

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA TERRY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# TERRY

*Business of Food*

---

## CREAM *of the* CROP

*Alumni rise to success in  
the restaurant industry*

*page 14*

---



FALL/WINTER 2025

# LEADING IN THE AI ERA

**Tomorrow's business leaders must speak the language of artificial intelligence.** The Department of Management Information Systems is preparing Terry students to lead the conversation.

With your support, we can continue our efforts to:

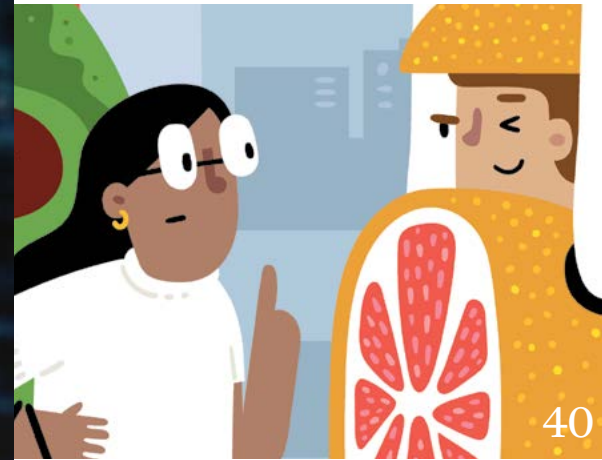
- Further enhance the new college-wide Certificate in Artificial Intelligence
- Attract and retain leading faculty experts
- Offer immersive, AI-focused experiential learning opportunities
- Provide a holistic AI education covering both possibilities and precautions

Terry students are eager to turn classroom curiosity into real-world change. Your gift to the Terry MIS Excellence Fund can help ensure our graduates are ready to lead effectively and ethically.

**MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY.**



UNIVERSITY OF  
GEORGIA  
Terry College of Business



40



14



34

## FEATURES

- 14 BITE BUSINESS**  
Alumni are carving out impressive careers in the culinary world.
- 37 25 YEARS OF TTT**  
The Terry Third Thursday speaker series continues to inspire.

- 34 BUILDING TERRY**  
Dean Ben Ayers guided the college through a period of remarkable growth.
- 40 WHAT'S THE DEAL?**  
Marketing researchers study grocery shoppers' perceptions of product value.

## DEPARTMENTS

- 6 FROM THE DEAN**
- 7 NEWS**  
College earns top 10 ranking; AI certificate, bond fund launch; Seven named to 40 Under 40; Chick-fil-A CEO speaks at ILA event
- 33 COMMUNITY**  
Faculty accomplishments and recognitions
- 43 CLASS NOTES**
- 49 PASSINGS**

THE BIG PICTURE

**HUG IT OUT:** Good vibes filled the air on the first day of fall semester, as students returned to the Business Learning Community to kick off the new school year.



Interim Dean Santanu Chatterjee

Associate Dean for Research and Executive Programs Michael D. Pfarrer

Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs Henry J. Munneke

Senior Director for Finance and Administration Sadie Brown

Senior Director of Development and Alumni Relations Katharine M. Ortstadt

Senior Director of Marketing and Communications Daniel W. Eggers

University Administration

President Jere W. Morehead

Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Benjamin C. Ayers

Terry Magazine Staff

Editor Gabe Vodicka

Art Director Leah Rooze

Staff Photographers Richard Hamm, Brian Powers

Contributing Writers Charles McNair, Merritt Melancon, Ed Morales

Contributing Illustrator Shaw Nielsen

Contact  
Gabe Vodicka  
Terry College of Business  
The University of Georgia  
Athens, Ga. 30602-6269  
(706) 542-8943  
gvodicka@uga.edu

Terry magazine is published by the Terry College of Business Office of Marketing and Communications

Cover photo by Brian Powers



Terry College of Business  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



facebook.com/terrycollege  
twitter.com/terrycollege  
instagram.com/terrycollege  
Find us on LinkedIn

## FROM THE INTERIM DEAN

### Leading in learning

**S**ustained excellence is only possible with strong leadership.

Over the past decade, Terry flourished under the direction of Dean Benjamin C. Ayers, growing in size and stature while achieving historic outcomes for our students and ensuring our faculty and staff have the resources needed to be successful and make an impact.

In large part because of his efforts at Terry, Dean Ayers was named UGA's senior vice president for academic affairs and provost. I join the Terry community in thanking Ben for his service as dean and congratulating him on this well-deserved promotion. Read more about the Ayers era on page 34.

As this magazine consistently highlights, Terry graduates find success with companies of all types and sizes, from startups to Fortune 500 multinationals. This issue shows they have also made a considerable mark on the restaurant industry. In the kitchen and boardroom, alumni are thriving in a famously challenging field. Read their stories beginning on page 14.

Many of these graduates credit their professional achievements to their Terry education. We are proud our academic offerings continue to garner national recognition. This fall, *U.S. News & World Report* ranked our undergraduate program No. 9 among public business schools. Every undergraduate major was also ranked, with four listed among the top 10 public programs. Additionally, our Full-Time MBA program was ranked No. 7 among public business schools by *Bloomberg Businessweek*.

Looking to the future, there is much to anticipate, beginning with the Certificate in Artificial Intelligence for Terry undergraduates. As AI education is increasingly critical, we are incorporating it across our curriculum to ensure students are prepared to ethically and effectively harness new technologies in the pursuit of better business. At the graduate level, we partnered with the UGA School of Social Work to launch two degree programs centered on social innovation: an MBA-MSW and MBA-Master of Arts in Nonprofit Management and Leadership.

And thanks to key partnerships, we created the Arch Bond Fund, allowing students in the Student Managed Investment Fund program to manage a bond portfolio, giving them early exposure to fixed-income investing and opening doors to more internship and job opportunities.

It is the support of our alumni and friends that enables us to provide these types of learning opportunities and ensure Terry remains at the forefront of business teaching and research. I am honored to serve in the role of interim dean as we continue to advance our mission of educating and inspiring future leaders.

Sincerely,

Santanu Chatterjee, *Interim Dean*  
*Dr. Harold A. Black Distinguished Professor and Josiah Meigs Distinguished Teaching Professor, John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics*  
busdean@uga.edu



# news



## Nuggets of wisdom

Page 12

Chick-fil-A CEO shares insights at Terry event

Photo by Brian Powers



# Programs earn top rankings

The bachelor's program at the Terry College of Business is ranked a top 10 public program in the latest survey of undergraduate business schools from *U.S. News & World Report*. Terry's undergraduate program ranked in the top 20 among all business schools for the first time, up four spots to No. 19. Among public business schools, Terry's undergraduate program is ranked No. 9 — also a record best — up from 13th last year. For the second straight year, every Terry undergraduate major was ranked, with four of the college's eight majors ranked among the nation's top 10 public programs. Business analytics, an undergraduate program offered as a 12-credit hour area of emphasis, was ranked No. 11 among public business schools. The C. Herman Terry Risk Management and Insurance Program, with the largest RMI major in the country, led all insurance programs at No. 1 overall for the sixth consecutive year. Terry's Real Estate Program ranked No. 4 overall (No. 2 public). Real Estate has averaged a top 5 national ranking over the past 25 years of the *U.S. News* survey. Management

Information Systems (No. 9 public and No. 13 overall) and Finance (No. 10 public and No. 26 overall) are Terry's other top 10 public programs. Among public business schools, Management ranked No. 12, Marketing ranked No. 12, and Accounting No. 15. The John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics received a top 30 public ranking for the third straight year. In addition, Niche.com recently ranked Terry in its top 10 "Best Colleges for Business in America." The website ranked Terry's undergraduate program No. 7 overall and No. 1 among public universities. At the graduate level, Terry's Full-Time MBA ranks No. 23 in the U.S. and No. 7 among public schools according to *Bloomberg Businessweek* — the program's highest rankings to date. The ranking is based on scores in five key areas, with nearly 70 top-tier MBA programs ranked on compensation, learning, networking, entrepreneurship and inclusion. "We've seen the reputation of the Terry College of Business reach unprecedented heights over the past decade," said Interim Dean Santanu Chatterjee. "These rankings reflect the key aspects of our instructional mission, including an exceptionally strong learning environment, excellent career support and employment rates for our students, and outstanding work by our faculty and staff."



