he says Bitcoin Depot is still in the early stages of its true potential.
Leading tomorrow’s leaders

Meet the Institute for Leadership Advancement’s new director

By Merritt Melancon (ABJ ’02, MA ’19)

Before studying CEO effectiveness, before teaching her first course on team management, Stacy Campbell (PhD ’07) knew the impact a great boss could have on an organization.

As a consultant for KPMG and North Highland in the early 2000s, she saw great leaders expertly guide their teams as companies embraced new technologies and structures. She also saw companies and employees suffer when leaders weren’t up for the challenges of the new century.

“I’ve always been interested in leadership because in the eight years that I worked as a consultant, I was on a new project all the time, and I would have new managers,” Campbell says. “I had some really good managers and some managers that made me look at the situation and say, ‘Well, I’m the same person, but this isn’t going the same way.’”

For the last decade, Campbell helped shape the next generation of business leaders in Georgia as a professor and director of the Coles College Leadership Scholars Program at Kennesaw State University. That passion for leadership led her back to the Terry College, where she hopes to broaden the impact of the Institute for Leadership Advancement (ILA).

Campbell, a native of Brooklyn, New York, received a master’s degree in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a bachelor’s degree in economics and psychology from Lafayette College in Pennsylvania.

When working on her PhD at Terry, she was drawn to studying how leaders and their followers interact. When she started teaching, that interest morphed into learning how to prepare students to be effective leaders.

At Kennesaw State, she built the Coles Scholars program to put into practice what she learned about leadership education. It was a great program, but its size was a drawback, she says. The program was capped at about 25 students and restricted to business majors.

Campbell says a top draw of working with ILA is the program has the capacity and support to serve the entire university. She wants more UGA students from outside of Terry to pursue ILA’s Certificate in Personal and Organizational Leadership or just take a few ILA classes as electives.

The skills students take away from ILA — whether they’re in one leadership course or pursuing a certificate — impact their abilities in the workplace and spill over into the communities they live in and the organizations they join, Campbell says.

“There is talk about the younger generation being entitled and expecting so much, but what I have seen is a lot of fear,” she says. “They’re afraid of failing, and they’re afraid of making mistakes.”

“(ILA) is an environment where they can make mistakes, learn from them and grow. You’re not able to do that in all of your classes. ... This is more about really getting to know yourself and how to work with people.”

Since its founding in 2000, ILA has trained more than 1,500 values-based, impact-driven leaders through innovative certificate programs combining coursework with service-learning opportunities.

In 2021, ILA expanded its public outreach efforts by launching the Leadership Dawgs program. The yearlong program for UGA alumni provides off-campus leadership development experiences and partners alumni with nonprofits to complete a community improvement project.

Seven named to endowed professorships

A new endowed professorship in the J.M. Tull School of Accounting is one of seven new faculty appointments announced this fall by the Terry College. The endowed chairs and professorships were approved by the University System of Georgia Board of Regents in August.

“These seven faculty members have developed strong reputations in their respective fields,” said Dean Ben Ayers, “What they have achieved as teachers and scholars adds value to their departments, and we are very pleased to recognize their hard work with these new appointments.”

Erin Towery, a professor of accounting, was named to the newly created KPMG-Atlanta Partners’ and Employees’ Professorship.

Stacy Campbell, previously a management professor at Kennesaw State University, was named Synovus Director of the Institute for Leadership Advancement.

Anindita Chakravarty, associate professor of marketing, was named to the Terry Dean’s Advisory Council Distinguished Professorship.

Marcus Cunha Jr., professor of marketing and director of Terry’s Master of Marketing Research program, was named the Robert O. Arnold Professor of Business.

Gregory Eaton, associate professor of finance, was named the Bradford McFadden Professor of Financial Management.

Josh Kinsler, professor of economics and department head, was named the Nicholas Beadles Chair of Economics.

Amrit Tiwana, professor of management information systems, was named the J. Rex Fuqua Distinguished Chair for Internet Strategy.
All Rise | Page 25

Terry judges bring their business background to the halls of justice
PROFILES: ENTREPRENEURSHIP
So you want to start a business?

Entrepreneurship Program helps students find startup success

Story by Gabe Vodicka (ABJ '08)
Photos by Brian Powers
Illustrations by Kathleen Fu

It begins with an idea.

Specifically, an idea designed to solve a problem — something that fills a consumer need.

Then comes customer discovery — do others see value in the solution? Once product-market fit is verified, then comes pitching. Lots and lots and lots of pitching — selling the idea to anyone who might be willing to help financially or otherwise.

Then there’s the business plan creation, market research, legal structuring, manufacturing, sales, scaling up...

In short, being an entrepreneur involves a ton of work, often for little payoff; more than half of startups fail within five years. But so much hinges on the strength of the idea, and companies with marketable ideas who make good products and grow smartly can enjoy lasting success.

The companies that grew out of the UGA Entrepreneurship Program since its formation eight years ago have been successful, indeed.
“We estimate that 55 to 60 percent of companies that win one of our accelerator competitions are still in business five years later,” says Bob Pinckney, UGA’s Milton Anthony (Tony) Greene Director of Entrepreneurship and a senior Terry lecturer who launched the campus-wide program in 2015.

Housed in the Terry College and open to the UGA community, the Entrepreneurship Program offers many entrance points to participation, including a popular certificate program, an idea workshop, pitch contests and a student-led venture fund. Students and faculty with a business idea can take advantage of mentorship, seed funding and other resources.

For Pinckney (BBA ’82), the program is a continuation of his entrepreneurial journey. After stints in real estate and investment banking, he founded a string of software and communications businesses before becoming CEO of EvoShield, growing the sports apparel company from a small enterprise to a major player in its industry.

“Starting the Entrepreneurship Program was a good opportunity to come back and give back to UGA,” says Pinckney, “to be an entrepreneur in a big organization and create something that didn’t exist. That’s been the fun thing: being able to put something together and watch it grow.”

The program has grown. The first year, Pinckney recalls, “I had one class of about 33 students. Today we have more than 400 in the certificate program.” In 2019 the program opened a shiny new home, Studio 225, a modern, collaborative learning and maker space in downtown Athens.

There, students converge to develop ideas, learn from innovators, share advice and secure funding. By and large, they are driven by a common goal: creating the next big thing.

**Shaking up skin care**

Kristen Dunning never thought she would start a business. Until she encountered the Entrepreneurship Program, she didn’t think much about business at all.

“My dream job was to be a product formulator or a cosmetic chemist for a natural products company,” says Dunning (BSA ’21), the founder of natural skin care brand Gently Soap. “I always said (working for) Burt’s Bees was my dream.”

As a student in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Dunning drew on her family’s background in agriculture to study the healing properties of medicinal plants. Inspired by a traumatic childhood battle with eczema, she dreamed of creating bathing products for people with sensitive skin.

After developing a new way to infuse plant materials into personal care products, Dunning began making soap in her dorm room and sharing it with friends. She soon realized she had a business idea on her hands — an idea too personally significant to ignore.
“There was something that clicked in 2020 while I was sitting in quarantine,” she says. “I had done a lot of research. I had taken a lot of classes. I had a lot of knowledge, but I didn’t necessarily want to share it with some big brand.

“I felt like what I was learning was unique to myself,” she continues. “It was my power. I wanted to use that to create my dream job but create it in a way that I had so much freedom. And entrepreneurship started to make a lot of sense.”

Dunning entered the Entrepreneurship Program and quickly found support for her idea, winning the Idea Accelerator in October 2021 and first place at the UGA Venture Prize Competition the following February. Last April, she took the top $25,000 prize at the national Collegiate Great Brands Competition. This September, Dunning appeared on the season premiere of “Shark Tank,” striking a $75,000 deal with investor Candace Nelson.

While Gently Soap rose on the strength of her product, Dunning says the program helped her tell her story. “A lot of times in college, they teach you to speak in public, but pitching is different because you are selling yourself, your idea. It’s more vulnerable,” she says. “That’s really hard for a lot of people. It’s really hard for me, and it’s something I’m still learning. This was the first time I had done that in any sense.”

Dunning says Pinckney was instrumental in her company’s growth, urging her to find a co-manufacturer rather than make each bar of soap by hand. Now Gently Soap is found across Georgia, as well as on Amazon and other retailers.

“I thought, I’m going to keep making everything myself until I can afford a multimillion-dollar plant,” she says. “But that was going to stunt my growth. Because I was able to have real conversations with Bob about what I wanted, I’m now able to say yes to things I wouldn’t have been able to say yes to.”

No longer a stranger to the world of business, Dunning entered Terry’s Full-Time MBA program last year. “I want to be the smartest person in the room,” she admits with a laugh.
“And when I was talking about financials or accounting, there was so much I didn’t understand. I wanted a foundational understanding of all of those concepts.”

So long, smelly feet

Growing up, Matthew Tesvich had dueling aspirations. “I wanted to play professional baseball at night and be a CEO during the day,” he says. “I wanted to run a business and be in charge. I thought I could do that, then drive quickly to the stadium and play for the Braves.”

Arm injuries in college derailed his path to MLB stardom, but Tesvich (BBA ’23) is well on the way to realizing his other dream. As the founder of sock company Ox Sox, he leveraged pitch contest success into national press and a fast-growing business that aims to solve a common — if largely unspoken — concern.

His concept? “Everybody’s got stinky feet,” says Tesvich.

When a roommate brought home a towel purported to have germ-killing properties, it sparked an idea — one informed by years of being made to leave his shoes outside after baseball practice. With Ox Sox, Tesvich planned to utilize a naturally antimicrobial material to conquer a familiar nemesis: smelly socks.

After winning the UGA Idea Accelerator contest last October, Tesvich identified a manufacturer that could make the product, and Ox Sox launched in November. But word had already spread.

“We launched on Nov. 22, and two or three days later we got on the front page of USA Today,” Tesvich recalls. “This was right around Thanksgiving, and I had to miss five days of school because we were so busy packing orders.”

The demand kept up. Tesvich estimates he sold more than 5,000 pairs of socks and grossed more than $75,000 since the company launched last fall. In April he won UGA’s Next Top Entrepreneur competition, besting a group of innovators from around the country to take home the $10,000 top prize.

Tesvich credits the Entrepreneurship Program for his success so far. “Bob and the rest of the Entrepreneurship team have been fantastic. I owe so much to them,” he says. “My entrepreneurship classes were the most valuable thing I could have taken in college. The lessons we learned were from people who have done it. It’s not out of a textbook. They’re real, applicable lessons.

“The (startup) learning curve is so significant, and it can lead to failure,” he continues. “For someone like Bob to guide you and say, ‘Go this way, not that way’ — it is extremely valuable.”

While he stresses starting a company is not for everyone, Tesvich urges students to consider how their academic pathway lines up with their inner desires.

“It’s so easy to see people getting jobs out of school, doing investment banking, working in consulting,” he says. “You have to detach yourself from that and say, ‘Is that the work-life balance I want? Is that really what I want to do?’ It’s different for everybody, but I knew that’s not what I wanted. So, I chose to focus my time on this. And I think it’s paid off.”

Entrepreneurship Program director Bob Pinckney (at right) has been a devoted mentor to the program’s students, many of whom, like Matthew Tesvich (at left), have started successful businesses.
Streamlining e-shipping

Entering the Idea Accelerator her sophomore year, marketing major Valeria Brenner didn’t just want to start a business — she’d already started one. In high school, she discovered a neat way to make a few bucks: by selling secondhand clothes through an Instagram thrifting account, @Kickin_thrifts. But although it brought in some spending money, she couldn’t quite see the growth potential.

What does a shrewd entrepreneur do in this situation? She pivots.

“Out of curiosity, I started interviewing other thrifting accounts in my community,” says Brenner (BBA ’23). “And I realized there were a lot of inefficiencies in the system — mainly around shipping.”

Brenner’s company, Thryft Ship, creates customized links for Instagram sellers and other small businesses that allow their customers to input address information directly onto a shipping label. Brenner estimates the service trims the average shipping time for 10 packages from two hours to 30 minutes.

As a product geared largely toward younger users, she says explaining the idea to contest panels of often older judges proved a challenge.

“It took a decent amount of pitches for me to refine it,” she says. “I realized I needed to emphasize the idea of efficiency, time savings and cost savings, and also make sure I explain the marketplace clearly.”

Judges, including those at this year’s Venture Prize Competition, were impressed. “We felt like you were solving an actual pain point,” Ashley Staggs, senior director of content marketing and operations for Floor & Decor, told Brenner at the contest. “The companies you’re serving are not big enough to play in some spaces. It sounds like you know your customer, and you know how to increase your revenue as you move forward.”

Brenner took the top $10,000 prize at that event and went on to secure a whopping $135,000 at the Rice University Business Plan Competition. Meanwhile, sales are strong. Since launching Thryft Ship in 2021, she grossed more than a half million dollars and helped 1,500 customers ship more than 100,000 packages.

Entrepreneurial Advice

What should aspiring entrepreneurs know about going through the daunting process of launching a startup?

We asked Entrepreneurship Program alumni what advice they would give.

Don’t be afraid to ask. The worst thing someone can tell you is ‘No.’

— Valeria Brenner (BBA ’23)
CEO, Thryft Ship

It’s easy to want to jump from idea to idea. Take the time and wait for yours to grow.

— Matthew Tesvich (BBA ’23)
Founder, Ox Sox

Pitch your idea, no matter your major. Entrepreneurship starts in every sector, and it’s not just people with business degrees who create innovative businesses.

— Kristen Dunning (BSA ’21)
Founder, Gently Soap

Make calculated plans. But when they don’t work out, recalculate and keep going.

— Shep Ogden (BBA ’18)
CEO & Co-Founder, Offbeat Media Group

There are no mistakes when you’re creating something that hasn’t been done before — only learning opportunities.

— Vanessa Sachs (BS ’21, MS ’22)
Founder, SWAKE
Entrepreneurship Program resources underpin that growth, she says. For instance, lecturer Jim Flannery helped review potential investment contracts and connected Brenner — very much not a coder, she says — to her first web developer, somewhat key to launching an online business.

Entrepreneurship faculty “are 100 percent willing to help you with what you need, as long as you show dedication toward it,” she says.

Brenner is dedicated, and she’s thinking bigger, with plans for a website integration and a packaging partnership, among others, on the horizon.

“I want Thryft Ship to be the place for small businesses,” she says. “I want it to reach beyond shipping. My goal is for it to be a central hub, and as our businesses grow, I want to grow with them.”

**Let it grow**

Dunning, Tesvich and Brenner are far from the only UGA Entrepreneurship success stories. To name a few:

- **Vanessa Sachs (BS’21, MS’22)** used her biology background to create SWAKE, a fast-growing sweat-proof makeup brand that grossed more than $100,000 in sales in less than two years.

- **Spencer Sutlive (BSFCS ’20)** raised more than $2 million in venture capital in the year after launching Rugged Road, a line of lightweight coolers.

- **Three students banded together to start Offbeat Media Group, an innovative digital marketing firm that was No. 1 on the 2022 Bulldog 100, the annual list of fastest-growing companies owned by UGA alumni.**

- **In the past year, companies that received funding from the student-managed Georgia Kickstart Fund raised more than $7 million in venture capital.**

Pinckney cites these pride points, as well as a recent uptick of UGA wins in national pitch contests, as proof the program is fulfilling its mission. “We’re seeing traction being made, and I think that’s validation of what we’re doing and that we’re doing something right.”

But like any good entrepreneur, he keeps an eye on what’s next.

In addition to striving for full program endowment, “we’re constantly looking for new course opportunities,” says Pinckney. “We launched a course on startup investing. We offer a course in franchising, which has been extremely popular. And we’re looking for other opportunities to enhance our offerings.”

These efforts echo the Entrepreneurship Program’s guiding principle, which is to make entrepreneurship accessible to all students — even if those students don’t see themselves as entrepreneurs.

“Most of our students may not ever start a business,” says Pinckney. “My goal is that if they do, they’ll at least have resources to draw upon that can help them have a better chance of being successful.”
Leadership Dawgs is a leadership development program available only to UGA alumni that teaches personal and professional leadership. The program, which includes two on-site weekends at the Terry Executive Education Center in Atlanta, challenges participants to unlock their potential to:

- Maximize their leadership capacity
- Optimize their team’s performance
- Cultivate a diverse professional network
- Create impact in the state of Georgia

WE’RE LOOKING FOR UGA ALUMS WITH UNTAPPED LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL.

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Terry College of Business UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
T he verdict is in: a Terry College education serves justice well in the state of Georgia. Several Terry alumni hold prominent judicial positions across the state. These interpreters of the law use similar words to describe how a business core has helped them in their legal duties: Logic. Discipline. Organization. Accountability. Planning. Prioritization. Financial acumen.

One of these alumni is a state court judge. Another sits on the federal bench. Three serve on the Georgia Supreme Court.

Wherever they make their rulings, these distinguished arbiters put on their robes every day and bring Terry DNA into the halls of justice.
Ana Maria Martinez has a habit of breaking things. Like barriers.

She became the first Latina to serve as a trial judge in Georgia after accepting an appointment to the DeKalb County State Court in January 2022 from Gov. Brian Kemp.

Martinez (BBA ’04) also runs Georgia’s only Spanish-speaking DUI court, with a groundbreaking treatment and accountability program for repeat offenders that profoundly changes their lives.