The inaugural Arch Bond Fund cohort includes more than 30 students managing a \$1.46 million portfolio.

## Arch Bond Fund launches

If stocks are the roller coasters of the investing world — exciting and unpredictable — then bonds are the Ferris wheel — steadier and more reliable. Any solid investor will tell you that having a mix of both is a strong pathway toward financial success. For nearly two decades, the Student Managed Investment Fund (SMIF) at the Terry College has offered finance students the opportunity to steer the twists and turns of an active investment stock portfolio. But now, Terry has a new learning attraction for students to ride. An initial investment of \$250,000 from Bay Point Advisors, paired with \$1 million over five years from Angel Oak Capital Advisors and an additional \$1 million from the UGA Foundation investment committee, gives the 33 students in the initial Arch Bond Fund cohort \$1.46 million to manage a real bond portfolio. They join the 55 students in the Athena Stock Fund who oversee a portfolio of \$3.9 million across 11 different sectors represented by 40 individual stock holdings. The Arch Bond Fund was born when Charles Andros (BBA '95), president and managing partner at Bay Point Advisors, met with former Terry dean and now UGA provost Ben Ayers to explore the feasibility of adding a bond component to SMIF. Ayers reached out to Johannes Kohler, senior lecturer in the Department of Finance and SMIF faculty advisor, who affirmed the concept's viability, noting strong student interest and academic value. Three students make up the fund's executive leadership committee. Sharing the role of co-president are Patrick Ingalls, a finance major and Institute for Leadership Advancement Fellow who spent the previous summer as an analyst at Bay Point Advisors and double finance/accounting major David Giardi, who finished an investment banking internship at Canaccord Genuity. The role of portfolio manager is occupied by Leon Cohen, a double finance/political science major who interned with Goldman Sachs this summer. Students in the Arch Bond Fund will manage a live portfolio; develop career-ready skills in credit research, portfolio analytics and risk mitigation; and gain competitive access to high-profile internships and full-time roles in fixed income, asset management and financial services. An Arch Bond Fund Advisory Board, comprised of senior-level professionals and investment executives, will provide insight, mentorship and strategic direction to ensure student managers develop an understanding of credit analysis, risk management and portfolio construction.

## Four named to endowed chairs and professorships



McCARTHY

David McCarthy, associate professor in the C. Herman Terry Risk Management and Insurance Program, was appointed the McCart Family Distinguished Professor of Risk Management and Insurance. McCarthy joined Terry in 2016 and is the first faculty member to hold the professorship.



CALLAWAY

Brantly Callaway, associate professor in the John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics, was appointed the P. George Benson Professor. Since joining Terry in 2020, Callaway has emerged as a leading scholar in econometrics.



GAMACHE

Daniel Gamache, professor of management, was named Terry Dean's Advisory Council Distinguished Professor. Gamache, who joined Terry in 2015, studies decision-making in the C-suite, the psychological traits of CEOs and how compensation considerations and reputation affect CEO behavior.



MATTA

Fadel Matta, professor of management, was named the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry Chair of Business Administration. Matta came to UGA in 2016 and studies how employees' emotions and perceptions of fairness affect business productivity and the relationships between leaders and their direct reports.

# Boehringer partnership wins award



Representatives from Boehringer Ingelheim and UGA accepted the Phoenix Award in August.

UGA's partnership with Boehringer Ingelheim has impacted lives and industry and now boasts a Golden Helix Phoenix Award for its Sustainable Development Experience (SDX) program.

This award, sponsored by the Metro Atlanta Chamber and presented by Georgia Life Sciences, celebrates an industry/academic collaboration that exemplifies how strategic partnerships can accelerate discovery, fuel commercialization and create meaningful impact for patients and communities.

Including sections on the environment, human and animal health, workplace culture and corporate critical thinking, the SDX certificate program pairs Boehringer employees with UGA academics to promote better business practices. Terry College Executive Education was responsible for bringing together all the necessary partners to make the program work.

Under three strategic pillars — More Green, More Health and More Potential — the program gathered instructors from across campus to lead training sessions and craft lectures that match company goals.

# Terry introduces AI certificate



SCHETER

The Terry College continues to ensure graduates have the tools to thrive in tomorrow's business environment by offering one of the first undergraduate business certificates in artificial intelligence.

The certificate program is a five-course series introducing students to AI foundations, Python programming, AI ethics and concepts such as machine learning, predictive analytics and natural language processing. It's a mix of technical courses and electives for students to learn and practice using AI skills in business settings.

AI researcher Aaron Schecter, associate professor of management information systems, is program director. He planned the curriculum after talking to business leaders about what skills they want to see in new hires.

"We based the curriculum on what companies are using AI for and what our advisory board members said they needed," Schecter said. "You need to be technical enough to know how to use AI tools to do basic things, but also know enough to manage a team implementing these types of systems. You need to understand the challenges and the capabilities."

While every student may not need to be able to program, it is important to learn how to use AI tools effectively, Schecter said.

"If I were an undergraduate, I would take at least a few courses that would help me become familiar with AI," he said. "If you're not able to use this technology, you're probably going to get passed over. ... It's not so much people being replaced with AI. It's people who use AI replacing people who don't."



BLISS



FOYE



HASLAM



HENDRICKS



MARTINEZ



MACDONALD



YANCEY



# Seven named to UGA 40 Under 40

The 2025 honorees of UGA's 40 Under 40 include seven graduates who earned a degree from the Terry College of Business.

**Dave Bliss** (AB '07, BBA '08) is an assistant coach for the National Basketball Association's Oklahoma City Thunder, winners of the NBA Finals in June. He majored in real estate. He provides mentorship and guidance to student-athletes through the UGA Athletics department and gives back to Terry's Real Estate Program.

**Shane P. Foye** (BBA '15) is president of DW1, a family-owned business specializing in job site services for contractors, retail facilities, manufacturing, distribution centers and more. He majored in finance and remains engaged with the college through the Leadership Dawgs program, speaking engagements and financial support.

**Kate Haslam** (BBA '10) is a principal at Baker Tilly. She was an accounting major and remains connected to the university through the UGA Mentor Program, the Terry Talks series and student recruitment.

**Nick Hendricks** (BBA '09) is a senior vice president at IMA Financial Group. He was a risk management and insurance major and serves on the Terry Young Alumni Board, mentors students and is establishing a scholarship fund to support future RMI majors.

**Mike Macdonald** (BBA '10, MS '13) is the head coach of the National Football League's Seattle Seahawks. He was a finance major and a Leonard Leadership Scholar in the Institute for Leadership Advancement and remains engaged with the university through speaking engagements and mentorship.

**Alia C. Martinez** (BBA '10, MBA '17) is a senior platform manager at Chick-fil-A. She was a marketing major and earned her MBA at Terry and serves as philanthropy co-chair of the UGA Black Alumni Leadership Council, which recently celebrated reaching \$1 million in its scholarship endowment fund.