“It’s the work I’m proudest of,” Martinez says. “The idea is not just to send people with problems to jail, but to give repeat offenders a way out of their downward spirals with an opportunity to rehabilitate, become accountable and be more involved in their communities.”

Martinez says the DeKalb DUI Court is really a team: a solicitor, public defenders, administrators and case managers, treatment coordinators, probation officials and judges. It’s a phased program, 15 months minimum, with milestones participants must achieve on a path back to positive community and family engagement.

“It’s so cool to hear people tell us how they’re getting better, participating in their families, how their kids want to be with them, how they’re finding new love because now they’re present people,” Martinez says.

Martinez has a unique perspective on acceptance. She came to Georgia at age 12 from Manizales, Colombia. Her beloved grandfather, a lawyer in Colombia’s coffee region, was a primary influence.

Martinez credits the Terry College for her bench skills.

“My marketing degree taught me to conduct myself in a professional manner and how to sell my brand and what I believe in,” Martinez says. “I see the benefits every day.

“Every class I took at Terry felt relevant. I learned the building blocks to get me where I wanted to go.”

Martinez realizes she stands for something important in the Georgia judicial system. She and her predecessors and mentors in DeKalb, Judge J. Antonio DelCampo and Judge Dax López, have made DeKalb the only one of Georgia’s 159 counties with a continuous line of Latino judges for the past 21 years.

She lives in north DeKalb with her husband, two daughters and a dog, Lucy. “Lucy’s my third kid,” Martinez laughs. “The one that doesn’t talk back.”
JUDGE STEVE JONES

Steve Jones grew up in the 1960s near Athens, smack in the middle of Clarke County. For a youngster, it was paradise.

“I set rabbit boxes, pulled muscadines, picked blackberries and played sports every day,” Jones recalls. “My uncle would pay me two dollars for mowing grass, and I thought I was rich.”

The first of his family to attend college, Jones entered UGA aiming at the corporate world.

At Terry, Jones (BBA ‘78, JD ’87) mastered business concepts that would one day easily transfer to the legal world.

“About two-thirds of a judge’s time is spent organizing time, moving cases along,” he says. “Terry taught me to plan and prioritize. I know how to operate a judge’s office, what cases to move fast, what to do to let people prepare.”

After graduation, waiting for corporate job offers, Jones took work running the child support recovery office for the Clarke County district attorney. The duty proved compelling, and he stayed six years before entering the Georgia School of Law.

With his JD, Jones became an assistant district attorney, then a municipal court judge in Athens-Clarke County. In 1995, Gov. Zell Miller named him to the Georgia Superior Court for the Western Judicial Circuit.

Jones' bench work stood out — so much so that in March 2011, President Barack Obama appointed him to the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia.

Jones works with a purity of purpose.

“I make sure I conduct my court every day in a way that wins respect and the trust of people,” he says. “That means making sure people feel treated fairly.

“In court, somebody always wins, and somebody loses. One of the best compliments a judge can get is to conduct a trial, rule, and hear lawyers say, ‘We respect the ruling.’ That means the public feels it had its day in court.”

Away from the courthouse, Jones still does some mowing.

“I have a small farm,” he says. “I raise a few goats. And I like to get up on my tractor and bush hog the property.

“Nobody’s objecting. Nobody’s arguing. It just feels great up there.”
A long-ago Friday business class at the Terry College still stands out for Charles “Charlie” Bethel.

“The professor showed beautiful slides of the Appalachian Trail for the first 10 minutes,” recalls Bethel (BBA ’98, JD ’01). “It was a nice incentive to get students out of bed and to a Friday morning class.

“Even more, it was a good reminder that having a business education and engagement in the business world ought to be about more than just work. We can do serious work and still have a life beyond.”

Bethel’s “life beyond” has been notable. He grew up in Dalton, where he still lives. He worked as a law clerk, assistant solicitor for Dalton and an executive at J&J Industries, once one of the flooring companies that bolstered the city’s economy.

Public service called. Bethel first served as an alderman in Dalton, then won four terms in the Georgia State Senate. Standout achievements of his legislative tenure include championing juvenile justice reform and “Ava’s Law,” legislation that reformed autism insurance availability.

In November 2016, Gov. Nathan Deal appointed Bethel to the Georgia Court of Appeals. Then, in September 2018, Gov. Deal appointed him to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Bethel calls Terry his “foundation.”

“All the skills and experience I bring to my work sitting on the bench and my personal life have been influenced by my Terry education,” he says. “People think of judges as only hearing cases. But we do lots more. I’m chairing an ad hoc committee dealing with compensation and finances. My background at Terry certainly equipped me for service in that role.”

What’s the hardest part of being a justice?

“Like most people,” Bethel says, “I’m opinionated. But because of ethical considerations, judges and justices can’t talk about political issues or cases they may have to later hear.

“It doesn’t hurt me to keep my opinions to myself, but we live in such an accessible world ... and sometimes people view a lack of access as an effort to conceal something.

“That’s the hardest part of what we’re called to do: to honor the system of constitutional government by staying neutral when people want you to take a partisan side. A judge’s duty is always to the law.”

Bethel and his wife, Lynsey, also a UGA alum, have three children.

Andrew Pinson learned about pedigree growing up with veterinarian parents, first in Lithonia, then Lincolnton, a small town near Augusta.

He built up quite a pedigree for himself along the way to the Supreme Court of Georgia.

Pinson (BBA ’08, JD ’11) graduated summa cum laude and first in his class from Georgia Law. Afterwards, he nabbed highly competitive law clerk positions with then-chief judge David Sentelle at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, then with U.S. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas.

Pinson next moved into a notable legal practice at Jones Day in Atlanta, then to posts as Georgia’s deputy solicitor general and solicitor general — the state’s chief appeals lawyer. In 2021 Gov. Brian Kemp swore Pinson in as a justice of the Supreme Court.

Oh — and he accomplished all this by age 35.

“I feel proud and grateful to be on the Georgia Supreme Court,” Pinson, now 37, says. “It’s an honor to serve my own home state and uphold the rule of law.”

Pinson says he serves in this role by treating “every case and every party equally to make sure justice is served.”

And on the bench, Pinson puts his Terry education to good use.
“My focus on the financial side comes into play in certain cases,” he explains. “I’m never starting from scratch with respect to certain legal questions. Also, the business discipline of economics, accounting and finance started me on the path to having a better analytical mind.

“When you walk into law school, the first thing you hear is, ‘Think like a lawyer.’ That means by analysis, deliberately, with structure and logic. I had already begun to develop that mindset at Terry.”

Pinson feels his most important duty as a justice is interpretation of the law.

“We don’t have the power to change the law,” he says. “That’s outside our lane. In legal opinions, we say all the time that our job is simply to tell you what the law is and what that means.

“That role is crucial, but it’s very limited. It’s up to legislators and the people who elect them to change laws.”

Pinson and his wife, Sara Beth, live near Tucker. They relax with their dogs, taking a furry trio in a camper van to various hiking spots and to “dog sports events” such as Frisbee competitions.

JUSTICE JOHN ELLINGTON

“I tell lawyers, ‘There’s life outside the courtroom — get one,’” says John Ellington. “It will make you a better judge or lawyer inside the courtroom.”

Life past the gavel for Ellington revolves around his Soperton family farm and nearby rural communities. When he’s not bringing in hay or plowing fire lanes through pine trees, he’s presiding over a Lions Club or Rotary Club meeting or Ducks Unlimited or Boy Scouts group.

Or a courtroom.

Ellington (BBA ’82, JD ’85) ruled from the bench for 29 counties comprising five judicial circuits in south Georgia before going to Georgia’s appellate courts. Terry, he says, helped him with all of it.

“Judges and lawyers are problem-solvers,” Ellington says. “The background I got in Terry was in accounting, and accounting requires great discipline. It has served me throughout my career. In law and in life, it’s the people you meet and the friends you make that make the difference. I made lifelong friends at UGA and at Terry.”

A Vidalia native, Ellington was barely in his thirties when he was appointed in 1991 as a state court judge for Treutlen County after practicing general trial law with a local firm. He would go on to serve as a municipal court judge, then as a judge in state and superior courts before being sworn in as judge of the Georgia Court of Appeals in 1999.

He served there for more than 18 years. In 2018, Ellington ran unopposed for a state Supreme Court seat vacated by retiring justice Carol Hunstein. Gov. Deal swore him in on Dec. 19, 2018.

Ellington reveres the rule of law.

“It’s one thing for somebody to lose a case, but it is much worse for them to lose confidence in the legal system. Everyone should have the opportunity to be heard and treated fairly under the rule of law,” he says.

Ellington is one judge who sometimes gets judged.

He cultivates trophy roses on his farm, showing them off in competitions in Thomasville, Georgia’s “City of Roses,” and other places.