**Harley Yancey IV** (BBA '11, JD '15) is the president of State Mutual Insurance Company. He majored in management information systems and is a member of the UGA Law School Alumni Council, a former member of the Young Alumni Committee, and connects with students through the UGA Mentor Program.



NEWS: ALUMNI

## Chick-fil-A CEO returns home to UGA



By the time he was 6, Andrew T. Cathy remembers standing atop an overturned pickle bucket, filleting chicken and handing out sample nuggets to mall customers. But while Chick-fil-A has always been part of his life, it wasn't clear he'd grow up to work in his family business — much less become the company's CEO.

"My parents never put any pressure on me," Cathy told a crowd of students at the University of Georgia Chapel on Sept. 9. "They were adamant that, 'You have to do what you feel like your passions are and what you feel like God is calling you to do.'" Cathy was at UGA as part of the Shoukry Leadership Speaker Series hosted by Terry's Institute for Leadership Advancement.

As a young man, he wrestled with two passions. On the one hand, he loved business. As an undergraduate at UGA, he would sneak into MBA classes to learn about advanced finance. He day traded through college, when trading online was still in its infancy.

On the other hand, he wanted to have a direct impact on the lives of others. He had a coach in middle school who helped him immensely, and he wanted to be that person for others.

"I was torn," he said. "But I thought, 'If I don't teach or coach, I'll always wonder if that was my calling.'"

After graduating from UGA, Cathy spent a few years teaching and coaching football and track. While it's been more than two decades since his time in a classroom, being a teacher still informs his views on leadership and service.

"To get the very best out of somebody (as a coach), you've got to really get to know what drives and motivates them. ... It's the same thing with business... you have to adapt as a leader and know each person well to get the best out of them."

Cathy held several roles at Chick-fil-A. In 2020, when his father told him he was planning to step down and asked him to serve as CEO, he felt he wasn't quite ready.

"I think that you never feel prepared for the biggest opportunities," he said. "But if you dig in and learn from others, you can grow into the role."

Even with Chick-fil-A's success, there's still room for innovation and growth, Cathy said.

"For businesses — even those that have been at the very top of the game for years — it's important that while they maintain their core values and purpose, they evolve and change. It's incumbent upon all of us that we are constantly growing and learning." 📌

Students filled the UGA Chapel for the biannual Shoukry Leadership Speaker Series featuring Andrew Cathy.

PREPARE FOR 2026  
**REGISTER NOW**

[terry.uga.edu/eo](http://terry.uga.edu/eo)

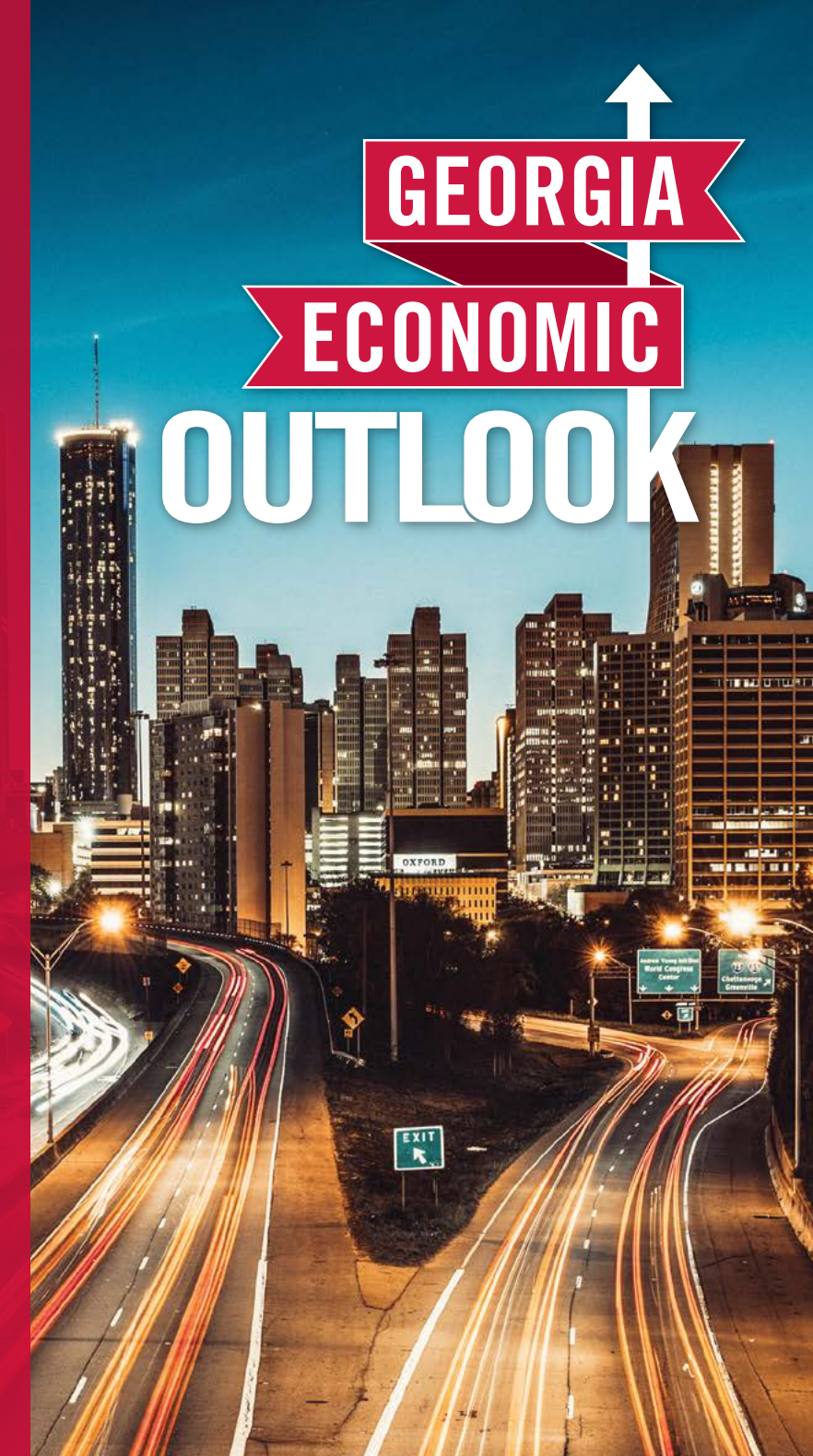
ATLANTA	DEC 10, 2025
SAVANNAH	JAN 7, 2026
JEKYLL	JAN 8, 2026
MACON	JAN 23, 2026
COLUMBUS	JAN 27, 2026
ALBANY	JAN 28, 2026
ATHENS	FEB 4, 2026
AUGUSTA	FEB 10, 2026

Join Georgia's top business leaders for expert economic insights, networking, and strategies to navigate the year ahead. Don't miss the Georgia Economic Outlook luncheon!



Terry College of Business  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

**GEORGIA**  
**ECONOMIC**  
**OUTLOOK**



Gold Sponsors



Silver Sponsors



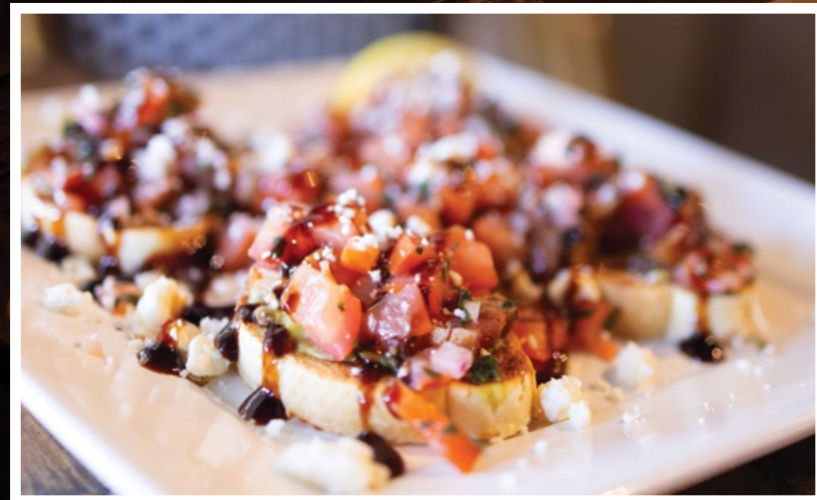
Bronze Sponsors



Media Sponsors



# TERRY TASTEMAKERS



**A** Terry College of Business degree opens many doors for graduates. Some of those doors just happen to lead to a kitchen.

Take a peek behind the scenes of the restaurant business and it won't be long before you come across a Terry grad cooking up career success. Whether crunching numbers or creating menus, balancing books or building flavors, these alums play crucial roles in keeping a key industry functioning — and keeping the rest of us fed.

As chefs and CFOs, entrepreneurs and chief executives, alumni are making their mark in the world of food, putting their Terry education to use in distinctive — and delicious — ways.

**BECAUSE FOR THESE TASTEMAKERS, FOOD ISN'T JUST LIFE — IT'S THEIR LIFE'S WORK.**



# QUESO AND COMMUNITY



**P**ranav Patel still remembers his first taco. “It was my friend Christian’s fifth birthday party,” he says with a wistful smile. “It was just lettuce and ground beef, and I thought it was the most amazing thing I’d ever had in my entire life.”

The menu at The Taco Stache, Patel’s restaurant in his hometown of Pooler, Georgia, is rooted in that childhood memory – but there’s more going on than crunchy shells and shredded cheese.

“You think tacos, you think easy,” says Patel (BBA ’08). “It’s actually (not). We are a sports bar, so we’ve got wings and nachos. We’ve got fries and tots, but we also have really complex flavor profiles for our tacos. We make all the sauces, seasonings, rubs – everything’s made in-house from scratch.”

Photos by Brian Powers



**“SMALL BUSINESSES ARE THE ONES WHO ARE GIVING BACK TO THE COMMUNITIES.”**



With The Taco Stache and its adjacent sister restaurant, the full-service Italian joint The Sauce, Patel draws on a love of hospitality inspired by his parents.

“They hosted parties, and they always made sure to cook a lot of food. ... I grew up with that kind of notion – to always be a great host. That’s what really drew me to the restaurant industry.”

His start in the business came during high school, when he worked his way up at a local restaurant from the dish pit to become a line cook. Then came college at UGA, where he graduated with a degree in risk management and insurance and took a corporate job before his true passion came calling once again.

“I started looking at franchises,” he says. “But once I went down that route, I realized (the companies) have a lot of control. I decided I didn’t want to do business like that. And I thought, ‘You know what, I’m going to open up my own concept.’”

The Taco Stache came first, followed by The Sauce, both of which proved wildly popular. Now, Patel and his partners with 2Vibes Concepts Group are underway on several more projects, including a rooftop bar and restaurant and a “high-end cocktail speakeasy lounge” in nearby Savannah. And Taco Stache expansion is top of mind.

As his business grows, Patel continues the community involvement he learned in small-town Pooler by donating a percentage of profits to local charities, serving on multiple boards and sponsoring youth sports.

“I played rec sports, and I always had a business’s name on the back of my shirt,” he says. “I didn’t know that what that meant was they’re (helping us) afford equipment and uniforms. They’re helping us do what we love.”

“My goal is to help the youth, the future of our country. I think it’s important to remember that small businesses are the ones who are giving back to the communities that they’re a part of.” - Gabe Vodicka

## FAVORITE TASTE

*“When Taco Bell decided to slash its Mexican Pizza, there were a lot of angry people in the Indian community, because it’s a huge vegetarian dish. So we decided to introduce our version. I’ve had people from all over the country ask me to freeze it and ship it to them, because it’s so good.”*



# EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

**A** Terry degree gets jobs at lots of places.

Like Wendy's.

In 1977, **Chris Elliott** took a management job at an Athens Wendy's. Before graduation, he'd burned the midnight oil eight straight quarters... and burned through his finances. He needed money.

"I got teased about getting a college degree to work in a fast-food restaurant," Elliott remembers. "But I liked the pace and the challenges, and I really liked managing people."

Wendy's liked him. Within 18 months, Elliott (BBA '77) was a district manager with a company car. He pulled down \$18,000 in 1978 — about \$90,000 today.



Elliott grew up in Tallapoosa, Georgia, with just 2,900 neighbors. In 1974, the UGA campus had 20,000 students. "I felt intimidated in my first class," he recalls. "The students seemed so worldly, more sophisticated and smarter. I felt I had to prove I belonged."

Elliott learned outside the classroom, too. Early in his career, a Coca-Cola dispenser malfunctioned during a busy lunch rush, spraying Coke across the restaurant he managed.

"At first I panicked," Elliott laughs. "I had no idea what was happening and there was only me to solve the problem. So I got down on my hands and knees, with Coke spewing in my face, and figured out how to turn off a carbonator."

"Moments like that build your confidence. When problems come up,

you can't run from them. You dive in head first."

Today, Elliott works in Tampa. He's been married to his wife, Jill, for 25 years. ("Don't tell anybody," he says, "but she was a cheerleader at Georgia Tech.") They love to travel with their children, both college students. And they love playing dominoes.

His advice to Terry students?

"My accounting degree has served me well," Elliott says, "but don't let your major pigeonhole you. Find a career that fits you personally."

He adds, "Also, remember that you don't get ahead in life by meeting expectations. You get there by exceeding them. Doing things you're not comfortable with is where you grow."

- Charles McNair

## FAVORITE TASTE

"I LIKE OUR WINGS, COOKED A LITTLE EXTRA TO MAKE THEM CRISPY, THEN SERVED WITH OUR BUFFALO WING SAUCE."



Elliott went on to serve 15 years at Pizza Hut, rising to senior director of operations over 448 restaurants in the Florida division. He subsequently held top positions at Morrison's Fresh Cooking, Church's Chicken, Cinnabon and Fiesta Brands.

Since 2010, Elliott has been CEO at FSC Franchise Corp., overseeing three national brands — Beef O Brady's, The Brass Tap, and Newk's — with 280 locations and \$500 million in annual sales.

"We've driven positive sales for 12 of the past 14 years," Elliott says proudly. "There's been a lot of Terry College accounting at work."

Elliott fondly recalls classes with the late Earl Davis, a revered professor in the J.M. Tull School of Accounting. "Dr. Davis's class started at 8 o'clock, when he locked the door, no late admissions," Elliott says. "That discipline reinforced my natural instincts about being on time, dependable and fully present."

## "DOING THINGS YOU'RE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH IS WHERE YOU GROW."



# A CHEF WITH MANY HATS

“Growing up, I refused to order off the kids’ menu,” says **Matt Needle** (BBA ’15). “I would order sushi. And everyone’s looking at me crazy.”

Needle’s culinary curiosity came naturally: his dad owned a restaurant, and cooking was a shared family passion.

He got his first restaurant job at 15, scrubbing dishes and bussing tables at an Atlanta cafe. He quickly became hooked. “I loved it,” he says. “The owner was incredible and let me see everything.”

When it came time to consider a career, there was no question.



His skills and work ethic propelled him forward. He became Superica’s executive chef, then culinary director, before assuming the same role at sister restaurant Little Rey. There, his Terry education took center stage.