Another passion is farming — “The only cure for farming is embalming fluid,” Ellington puts it — an occupation that supports an even more fervent one.

“Turkey hunting is a disease,” he jokes. “A lot of people don’t know why they’re here on this planet. But I do. I’m here to follow the Georgia Bulldogs and kill turkeys.”

He and his wife, Sandra Kate, truly enjoy their Thanksgivings.
A GOLDEN AGE

Brian Harman (BBA '11) celebrates after winning his first major championship at the 2023 British Open in July.
A GOLDEN AGE       FOR TERRY GOLF

By Gabe Vodicka (ABJ '08)

Brian Harman (BBA '11) celebrates after winning his first major championship at the 2023 British Open in July.

Photo by Keyur Khamar/Getty Images

FOR TERRY GOLF

By Gabe Vodicka (ABJ '08)
Profiles: Keeping Score

Terry and golf go together like azaleas and Augusta National.

Look no further than the UGA Golf Course, where players recharge after rigorous practices in the plush Boyd Golf Center, named after the late former amateur standout and Georgia Golf Hall of Fame director David Boyd (BBA ‘63). The course’s general manager? That would be another Terry alum, former pro Matt Peterson (BBA ‘89).

Indeed, the college is historically well represented on the university’s men’s and women’s teams and at the professional level, with golfers such as Franklin Langham (BBA ‘91) and Angela Jerman Ormsby (BBA ‘02) dropping birdies while brimming with Bulldog pride.

Even so, there’s something special about the current crop of Terry Dawgs competing in the pros. At the time this issue went to press, all five were listed among the top 125 players by the Official World Golf Ranking, with two in the top 25. Two won tournaments this year. Two others earned top 5 finishes. And, oh yeah — one of them is a defending major champion.

So, does a Terry degree automatically confer special powers on the putting green? Maybe not. But there’s ample reason to believe it certainly doesn’t hurt.

Brian Harman | BBA ’11, Finance
Official World Golf Ranking: No. 9 (October 2023)

Going into the 2023 British Open, Brian Harman knew he had a shot.

“I’ve always (believed) I could do something like this,” he said at the post-tournament press conference. “It’s just when it takes so much time, it’s hard not to let your mind falter, like, ‘Maybe I’m not winning again.’”

Indeed, it was six years since Harman’s last win — at the 2017 Wells Fargo Championship. But on the rolling links of the Royal Liverpool Golf Club, Harman was electric. Charging into the final round with a five-stroke lead, he held his ground in gusty winds and driving rain to finish as the 2023 Open victor and become the second golfer who played under Georgia coach Chris Haack to win a major championship.

Harman’s first major win seemed to mark a new era of self-confidence for the charismatic leftie, who spent the summer racking up five top-15 finishes and earned the No. 23 FedEx Cup ranking at the end of the season.

It also brought newfound attention to a player who had previously flown well under the radar.

“It’s a new experience, people recognizing me,” Harman said ahead of the St. Jude Championship in August. “I’ve always enjoyed going out to dinner when I’m on the road by myself … it’s probably going to be a minute before I get to enjoy that again.

“I will say,” he added with a smile, “life is better as a major champion than not.”

Brendon Todd | BBA ’07, Marketing
Official World Golf Ranking: No. 59 (October 2023)

Following his first PGA win in 2014, Brendon Todd spent a few years wandering the golf wilderness before roaring back to take the top prize twice in the 2019-20 season. In 2022-23, he tallied six top-10 finishes, including the runner-up spot in July’s John Deere Classic.

That tenacity is a testament to Todd’s skill, preparation and confidence. “I didn’t have a backup plan leaving college,” he tells Terry magazine. “I don’t think that’s really possible to truly pursue pro golf.”

Todd says the bond between the UGA players in the pros transcends the typical working relationship. “Kevin Kisner and I used to sit in an MIST class and then cruise downtown to Gyro Wrap,” he says with a laugh.

And on tour, it’s not uncommon to find a rental house full of Dawgs on any given week. “Me, Chris Kirk (BSEd ’08), Sepp Straka, maybe Greyson Sigg (BSEd ’22) stay together,” says Todd. “Kevin Kisner or Brian Harman might join us.

“We definitely inspire each other, whether we know it or not,” he adds. “We’re all trying to beat each other, but it’s a healthy competition.”
Sepp Straka | BBA ’15, Management
Official World Golf Ranking: No. 23 (October 2023)

After securing his first win at the 2022 Honda Classic — and coming up just short in a playoff at the St. Jude Championship the same season — Sepp Straka continued to put up impressive numbers in 2022-23.

In fact, with six top-10 finishes and a win at the John Deere Classic in July — during which he shot an eye-popping 62 in the final round, setting a tournament record — Straka had arguably the most consistent season of any of the Terry College pros.

He also held the distinction of being part of both one-two Terry finishes, tying for second behind Harman at the Open Championship and just holding off Todd at the John Deere Classic.

“I had a really good season,” the Austrian-born Straka acknowledged during the St. Jude Championship. “It was pretty steady, especially the last few months. I’ve played some pretty good golf.”

Following his breakout year, Straka was rewarded by unlocking a new career milestone: In September, he was handpicked by captain Luke Donald to play for Team Europe in the 2023 Ryder Cup.

Kevin Kisner | BBA ’06, Management
Official World Golf Ranking: No. 109 (October 2023)

With four PGA Tour wins under his belt, including the 2021 Wyndham Championship, and two Presidents Cup selections, Kevin Kisner is no stranger to professional golf fortune. But he still says his proudest moment came in 2005 when he helped lead a loaded Bulldogs squad to a national title.

“I loved winning the national championship with my guys,” he says. “We spent so much time and worked so hard together to try to achieve that goal. And you don’t always get to achieve your goals, even when you work your tail off. Winning that was the ultimate success.”

And while Kisner is forever grateful pro golf panned out — “I never wanted to be an eight-to-five guy in an office,” he admits — he says his Terry degree continues to pay dividends as he navigates his dream career.

“We call ourselves self-employed, but I have five, six, seven employees I manage, what we would consider our team. And every week I have to formulate a plan, with their input, for how to best run my business and best ways for me to succeed.”

Keith Mitchell | BBA ’14, Real Estate
Official World Golf Ranking: No. 62 (October 2023)

Nicknamed “Cashmere Keith” due to his proclivity for rocking a stylish throwback look on the greens, Keith Mitchell’s creativity is not limited to his wardrobe.

“(My style) brings some personality back into my profession,” he told Hypebeast in August. “And that’s a lot of fun because golf’s a very creative game when you’re deciding what shot you’re gonna hit.”

Known for his long, accurate driving ability, Mitchell’s inventiveness on the course helped him secure a win in the 2019 Honda Classic, and this season he embarked on yet another solid campaign, earning five top-10 finishes.

And when he wasn’t climbing leaderboards, he was busy spreading the Bulldogs gospel, including to his Zurich Classic teammate Sungjae Im, a new Georgia resident.

“I taught him about Georgia football,” Mitchell told reporters who asked what the two players were learning about each other. “He’s the biggest Georgia fan (from) South Korea now.”
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Harriett Williams (BBA ’12) speaks up for emerging entrepreneurs

Photo by Brian Powers
Making it to the playoffs is great, but for two Terry College alumni who make a living rooting on the Atlanta Braves and Atlanta United, working in sports is more about building community than winning games.

**Working in Sports Is More About Building Community Than Winning Games.**

O’Donoghue and Palmer grew up playing sports, but it wasn’t until they came to the University of Georgia and got involved with Terry’s Institute for Leadership Advancement (ILA) that they thought to get into the game professionally.

Palmer came to UGA with plans to become a doctor but hit a roadblock.

“I had what I call my ‘quarter-life crisis’ my sophomore year,” she says. “So one day in the middle of the semester, I changed my major to finance and thought I would go the business route. It wasn’t until I joined the ILA program that I asked, ‘OK, what do I want to do?’”

Working through the self-reflection and self-assessments she took as a Leonard Leadership Scholar, Palmer, the grade-school travel team softball player and UGA rec league player, realized she was happiest playing team sports and working with people in sports.

Two weeks later, she landed an internship with Loran Smith at the UGA Athletic Association’s marketing and communications arm. She interned with Minor League Baseball’s Augusta GreenJackets and then with Major League Baseball.

By the time she graduated, she had a finance degree, as well as the ability to work for a ticket-window crowd, tarp a field and clown around in a mascot’s costume.

“Working for the Braves was a dream, but coming out of college, my goal was to find a job in any of the pro leagues or league offices or the corporate sports marketing side,” she says.
After graduation, Palmer made her way up the ladder at Turner Broadcasting before landing a dream job with the Braves in 2018. The people skills learned in ILA were indispensable in her ability to progress professionally and stay focused on her goals.

“What I’ve seen is the people advancing in their careers are the ones who have the emotional intelligence and the diplomacy skills needed to work with others,” Palmer says. “It’s not necessarily the smartest person who gets promoted, but the person who has the best people skills.

“I think ILA teaches you that while your academics and intelligence are important, we’re all people at the end of the day.”

Taking time to get to know herself and how she interacts with others helped her lead teams who got things done, and those successes led her to the Braves.

Introspection and self-knowledge are vital to being an effective leader and make people more resilient, says O’Donoghue, who wanted to work in sports and had marketing and economics degrees but fell back on her ILA training when her job search didn’t work out as planned.

“I remember the books we read — Good to Great and others — and all these other tangible things we learned that set me apart from other 21-year-olds,” O’Donoghue recalls. “I thought, ‘How can I use this experience? All the things I learned, not just about myself, but about great leaders and how they handle barriers — how do they push a negative into a positive?’”

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**IT’S NOT NECESSARILY THE SMARTEST PERSON WHO GETS PROMOTED, BUT THE PERSON WHO HAS THE BEST PEOPLE SKILLS.**

She landed a one-year internship with Turner Sports in New York City and, when they weren’t able to keep her on full-time, made the jump to CNN in ad sales strategy.

“That was the scariest thing I’d ever done in my entire life,” she says. “I cried the whole flight there. It was awful. But it was the best thing I’ve ever done. I could do that because of the things I learned not only about myself, but about how great leaders take risks.”

That role at CNN taught her she was a data person trying to fit into a marketing role, and she embraced her inner number cruncher.

When she returned to Atlanta and became a fan experience manager at AMB Sports and Mercedes-Benz Stadium in 2017, she found a place where she could use her comfort with data to help create event-day experiences that bring a feeling of community and excitement to the stadium.

That led to her current position as vice president of business operations for Atlanta United, where she relies on the self-awareness learned in ILA to create the atmosphere and tight-knit community that are trademarks of United games.

“The best leaders are self-aware leaders,” O’Donoghue says. “If you know what your gaps are and are humble about where those gaps are, then you can be successful in leading large groups of people toward a common goal.”

You have to trust your team and get obstacles out of their way, she says.

That’s an ideal they learned playing sports, but O’Donoghue and Palmer believe they brought that mantra into action in their professional lives because of ILA and Terry.
Harriett Williams (BBA ’12) uses her business, artistic and analytical skills to empower and propel entrepreneurs in metro Atlanta

There’s not a lack of genius in our communities, there’s a lack of opportunity.

Harriett Williams should have been worried.

As the holiday season approached in 2016, the freshly minted homeowner — with a new car to boot — was working through her fourth year as a forensic technology associate for KPMG in Atlanta. Responsible for data collection in client investigations (“cool things I can’t talk about,” she says), Williams navigated the ins and outs of corporate leadership and professionalism when suddenly confronted with an unfortunate business reality: downsizing.

“I watched all the ‘Game of Thrones’ and Netflix that I possibly could — it was the holiday time, and nobody was hiring,” she says with a quiet laugh. “So one day I decided I was going to get out of the house and volunteer in my community — I’m going to help somebody because I have to do something.”

Using the insights she sharpened at KPMG and the Terry College as a management information systems major, Williams sought to enrich a local business in her Westview neighborhood, located in southwest Atlanta. It was novel, different and comforting — everything up to this point built her for the corporate world, but she was discovering you can live life and not be incorporated.

It set her on an entrepreneurial path — a route she trekked in her youth — and into a consulting business creating roadmaps to financial success for startups and small businesses. Williams never thought she’d leave KPMG, but past experiences steeled her for the abrupt layoff. There was never cause for concern.

“My life is God’s will,” she says. “I have a lot of ideas of where I think I want to be, and God’s like, ‘Absolutely not. We’re actually doing this.’”

The present “this” is the Village Micro Fund, a grassroots finance group providing capital, education and support for emerging entrepreneurs in the Black community. Williams co-founded the fund with Donte Miller and Nathan Jones, merging her boutique consulting firm The Tubman Group into the duo’s
emerging fund in 2018. The trio's shared
synergy centered on creating a path of
wealth for future generations deprived
to their ancestors.

“We often say in the Village
that there's not a lack of genius in
our communities, there's a lack of
opportunity,” she says.

And that’s where the Village
Micro Fund steps in. Benefiting from
solid business education training, the
trip developed a free curriculum
for entrepreneurs to track their
progress while offering two 15-week
cohorts a year teaching business
model development, pitching tips,
accounting, public speaking and process
management to small business owners.
Each cohort receives big business
sponsorship, and this cohort's sponsor —
Walmart — will award a $25,000 prize to
the entrepreneur with the best pitch at
the end of the 15 weeks.

Partnerships were built with the
aptly named Access to Capital for
Entrepreneurs (ACE), the Atlanta
Wealth Building Initiative (which
reimagines economic realities in
communities of color), and Kiva,
a company helping underserved
communities receive crowdfunding
loans. Village has plans to become a
Community Development Financial
Institution and provide credit and
financial services to underserved
markets. To expand its borders, the
fund embraced cryptocurrency while
taking advantage of trade and treaty
agreements to spur international
expansion for its clients. Whatever
innovation or solution is needed, Village
Micro Fund is on the task.

“A lot of entrepreneurs of color have
to piecemeal their businesses together,”
she says. “My dream for every business
that resonates with us is that they can
walk into their building because they've
been able to get funding that is flexible
and affordable and see their vision
actualized that first day. I want that for
all of our businesses.”

Village has proven indispensable
for the businesses it helped, especially
during the global pandemic. The
fund distributed $1.8 million to small
businesses affected by COVID-19,
allowing them to keep afloat while
offering consulting and technical aid.

Just Add Honey Team Company is
a shining example. Nestled on Atlanta's
Beltline, the business came to the fund
with the prescient idea in 2019 to get
into online sales, and with Village's
help, updated its website and developed
a concept for parTEA in a box —
a take-home version of its signature
afternoon tea experience.

"Being an entrepreneur
allowed me to do
everything I ever
wanted to do."

“During the pandemic, you could
send these boxes to your family
members and go on Zoom and have a
virtual party,” Williams says. “They said
Village was able to help them concep-
tualize and lead them to a safe place
so when COVID happened, they were
ready to act.” With exponential online
sales, Just Add Honey was able to
expand its business and “work on their
business, and not just in it,” she says. “It
propels and prepares you in ways you
don’t even know.”

While her work is a steady drive to
promote others, Williams understands
her need for self-care. And though
your idea of self-care may include
an afternoon mocha (with whipped
cream? Yes) or perhaps a mani on a busy
Monday morning, Williams’ involves
building a fashion line of avant-garde,
one-of-a-kind, wearable, collectible art.

She enrolled in Le Fashion Lab,
an Atlanta institution “disrupting
fashion education,” to fully learn what
it means to be in the fashion world as
she promotes Dirty Harriet, a clothing
brand she created with visual artist
Fabian Williams. In high school — when
the classically trained pianist wasn’t
making money playing for her Augusta
church — she built costume designs,
a skill she became interested in after
watching “Project Runway.” But while
she was a lover of all the arts (she was
also a ballerina), her practical
parents steered her toward
a career in math, business and science.

“And I did that,” she says. “I did it my
mom’s way, and now it’s time to do it my way. Being an
entrepreneur has allowed me to step
back and do everything I ever wanted
to do. ... Learning at Le Fashion Lab
has been the most rewarding thing —
it goes back to my experiences of what
I’m doing today and then being very
intentional. I think about 8-year-old
me, and that’s why I’m doing this. I’m
doing this for 8-year-old me.”

She doesn’t do all the things she does
for accolades, but she has plenty of them.
Williams is on UGA's 2023 40 Under 40,
and the Village Micro Fund was No. 14
on the 2023 Bulldog 100 list of fastest-
growing businesses owned or run by
UGA alumni. Last year, the Village
Micro Fund was named a Beloved
Community Beacon, given to those who
provide economic support to the people
of Atlanta. She also received the Good
Trouble Award, named in honor of the
late Congressman and civil rights leader
John Lewis, and given to founders in
Atlanta who committed their lives to
public service and community-centered
problem-solving.

You never know where you go in life,
even if you think it's all planned out.
At distinct points, Williams had ideas
of what her life would be, but time and
experience taught her that creating
legacy — “one of the things that fuels
me” — is about hard work, sacrifice and
taking chances.

“One of the most impactful quotes
that changed my life is, ‘What’s for me
won’t miss me,’” she says. “And that’s
beautiful because a lot of times we
deal with rejection or being redirected
differently, but you have to be flexible
and realize maybe there’s something
over here that I need to look at.
Maybe I’m being redirected
into a different playing field
because that wasn’t what
I was supposed to do.
So let’s explore.”
Until 2011, research showed hiring managers discounted applicants who broke with gender-linked behavioral stereotypes — women seen as more direct and less friendly were less likely to be hired, and men seen as too warm or empathetic were passed over.