“I was able to start laying a foundation: how do we expand this brand?” he says. “How do we build? How do we maintain consistency and profitability across multiple stores?”

At Little Rey, Needle wears many hats. “I do a little bit of everything. I might

put on my engineering cap one day. I might hop out on the floor and talk to guests. I might jump in the kitchen and cook. I might be behind the computer putting together systems.

“It’s why the restaurant industry works so well for me,” he continues, “because I don’t sit still. The typical finance job would have been a challenge. But applying it as a piece of the puzzle — how to take a restaurant, grow it, expand it, make it successful — that’s what I really love.” - *Gabe Vodicka*

## FAVORITE TASTE

*“Our pollo al carbón, which is a slow-smoked half chicken. We brine and marinate them, then cook them in a custom wood smoker until they get really tender, but crispy and smoky on the outside. That gets served with jalapeños, onions, rice, beans and tortillas. And we’ve got a salsa bar with salsas we make fresh every day.”*



“I loved cooking,” he says. “I wanted to do it for the rest of my life. But my parents kind of pushed me and said, ‘Do what you love, but find a way to make money doing it.’”

Rather than attend culinary school, Needle enrolled at UGA, where he majored in finance.

“It’s the best decision I ever made,” he says, “learning the business side of it, because it applies to everything.”

While at Terry, he took a dishwasher job at Athens farm-to-table restaurant Heirloom Cafe, where he impressed the owners with his cooking ability and eagerness to learn.

“I worked hard to keep up with the dishes, because I knew if I was ahead on that, I could say, ‘Hey, can you teach me something? Do you need any prep? Do you need potatoes cut? I can use a knife, and I’m willing to learn.’”

By his senior year, he was the restaurant’s executive sous chef.

After graduation, Needle spent nine months with a burger chain, where he got a feel for managing operations across multiple locations. He then joined Atlanta Tex-Mex mainstay Superica, serving as sous chef for the restaurant’s location at The Battery.

**“I LOVED COOKING.  
I WANTED TO DO  
IT FOR THE REST  
OF MY LIFE.”**

# A LOCAL LEGACY

Shortly after the turn of the millennium, after two decades as a stockbroker, **Chris Lloyd** (BBA '80) sensed it was time for a change.

"I saw what the internet was doing to most businesses," he says. "I remember watching a Super Bowl commercial for Schwab, and they're talking about no commissions. And I went, 'OK, this could change my industry in a hurry.'"

Lloyd, who helped manage a bar and restaurant as a UGA undergrad, knew food, and he knew Athens.

Specifically, he knew what Athens was missing: a locally owned and operated steakhouse, an alternative to the chains cropping up along the Atlanta Highway corridor.



Photos by Richard Hamm

**"IF YOU'RE PUTTING OUT A GOOD PRODUCT AT A GOOD PRICE WITH GOOD SERVICE, PEOPLE WANT TO KEEP COMING BACK."**



"I knew I could open right up the street from Longhorn but do it a little better, give a different feel," Lloyd recalls.

Recruiting a former client as a business partner ("He was the equity. I was the sweat," Lloyd says) and with the guidance of his architect brother-in-law, Lloyd set forth renovating the old Shoney's on West Broad Street. In 2002, Hilltop Grille opened its doors.

With its classic menu and convivial service, Hilltop attracted a large and loyal customer base, establishing itself as one of Athens' essential eateries over the next decade.

By 2013, its founder was ready for his next local venture.

The vacant house at the busy intersection of Milledge and Lumpkin had recently been granted historic status, shielding it from demolition but placing it in a sort of real estate purgatory. Lloyd saw an opportunity — and he knew the property owner.

"He's a good friend of mine, John Barrett," says Lloyd. "I said, 'John, I want to put a restaurant there.' And he said, 'If you get it rezoned, it's all yours.' So I did."

Again, Lloyd's instincts paid off. With a breezy vibe and fresh seafood fare, Marker 7 Coastal Grill became one of a new wave of Five Points restaurants, transforming the neighborhood into a dining destination. "All the students up and down Milledge used to go downtown (to eat)," he says. "They hang around here now."

Lloyd credits much of his success to the teams he built, employees he trusts to carry out his vision with an eye on the details that can make or break a restaurant.

"You have to have people who care," he says. "My managers do a great job. They came up working at (local restaurants). They know the business, and they know who to hire."

Lloyd, who turns 70 next year, is looking to those employees to continue his legacy. He's finalizing plans to sell Hilltop Grille to one of his longtime managers and says he'll likely do the same with Marker 7 in the coming years.

The message he'll pass to them is simple. "If you're putting out a good product at a good price with good service," he says, "people want to keep coming back." - *Gabe Vodicka*

## FAVORITE TASTE

*"The fried shrimp at Hilltop Grille - we sell that more than anything else. I hear it all the time from people: 'This is better than when we go down to the beach!'"*



# HAM LIKE A HUG

How famous is Honey Baked Ham?

On “The Tonight Show” after Johnny Carson’s 1985 divorce, the late-night host offered words to this effect to sidekick Ed McMahon:

“She got the house. She got the car. But it’s OK — I got the Honey Baked Ham.”

“It’s an iconic American brand,” laughs **Linda van Rees** (BBA ’85), board member and former chairman of The Honey Baked Ham Co. She’s a granddaughter of company founder Harry J. Hoenselaar and an articulate champion of a celebrated dish familiar at holiday tables, tailgates, weddings, funerals and other special gatherings.



Photo by Brian Powers

“I’d always bought Honey Baked Ham, so I knew the quality,” Dinkins says. “It was a 60-plus-year family business based in Alpharetta. The family generously provided information and plans. I couldn’t say no.”

With Dinkins as CEO and van Rees as chairman, HBH boosted holiday sales, simplified online buying, added stores and franchises and made an acquisition.

“We’ve grown the top line plus-30 percent and the bottom line plus-40 percent in the last four-and-a-half years,” Dinkins says.

Dinkins and van Rees bring a double portion of Terry to HBH.

Jim was readied for business, he said, by a coat-and-tie accounting professor

who drilled students with pointed questions.

As a management information systems major, van Rees found her classes “taught me a very high level of problem-solving.”

The Honey Baked Ham family culture encourages private time. Van Rees rides horses. Dinkins and his wife golf together.

“We strongly believe that the family history of Honey Baked Ham has helped shape the warm culture of our stores,” van Rees says. “One customer told us, when it comes to food, a Honey Baked Ham on the table is the closest thing she knows to a hug.” - Charles McNair

## FAVORITE TASTES

**LINDA:** “I make an Italian lentil soup, and I add a Honey Baked Ham bone. It brings such complexity, a distinct flavor profile. It’s so amazing.”

**JIM:** “We came out a couple of years ago with ham and turkey sliders. I’ll get a tray of 12, and they make a meal or a snack or a breakfast or a tailgate dish. I’ve used them all those ways.”



Courtesy of Honey Baked Ham

“Honey Baked Ham is an artisanal product,” van Rees says. “From the selection of the meat to the smoke schedule and humidity and the glaze that’s added by hand in every store, all is done with great personal care. We deeply appreciate the fact that our products are part of important family occasions.”

Honey Baked Ham is, in fact, a family story. The four daughters of the Detroit-based founder, along with their husbands, took the business to separate parts of the country. Linda’s mother, Carol, and father, Richard, came to the Southeast, and it became the largest operation by far. Linda took over from her father in the early 1990s. When the family consolidated operations in a complex five-way merger, Linda found herself running more than 400 stores in 40 states. Post-pandemic, she looked for help.