But that may be changing, says Terry College assistant professor of management James Matusik. In a recent study, he and his co-authors found men presenting with more warmth were viewed more positively by hiring managers.

“If you look at all the literature from the '80s, '90s and early 2000s, it suggests that men who are communal or warm were lashed out against in different ways during their careers,” Matusik says. “But recently we were noticing little asides and anecdotes, and even whole papers, showing men were actually getting boosts — seeing clear career advantages — for being warm and communal. We wanted to test that.”

Matusik and co-authors Rebecca Mitchell at the University of Colorado and Russell Johnson at Michigan State University reexamined the role of stereotypes in hiring decisions. Their paper, “Backlashes or boosts? The role of warmth and gender in relational uncertainty reductions,” was published in Human Resource Management earlier this year.

In the first part of the study, Matusik and colleagues looked at the experience of 103 undergraduate students using an interview center on campus for early-career job interviews. They asked students to rate themselves on traits such as warmth, sincerity and tolerance to gauge personality and on confidence, independence and competitiveness to gauge overall competency.

Weeks later, they contacted them to see if they secured a job offer.

They found male students reporting more warmth were almost twice as likely to get a job offer than other men, while women who described themselves as less warm were just as likely to get offers as their friendlier female counterparts.

The team also did structured experiments asking 800 business students to rate videos of male and female job candidates answering questions about project management. The participants rated the candidates on how likely they were to be hired. Once again, men judged more highly on warmth were rated more likely than other men to be hired.

The authors wanted to unpack what changed since the 2000s and how displaying warmth became a boon for men. In the experiment where they asked students to rate the videos of interview questions, they also asked how confident they were in predicting the applicant’s future behavior. The male candidates rated as warmer and friendlier were also rated as less risky hires.

Increased “relational uncertainty” — uncertainty about someone’s future behavior — was often tied to why warm men and unfriendly women were penalized in past studies of stereotypes and hiring, Matusik says. Hiring managers didn’t know what to expect from employees who didn’t display stereotypical characteristics, and they wouldn’t take a chance on them.

In this study, they found even though friendly men violated past stereotypes, they did so in a way that made participants feel less uncertain — making them stand out in a good way, Matusik says.

Matusik cautions this is just one study, and only focused on applicants seeking entry-level work — not promotions or leadership roles. More research is needed to see if warmth gives men a boost later in their careers.

And while it may be good news for warmer-than-normal guys, what the study says about how we treat professional women is potentially more important, Matusik says.

Past research confirmed women not viewed as warm were sometimes discounted or penalized for counter-stereotypical workplace behavior. Corporate leadership training hammered these concepts as well, advising women to temper their competitiveness or forwardness with warmth or more relational leadership, Matusik says.

But he and his team didn’t find any evidence to support that, at least at the hiring stage.

“You can construe that as positive,” Matusik says. “Our evidence suggests that women who self-identify as low warmth are equally as likely to receive job offers as their warmer female peers.”

The authors wanted to unpack what changed since the 2000s and how displaying warmth became a boon for men.
Jennifer Chapman, principal lecturer in the J.M. Tull School of Accounting and director of Terry's International Business Programs, was one of 10 UGA faculty members invited to join the 2023-2024 class of Women’s Leadership Fellows. The program allows faculty and administrators to develop leadership skills and build connections.

Susan Cohen, assistant professor of management and entrepreneurship researcher, was invited to present at TEDxAtlanta’s “We Rise” in May. Her talk, “Three things entrepreneurs should know about advice,” was based on her research on startup accelerators and what makes them successful.

Tricia Hackleman, senior lecturer and director of the Legal Studies Certificate Program, joined the inaugural class of UGA’s Fellows for Transformative Teaching program. The program invites faculty to explore and engage in conversations about advanced teaching practices.

Jeff Humphreys, director of the Selig Center for Economic Growth, received a grant of more than $140,000 from the United Negro College Fund to update his study on the economic impact of historically Black colleges and universities.

Lindsay Sain Jones, assistant professor of legal studies, won the Academy of Legal Studies in Business’ 2023 Holmes Cardozo Award for “Finance, technology and the fall of antitrust,” written with legal studies professor Greg Day. The award recognizes the best working paper submitted to the ALSB Annual Conference.

The Russell Sage Foundation awarded Terry economists Matt Knepper and Ian Schmutte $46,732 in July to study strategic wage concealment and labor market power. The foundation funds research to develop informed responses to societal problems.

Poets & Quants named Joanna Lin, associate professor of management, a 40 under 40 MBA professor to watch. The list identifies talented young professors teaching in MBA programs around the world.

Terry Dean’s Advisory Council Distinguished Professor and associate professor of management Fadel Matta won the 2023 Early Career Achievement Award from the Academy of Management’s human resources division. The award recognizes a scholar who made distinguished contributions to human resource management during the first seven years of their career.

The Academy of Legal Studies in Business awarded Mike Schuster, associate professor of legal studies, the Early Career Achievement Award, which recognizes scholars who show exceptional promise based on early accomplishments.

Julio Sevilla, associate professor of marketing, won the Geraldine “Gerri” Rosa Henderson Early-Career Memorial Award from the Marketing Ethnic Faculty Association. Henderson studied multicultural marketing and advocated for diverse mentoring programs within the American Marketing Association.

The National Bureau of Economic Research and Sloan Foundation awarded Meghan Skira, associate professor of economics, $69,287 to fund a study on the career impact of caregiving in later life. Her work focuses on the economic and professional impacts of caregiving.

Robert Vandenberg, Robert O. Arnold Professor of Business Emeritus in management, was honored by the Academy of Management and the Community for Responsible Research in Business and Management with the 2023 Award for Responsible Research in Management. His paper “Evaluating the impact of the live healthy, work healthy program on organizational outcomes: A randomized field experiment” was published in the Journal of Applied Psychology.
class notes

Beth Rasnick (BBA ’05, MAcc ’05) hits all the right notes as chief of staff to the CEO for guitar giant Gibson Brands.
Where did Terry take you?
Submit your class notes online, upload photos, share a promotion.
terry.uga.edu/news/terry-magazine

1965-69

Jamie Boswell (BBA ’67) of Athens was elected to serve as secretary of the State Transportation Board of Georgia. He has represented Georgia's 10th Congressional District on the board since 2013 and previously served as chairman, vice chairman and secretary. He is president and owner of the Boswell Group, which includes insurance, real estate and appraisal companies.

Chuck Clowdis (BBA ’67) of Lookout Mountain, Tenn., retired as managing director, global trade and transportation for IHS Global Insight. He joined the firm in 2008 after decades of positions with major transport firms. An avid writer in his spare time, Clowdis has authored two novels and a sci-fi thriller as well as several books on transportation issues.

1970-74

Joe Stoner (MBA ’72) of Atlanta was selected as the 2023 recipient of the BMGT Nexus Award, established to recognize strategic, outstanding and sustainable contributions to the American Chemical Society's Division of Business Development and Management. During his distinguished career, he spent 30 years in sales and marketing for Shimadzu Scientific Instruments.

Dave Burch (BBA ’73) of St. Simons Island was named as a Premier Club qualifier by financial solutions firm Cambridge Investment Research. The honor is earned by financial professionals who demonstrate a commitment to serving clients while upholding an independent mindset and adhering to core values of integrity, commitment, flexibility and kindness.

John Callaway Jr. (BSA ’69, MBA ’73) of Hogansville was inducted into the Georgia Agricultural Hall of Fame in April. A longtime UGA Cooperative Extension agent who retired in 1998, he was celebrated at the ceremony for his wide-ranging impact on the cattle industry and youth livestock programs in Georgia.

Alan Najjar (BBA ’74) of Buford was named to Synovus' Atlanta advisory board. An Atlanta-area banking veteran, he serves as director of business development for Smith + Howard, a tax, accounting and advisory firm.

1975-79

Ray Gentry (BBA ’78) of Hoschton was named full-time president and CEO of the Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders. He was formerly the conference's part-time president and CEO and also serves as associational mission strategist for the Southside Baptist Network.

1980-84

Ken Smith (AB ’82, MAcc ’86) of LaGrange was hired as a tax principal for Hancock Askew & Co., an audit, tax, accounting and advisory firm. He has over 37 years of public accounting experience and comes out of retirement to join the firm. His most recent professional role was as a tax partner for BDO.