**Jim Dinkins** (BBA ’84) just finished a 29-year career at The Coca-Cola Co., retiring as president of North America.



“WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT THE FAMILY HISTORY OF HONEY BAKED HAM HAS HELPED SHAPE THE WARM CULTURE OF OUR STORES.”

# BURGER BOSS



**J**oe Nedza was drowning in waffles. His roving Hong Kong-style egg waffle stand, which he started as a fourth-year student at UGA, proved so successful he opened a brick-and-mortar restaurant, Nedza's, on Lumpkin Street.

As the store's customer base expanded, so did its menu, which featured the Instagram-worthy, ice cream-stuffed waffle cones, bespoke doughnuts, elaborate biscuit sandwiches, loaded grit bowls, candy-filled cookies, and various other Wonka-esque concoctions.

It all sprang from Nedza's boundless imagination — and it was all starting to feel like too much.

"We just had a lot," says Nedza (BBA '16). "It was confusing. It took a lot of work. And it was a lot of hours for not a lot of money. "My life was so chaotic," he adds. "I had to simplify."

Photos by Richard Hamm



**"THIS IS WHAT I'M GOING TO DO.**

**THIS IS HOW I'M GOING TO DO IT.**

**IT WAS IMMEDIATELY CLEAR AS DAY."**



In late 2022, Nedza's closed its doors. But the space didn't stay empty for long.

After soft-launching at pop-ups around Athens, Nedza opened the first Baddie's Burger House, serving up lacy smash burgers, crispy fries and homemade banana pudding — and nothing else.

The streamlined concept came wholly formed in a vision, says Nedza.

"I woke up one morning and it was like, 'This is what I'm going to do. This is how I'm going to do it. We're going to do one burger one way, fresh-cut fries and my pudding.' It was immediately clear as day."

Nedza may not have always known he'd be in the burger business. But he knew he wanted to be his own boss.

"My dad was an entrepreneur. His dad was an entrepreneur," he says. "I never wanted to be held hostage. I've watched people start a business, but then they need to raise a bunch of money or hire someone who can do the thing that allows them to make money. Restaurants were a thing where I was like, 'No one can hold me hostage.'"

Over the last two years, Baddie's boomed. A Watkinsville outpost opened in 2024. This summer, a third location appeared in Athens' Normaltown neighborhood.

Nedza doesn't plan to stop there, though for now he's committed to the "slow, painful growth" of sole ownership, rather than explore franchising opportunities.

"I'm obsessive about learning and becoming a better leader," he explains. "And now I have people I'm responsible to and for. I've got a family, I've got a mortgage. ... My philosophy is people who (grow) too fast miss the in-between problems. And the way we're growing, they're impossible to miss."

Still, don't mistake Nedza's intentionality for a lack of ambition.

"I want to grow slowly," he says with a smile. "But I want the biggest business, the most successful business ever. My plan is to have Baddie's all over the world." - Gabe Vodicka

## FAVORITE TASTE:

*"I THINK THE THING I'M MOST PROUD OF IS OUR PUDDING, BECAUSE IT'S VERY UNIQUE. WE DID THIS BLUEBERRY MUFFIN FLAVOR THE OTHER MONTH. IT WAS INSANE."*





# CHICKEN SALAD CHIEF

**S**cott Deviney, CEO of Chicken Salad Chick, has grown his enterprise tenfold in 10 years — from 32 restaurants in six states when he started in May 2015 to 309 eateries in 22 states today. He plans to serve customers in 30 states by year-end 2026.

“Chicken Salad Chick is all about people,” says Deviney (AB ’95). “It’s about taking care of our restaurant and franchise teams, taking care of our guests. Making chicken salad fresh, every day, from scratch, is our way to love on people.”

Deviney grew up in Carrollton, Georgia. His stepdad had a 44-year career at Southwire, and his mom worked in banking.

**“MAKING CHICKEN SALAD FRESH, EVERY DAY, FROM SCRATCH, IS OUR WAY TO LOVE ON PEOPLE.”**



Photos by Brian Powers



“They gave me something of tremendous value,” he says, “my work ethic. I learned that when things have to be done, you go do them.”

Deviney started professionally at SunTrust Bank, where he put in 13 years, including time in a food and beverage group. In 2008, he left banking to buy 19 Wendy’s fast-food restaurants. Six years later, he sold those, plus a few added along the way, then looked for new opportunities.

He bought Chicken Salad Chick with a private equity partner. The business had been hatched in Auburn, Alabama, in 2008 by Kevin Brown and his wife, Stacy, who named her various chicken salad blends (Fancy Nancy, Classic Carol, Kickin’ Kay Lynne) after female family and friends.

Deviney moved headquarters to Atlanta and began spreading the chicken salad gospel.

His Terry training played a role.

“I remember intermediate macroeconomics well,” Deviney says. “Dr. (David) Kamerschen required us to read *The Wall Street Journal* in class, and he broke down the articles so we understood exactly how they related to the real world. He really opened the eyes of this naïve kid from Carrollton.”

Deviney’s first job was pumping gas at a full-service filling station at age 15. He now spends time filling tummies and giving back as a member of the Terry Dean’s Advisory Council. He enjoys spending time with his wife, Kristy (BSFCS ’01), and their three children, one in college and two busy in high school. When he can, he plays a little golf.

Deviney enjoys helping others get their own taste of success. He fondly tells of a team member who started out as a cashier and has worked her way up to be part-owner of a restaurant.

“Franchising truly is the American Dream of entrepreneurship with a little backstop behind you,” says Deviney. “I’m very proud to be part of a business with the systems in place and brand recognition to help people reach their dreams by working hard and becoming successful. I have fallen in love with that aspect of Chicken Salad Chick.”

- Charles McNair

## FAVORITE TASTE

*“The Jalapeno Holly Melt. Two years ago, we rolled out chicken salad melts. You choose your flavor of chicken salad, put it on a croissant, add cheese and run it through a toaster. Along with our grape salad, I could eat this every day!”*

# A STARR CFO

**T**hink about this: Nowhere but in the restaurant industry do you purchase, prepare, sell and collect — all in one day.

**Nancy Furr** (BBA '93) is very good at accounting for every part of that complex process.

Since December 2024, she's been CFO at Starr Restaurants, a prominent restaurant group renowned for culinary artistry and cutting-edge design. Philadelphia-born founder Stephen Starr oversees 40 restaurants in the U.S. and internationally that have earned Michelin stars and other awards. In 2017, Starr was named Outstanding Restaurateur by the James Beard Foundation.



Photos by Brian Powers

Furr next dove into the CPA world, first in Greensboro, Georgia, with a local accounting firm, then in Madison at her first job in the food industry as a staff accountant at Avado Brands. She was an assistant controller at Reynolds Plantation for four years, then moved on to Ted's Montana Grill.

"When I was introduced as controller to Ted Turner," Furr recalls of the restaurant chain's colorful namesake, "he grinned at me and asked, 'Do you have everything under control?'"

It turned out she did, pretty much. Furr put in 13 years at Ted's. Then, with

the children mostly grown — two of her sons are Terry grads too, as is her dad and her husband, Kevin (BBA '18) — she couldn't resist the challenge of working and living in a new city.

"I've had an interesting path, for sure," Furr says. "It's been full of incredible experiences for a girl who grew up 100 miles from Athens. I may be in Philadelphia now, but I'm really never too far from home."

- Charles McNair

## FAVORITE TASTE

*"One of our most successful dishes is one of my favorites: the escargot from Parc, here in Philadelphia. Instead of getting the escargot in a pan, like most places, ours comes in a little cast-iron pot with mushrooms and hazelnut butter. It's not too expensive... but even if it were, it would be worth blowing the budget."*



His secret sauce?