Barry Wabler (BBA ’82, MAcc ’83) of Atlanta was appointed as CFO of EOS Hospitality, a quickly expanding

Dan Amos (BBA ’73) of Columbus was inducted as a 2023 Georgia Trustee, the highest honor the State of Georgia can bestow on an individual. Trustees are appointed by the Georgia Historical Society and Office of the Governor for their service, philanthropy and leadership. A noted supporter of higher education and pediatric cancer care, among other causes, Amos serves as chairman and CEO of Aflac Inc.

James Williams (PhD ’82) of Cincinnati, Ohio, was awarded a contract extension by Mount St. Joseph University, where he will continue to serve as president for at least five years. He has led the private Catholic university of 1,500 students since 2016 and has overseen a period of growth in both academics and athletics. He previously served as president of Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn.
hotel company. He has more than four decades of experience in finance focused mainly on the hospitality, food service and business services industries, including most recently with Valentine Insurance Services.

Carolyn Elster (AB ’83, BBA ’88) of Bogart was promoted to lead software compliance analyst for Macy’s. A seasoned IT professional, she previously worked as a software configuration manager for Vision Technologies.

1985-89

Pat Jarvis (AB ’87) of Suwanee was named VP of sales and marketing for Berenson Hardware. A sales and marketing veteran working primarily in the building, bath and fixtures industry, he most recently held the position of general manager with AD Waters.

Dave Morgan (BBA ’88) of Alpharetta was named CFO for ClearStar Inc., a provider of technology-based services in background and medical screening. He has more than three decades of finance experience, most recently serving as CFO of Cendyn, a provider of SaaS technology for the hospitality industry.

1990-94

Shaila Miranda (PhD ’91) of Fayetteville, Ark., was named chair of the management information systems department at the University of Arkansas Sam M. Walton College of Business. She joins the institution from the University of Oklahoma Price College of Business, where she was a faculty member for more than 20 years.

Tim Murphy (BBA ’91) of Valdosta retired as assistant director of auxiliary services for Valdosta State University, where he served as a staff member for more than 28 years.

Doug Strange (BBA ’91) of Moultrie was hired as chief credit officer for Ameris Bank. He joined the bank in 2005 as a senior lender, was promoted to regional credit officer in 2008 and most recently served as managing director of credit administration. Prior to Ameris, he worked for KPMG and Fleet Capital.

Woochee DeLoach (BBA ’92) of Augusta was named CFO for Open Range Beef, a leading national supplier of organic beef products. She was previously VP of finance for FPL Food.

Julie Partain (BBA ’92) of Cordele was named VP for academic affairs at South Georgia Technical College. She has worked for more than 20 years at the college and previously served as academic dean of enrollment management.

Rachel Perry (BBA ’93) of Mableton joined the UGA Alumni Association Board of Directors, working with UGA’s alumni relations staff to promote, support and advance its programs and services. She serves as chief innovation officer, commercial risk solutions, North America for Aon.

Doug Ross (AB ’93) of Germantown, Tenn., was hired as president of Peli BioThermal, a leading provider of cold-chain solutions for the life sciences industry. He has more than 20 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, most recently serving as a SVP for Eversana.

Chris Allen (BBA ’92) of Playa Del Rey, Calif., was named CFO of Keck Medicine of USC, the medical enterprise of the University of Southern California. Previously interim CFO of Keck Medicine and CFO of Keck Medical Center of USC, he was named Rising Star CFO of the Year by the Los Angeles Business Journal in 2022. He formerly served as CFO for Adventist Health Glendale Medical Center.

Raj Chokshi (BBA ’94) of Alpharetta was named to the UGA Board of Visitors for 2023–2026, where he will learn about university initiatives to extend and enhance its teaching, research and service mission. He is CEO and wealth manager at Bluerock Wealth Management.

Virna Mendoza (BBA ’94, MEd ’99) of Marietta accepted the role of director of events and engagement for Emory University’s Office of the President. She previously served as senior director of student affairs for the Emory Goizueta Business School’s executive MBA program.

Jim Exley (BBA ’95, MS ’20, PhD ’21) of Alpharetta collaborated with two other psychology PhDs to write Money Happiness: Five Wealth Lessons with Professor Ocean, a book about the intersection between personality and financial decision making. He is a wealth science researcher and coach for Atlanta-based Wealth Science Advisors.
Mike Sale (BBA ’94) of Watkinsville joined the Athens Technical College Board of Directors. He is president and CEO of The Commercial Bank and serves on the education committee of the Independent Community Bankers Association of America (ICBA), a national trade association.

Robert Soper (BBA ’94, JD ’97) of Sunrise, Fla., joined the board of directors for Esports Entertainment Group. He is the founder and CEO of Sun Gaming & Hospitality.

1995-99

Don Grimsley (BBA ’96, MBA ’99) of Gainesville joined the UGA Alumni Association Board of Directors, working with UGA’s alumni relations staff to promote, support and advance its programs and services. He is president of Grimsley Enterprises Inc. and a broker for BHHS Commercial Real Estate.

Lance Nail (PhD ’96) of Lubbock, Texas, was hired as provost and SVP for academic affairs at the University of Southern Mississippi. He was previously dean of the Vackar College of Business and Entrepreneurship at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Mike Bobo (BBA ’97) of Statham was inducted into the Georgia High School Football Hall of Fame as part of the 40-member Class of 2023. A former Thomasville High School and Georgia Bulldogs quarterback, he has enjoyed a lengthy collegiate coaching career. He returned to Georgia in 2022 as an offensive analyst and was promoted to offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach in 2023.

Jason Byrd (BBA ’97) of Brentwood, Tenn., joined Spencer Fane Bone McAllister in the law firm’s corporate and business transactions practice group. He was previously special counsel for Lewis, Thomason, King, Krieg & Waldrop.

Scott Devitt (MBA ’97) of Ho-Ho-Kus, N.J., joined Wedbush Securities as an equity research analyst initiating coverage on stocks centered around travel and mobility. He was formerly a managing director for Stifel Financial Corp.

Ivan Tornos (BBA ’97) of New York, N.Y., was named to The Healthcare Technology Report’s Top 25 Healthcare Technology Leaders of New York for 2023. He has held the position of COO for Zimmer Biomet since 2021.

Michael Hynes (M.Acc ’98) of Winter Springs, Fla., was named CFO for Noodles & Co., a fast-casual restaurant concept. He has nearly 25 years of finance and accounting experience and held several roles in finance and accounting since joining Ruth’s Hospitality Group, most recently as VP of finance and accounting.

Claudia Halabi (PhD ’00) of Santiago, Chile, was appointed as director of the continuing education department of the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. Before joining the university in 2015, she was director of graduate studies at the Faculty of Economics and Business at Diego Portales University and a professor at the University of Chile.

Bryan Hardman (BBA ’96) of Marietta was promoted to VP of marketing technology at Herschend Enterprises, the nation’s largest family-owned themed attractions corporation. He was previously director of marketing technology for the company.

Edward Casey (BBA ’99, M.Acc ’00) of Milton was appointed as CFO for StarRez, a cloud-based residential community management firm. He has over 20 years of experience in software, cloud, and enterprise-focused businesses and joins from Deposco, where he spent almost 10 years leading finance.

Jeff Flome (BBA ’99, MBA ’05) of Atlanta rejoined Wells Fargo as a tech strategic advisor serving middle market clients in the Southeast region. He has more than two decades of financial services consulting and commercial banking experience, most recently with Marsh & McLennan.

Joey Magaddino (BBA ’99) of Leesburg was appointed as chair of the Albany Tech Foundation. A South Georgia commercial banking veteran, he is regional president and chief credit officer at PeoplesSouth Bank.
2000-04

Andy Marshall (BBA ’00) of Brookhaven was appointed senior vice president and head of capital markets for Bonaventure, a real estate development and property management firm. He has more than 23 years of financial services experience and joins the company from Peachtree PC Investors, where he served as president and chief compliance officer.

Devin Barnwell (BBA ’01) of Brookhaven was promoted to managing partner at Brookfield Asset Management and is the global head of portfolio management for the company’s logistics sector. She has 20 years of real estate experience and previously worked for Morgan Stanley.

Matt Sawhill (BBA ’01) of Rome joined the UGA Alumni Association Board of Directors, working with UGA’s alumni relations staff to promote, support and advance its programs and services. He is the principal for Sawhill Strategic Partners.

Kimberly Boyce (BBA ’02) of Richmond joined Great Oaks Bank as VP and treasury services manager. She has more than 20 years of experience in retail banking and financial operations and was previously a special assets manager with The First Bank.

Claire Chotiner (BBA ’01) of Marietta was named incoming president of LCG Associates, a national investment consulting firm. She will officially begin in the position in 2024. She joined the company in 2007 as an investment analyst, was promoted to VP in 2011 and has served in the role of COO since 2021.

West Ferry (BBA ’02) of Cumming was named CFO for Medicus IT, a provider of health-care IT solutions. He previously served as EVP of finance for the company. Prior to joining Medicus, he was a senior finance manager for NCR Corp.

Blake Bruce (BBA ’03) of Atlanta was named to the UGA Board of Visitors for 2023–2026, where he will learn about university initiatives to extend and enhance its teaching, research and service mission. He is a managing director and private advisor at Rockefeller Capital Management.

Al Dallas (MBA ’03) of Augusta was named co–chair of the Leadership Augusta Class of 2024, a professional development program. He serves as administrator and chief of staff for the Georgia Cancer Center at Augusta University.

Nikki Lankford (BBA ’04) of Atlanta was appointed general manager of middle market field underwriting for Liberty Mutual Insurance. She was previously VP for the company’s middle market division.

2005-09

Dave Douglas (MBA ’05) of Atlanta joined Berkley Accident and Health as regional sales manager for the firm’s Medical Stop Loss Group Captive segment. He comes to the company from Optum, where he worked as a territory manager.

Brian Kaiser (MBA ’05) of Greensboro, N.C., joined the executive advisory board for the Department of Advertising and Public Relations in the University of Georgia Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication. An experienced health-care marketing strategist, he is EVP and head of strategy for Klick, an independent digital health agency.

Beth Rasnick (BBA ’05, MAcc ’05) of Nashville, Tenn., was named chief of staff to the CEO for musical instrument and audio equipment manufacturer Gibson Brands. Through nearly a decade at the company, she previously held key positions spanning finance, accounting, treasury, business acquisitions and divestitures, transformation initiatives and corporate strategy.

Blake Swearengen (BBA ’05) of McKinney, Texas, was hired as national casualty practice leader for One80 Intermediaries, a specialty insurance broker. He formerly served as VP and casualty broker at Amwins specializing in manufacturing, energy and environmental risks.

Shawn Vincent (MBA ’05) of Hinsdale, Ill., was named to the 2023 Becker’s Hospital Review list of 100 Academic Medical Center CEOs to Know. He is president and CEO of Loyola Medicine and the former COO of Augusta University Health.

Tara Eve (BBA ’01) of Suwanee was named to the 2023 Women of the Channel list by CRN magazine. The annual list recognizes women who are making their mark on the technology industry. She is president of ChannelWorks, a sales and marketing firm that helps IT companies build profitable sales channels.

Tim Daugherty (BBA ’06) of Florham Park, N.J., joined the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) as SVP for general licensing. He previously spent five years with Vice Media Group, most recently as SVP for revenue and digital operations, and also held senior roles with Lonely Planet Global and Turner Broadcasting.
Blake Fulenwider (BBA ’06) of Atlanta was named to the Georgia Trend 40 Under 40 Class of 2023. He serves as executive director of government affairs for Northeast Georgia Health System. He has extensive experience in health policy advising in the public and private sectors, including with the Georgia Department of Community Health.

Clay Huffman (BBA ’06, MAcc ’07) of Atlanta was named to the Atlanta Business Chronicle’s 40 Under 40 Class of 2023. He is an audit partner at Frazier & Deeter. In addition, he serves as chairman of the Georgia State Board of Accountancy.

Brad Mathews (BBA ’06) of Tampa, Fla., joined Stealth Partner Group, a stop-loss wholesale company, as a VP working in the southeast region. He previously spent 17 years with Sun Life Financial and was inducted into the company’s Distribution Hall of Fame in 2017.

Winton Mays (BBA ’06) of Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., was named a 2023 40 Under 40 honoree by the Jacksonville Business Journal. He works as a financial advisor for Bridgewater Wealth Advisors of Raymond James and was a member of UGA’s 2004 College World Series baseball team.

Brittany McCall (BBA ’09, ABJ ’09, MBA ’10) was promoted to VP for commercial excellence, pricing and inside sales at WestRock Co. She has spent a decade with the company and previously served as director of commercial finance and demand planning for the corrugated packaging division.

2010-14

Alex Hill (BBA ’10) of Atlanta was named to the Georgia Trend 40 Under 40 Class of 2023. He is director of investments at Icarus Alternative Investments, a real estate investment firm. He was captain of the Bulldogs tennis team that won back-to-back national titles and is also the founder of Yonder Yoga, which has five locations employing 135 people.

Michael Wilson (BBA ’10) of Kennesaw was named a partner at Tidwell Group, an accounting and consulting firm serving clients in the real estate industry. He joined the company in 2021 as a senior manager.

KB Yabuku (MBA ’10) of Atlanta was named a VP for Colliers’ Atlanta-based office tenant representation team. He was formerly a senior-level consultant and sales executive working in the company’s occupier services group.

Chris Godfrey (BBA ’11) of Powder Springs was named a principal at Avison Young. A specialist in third-party office landlord representation, he joined the company in 2015 and was honored with its Global Sean Faught Emerging Leader Award in 2022.

Holly Hawk (MAcc ’11, PhD ’20) of Greenville, S.C., was named to the CPA Practice Advisor 40 Under 40 Class of 2023. In addition, she received the George Krull/Grant Thornton EDGE in Teaching Award from the American Institute of CPAs. A former Terry College accounting lecturer, she is a clinical assistant professor at Clemson University.

Patrick Anderson-Higgins (BBA ’12) of New York, N.Y., was hired as commercial insurance property and casualty sales director for ICT North America, a division of broking and solutions firm WTW. He was formerly a senior strategic partner manager for Celonis.

Justin Patterson (BBA ’12) of Gainesville was named VP of operations for fast-casual pizza concept Your Pie.
He has been a franchise owner with the company since 2015, successfully opening two more restaurants in 2017 and 2019.

Daniel Singer (BBA ’12) of Raleigh, N.C., launched FPC Peachtree, a division of executive recruiting company FPC National specializing in finance, accounting and technology placements. Prior to joining FPC, he spent over a decade in business and technology consulting, most recently at PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Ryan Hammock (MBA ’13) of Watkinsville was promoted to SVP and regional director of lending and business services at Pinnacle Bank. He previously served as the bank’s middle market manager. Prior to Pinnacle, he spent 15 years in various roles with Wells Fargo.

Corbin Tanenbaum (BBA ’13) of New Orleans, La., was promoted to VP of the Dallas–Fort Worth office of Weitzman, a retail-focused commercial real estate firm. Before joining the company, he served in a risk management and credit role at BB&T.

Sarah Beeson (MBA ’14) of Roswell was named to the Atlanta Business Chronicle’s 40 Under 40 Class of 2023. She is VP of Oasis Consulting Services, a multigenerational family engineering consulting firm. In addition, she serves as Post 1 member of the Roswell City Council.

2015-19

Tyler Jones (BBA ’15) was promoted to Griffin market president for Georgia Banking Co. He previously served as the company’s VP of specialty finance. Prior to joining Georgia Banking Co., he was director of operations for White Brothers Auto Parts.

Logan Brown (BBA ’16) of Brookhaven was named VP of marketing for Reagan Consulting. She previously spent seven years at Newell Brands, where she most recently served as omni-channel marketing manager.

Josh Bailey (BBA ’18, MAcc ’19) of Rocky Face was promoted to corporate accounting manager for M3, a cloud-based data management platform serving the hospitality industry. He has been with the company full-time since 2020 and was formerly a corporate senior accountant.

Anna Brechin (BBA ’18) of Stone Mountain was hired as information security manager for the Atlanta Hawks. She previously spent three years with Global Payments Inc., where she most recently worked as an IT and security audit manager.

Mac Shelander (BBA ’18) of Atlanta joined Oakbridge Insurance as a client executive. He was previously an account manager for Galis Stewart Insurance.

Melanie Lane (BBA ’19) of Atlanta joined Founders Legal as an associate attorney focusing on trade and litigation. She earned a JD from Pepperdine University’s Caruso School of Law in 2022.

2020-

Jake Lee (BBA ’20) of Savannah was promoted to relationship manager for BankSouth’s Savannah market. He joined the bank in 2020 as a loan operations intern before being hired as a credit analyst and then portfolio manager.

Winston Fox (BBA ’21) of Atlanta joined Colliers Savannah as a research analyst. He previously served as a marketplace analyst at iGAM.

Spencer Parker (MBA ‘22) of Atlanta joined Process Vision, a technology company serving the energy industry, as a general manager. He is the founder of Green Design Technologies and previously worked as an area manager for Power Source Inc.

Garrett Williams (BBA ’22) of Atlanta works as an associate consultant at Bain & Co., where he supports clients in media and entertainment and consumer goods.

Rennie Curran (BBA ’17) of Stone Mountain was inducted into the Georgia High School Football Hall of Fame as part of the 40-member Class of 2023. A former linebacker who played for Brookwood High School, the Georgia Bulldogs, the NFL’s Tennessee Titans and in the Canadian Football League, he is a keynote speaker, leadership coach and author.
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