"Stephen has a maniacal eye for detail," Furr says. "Every touchpoint — where customers sit, the linens they unfold, the china, glassware, food service — it's all thought out in a way I've never seen before in the restaurant industry."

Furr followed a wandering path to Starr.

She grew up in Gwinnett County, a Bulldog fan. Her family went to football games and tailgated, and Nancy wore pigtails "with a red bow on one and a black bow on the other."

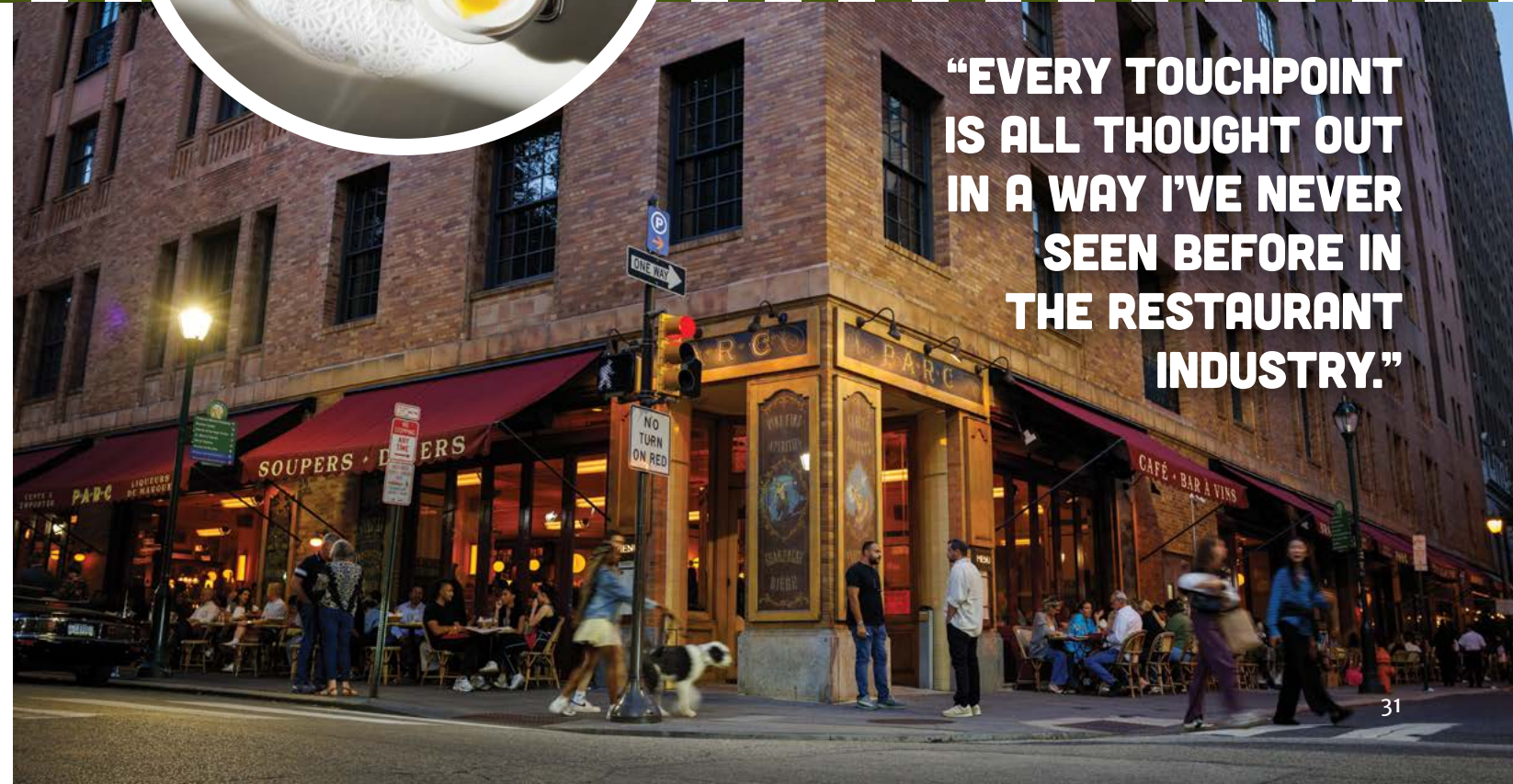
Of course, she chose UGA for college, where Terry's accounting classes ignited a passion.

"The professors drew me into the degree where I would sit in my room and balance my finances to a penny before I went out on social occasions," she confesses. "When I got through Terry, I was a black-and-white, debit-and-credit girl."

Furr wanted to see the world, so she traveled as a flight attendant for two years with American Airlines. She came home to Gwinnett, worked with her folks in real estate, then joined SunTrust Bank.

A life change left her a single mother with two young kids. Undaunted, she earned a master's at the University of Virginia Darden School of Business.

**"EVERY TOUCHPOINT IS ALL THOUGHT OUT IN A WAY I'VE NEVER SEEN BEFORE IN THE RESTAURANT INDUSTRY."**





## EVEN MORE ATHENS EATS

Find yourself in the Classic City on occasion? Here are a few other Terry alums whose businesses you can support while in town.

For a quick caffeine fix, stop by **Sunroof Coffee** on Tracy Street north of downtown. Founded by UGA Entrepreneurship grads **Reid Finnegan** (BBA '23) and **Nick Alliston** (BBA '23), the smartly branded shop sits in a new mixed-use development near the Chase Park Warehouses and serves up quality espresso, matcha, affogato and other delights.

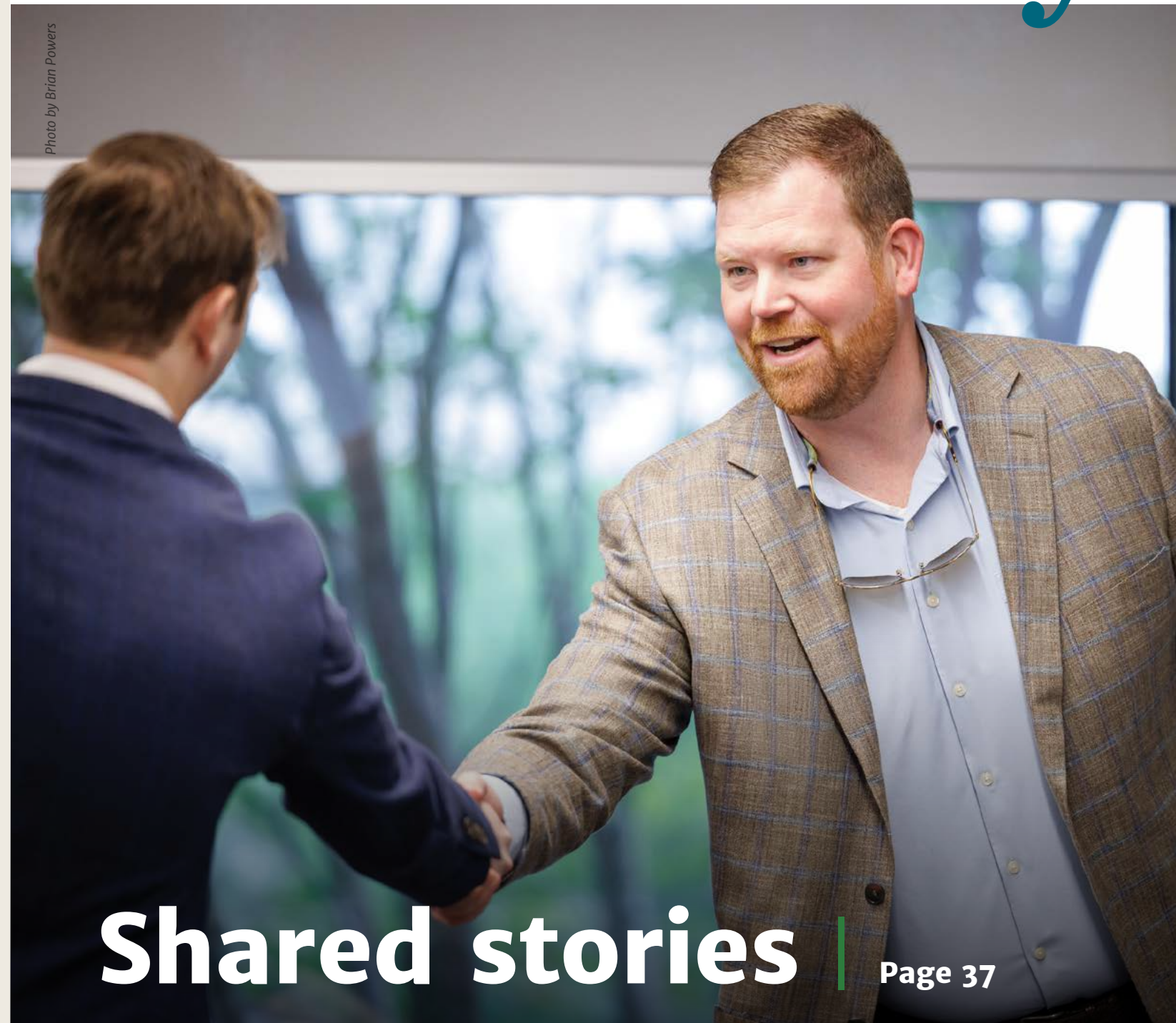
Feeding a crowd on game day? Place an order with **Saucehouse**, owned by **Chris Belk** (AB '05, MBA '13). The catering offshoot of the former brick-and-mortar barbecue restaurant offers your choice of slow-smoked meats and tasty sides, plus desserts, beverages and all the sauce you can handle.

For pub grub that transcends the typical wings and things, visit **Hi-Lo Lounge** on Prince Avenue. Co-owned by **Katie Gasperec** (BBA '02), the Normaltown staple has gourmet hot dogs, Cincinnati-style chili, creative sandwiches and plenty of vegetarian options. (Keep a lookout for the opening of **Nové Město**, the Hi-Lo team's Czech-themed spot on Barber Street.)

As the owner of Bean Team — operator of nine **Barberitos** locations, eight **Dunkin'** stores and four **Newk's Eatery** restaurants in the Athens area — former UGA football lineman **David Weeks** (BBA '95) has your burrito, doughnut and sandwich needs covered. Tooling around campus? Check out his newly opened Dunkin'/Newk's in the Business Learning Community's Amos Hall. ■

# community

Photo by Brian Powers



## Shared stories

Page 37

25 years of leadership tales at Terry Third Thursday

# THE AYERS ERA

*As dean, Ben Ayers led Terry through a decade of growth*



This summer, Benjamin C. Ayers, dean of the C. Herman and Mary Virginia Terry College of Business since 2014, was named the University of Georgia's senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.

Under Ayers' leadership, Terry achieved historic success, endowing four academic units while launching the Online MBA, Master of Science in Business Analytics, Master of Professional Accountancy, campus-wide Entrepreneurship Program, executive and dual degree programs, market-driven certificates, and new study away programs. Terry's enrollment grew exponentially, and the college achieved the highest employment rates for graduating students in its history.

"I am deeply honored to serve the University of Georgia in this important role," Ayers says. "With

extraordinary faculty and staff, talented students, outstanding leadership across campus and passionate alumni, the institution's future is incredibly bright. I look forward to working with the UGA community to further advance our world-class learning environment and expand our positive impact through groundbreaking research and service."

As dean, Ayers built Terry's national reputation and research productivity to all-time highs, more than doubling the amount of college-funded research

support. The college's academic programs are highly ranked, and five departments rank among the top 10 nationally for research productivity.

Beginning in 2015, Ayers oversaw the construction of the world-class Business Learning Community at the center of UGA's campus. In addition, he expanded and renovated the Terry Executive Education Center in Atlanta and secured and renovated Studio 225, home of the UGA Entrepreneurship Program.

"Dean Ayers has long been an engaged and thoughtful campus leader, fully invested in supporting the academic priorities of the institution," says UGA President Jere Morehead. "He is well respected by faculty, staff, students and alumni alike, and the deep and abiding relationships he has established with business and government leaders over the years will serve the University of Georgia extremely well."



**"Dean Ayers has long been an engaged and thoughtful campus leader:"**

## Growth and Transformation

Business Learning Community:

6 buildings

\$140 million

300,000 square feet

College endowment expanded

from \$90 million

to \$300 million —

a more than 225% increase

Undergraduate enrollment

grew by 40%

Graduate enrollment

by 64%

95% employment rate

for graduating students

More than

11,000 students

400 full-time faculty and staff

3 campus locations

(Athens, Atlanta and Griffin)

Donors established

22 endowed faculty positions and

130 four-year scholarships

15 programs ranked

among the nation's best

5 departments rank among the top 10

for research productivity



## 10 Years of Building Terry

Over a decade, Ben Ayers steered the Terry College of Business through a remarkable period of growth and transformation that cemented the college as a leading U.S. business school.

That transformation began in earnest when Correll Hall, named for Alston D. "Pete" Correll Jr. (BBA '63) and his wife, Ada Lee Correll (BSEd '63), opened its doors 10 years ago.

Funded through the Building Terry campaign, which raised a record \$140 million in support from a dedicated community of donors, as well as the state of Georgia, Correll was the first of six buildings comprising the Business Learning Community (BLC), a modern teaching, learning and working environment at the heart of UGA's campus.

The BLC is an upgrade from Terry's former digs in historic but cramped Brooks Hall; the college's state-of-the-art facilities now rival those of any major B-school.

But over the past decade, the six buildings' impact extended well beyond their physical footprint.





**Phase I (completed 2015)  
Correll Hall**

With classrooms, an innovation lab, a graduate commons, administration offices and more, the Business Learning Community's first building is named for longtime UGA supporters Alston D. "Pete" Correll Jr. (BBA '63) and his wife, Ada Lee Correll (BSED '63).

**Phase 2 (completed 2017)  
Moore-Rooker, Amos and Benson Halls**

Home to a music business lab and the Stelling Family Study, Moore-Rooker Hall is named for the families of Dudley L. Moore Jr. (BBA '57) and John W. "Jack" Rooker (BBA '60). Amos Hall, named for Aflac CEO Daniel P. Amos (BBA '73), houses Casey Commons, Rothenberger Café and the Benn Capital Markets Lab. Benson Hall honors one of Athens' most community-minded families: W. Howard Benson, son H.E. "Ed" Benson (BSC '42) and grandson Larry R. Benson (BBA '74).



**Phase 3 (completed 2019)  
Ivester and Sanford and Barbara Orkin Halls**

Named for former Coca-Cola CEO M. Douglas (Doug) Ivester (BBA '69), Ivester Hall features a large auditorium, classrooms, a seminar room and two conference rooms. Honoring the couple's longtime support of UGA, Sanford and Barbara Orkin Hall includes two auditoriums, classrooms, behavioral and marketing research labs and offices.



COMMUNITY: TERRY THIRD THURSDAY

*What's the*

**BIG IDEA?**



*Terry Third Thursday marks a quarter-century of insights and inspiration*

By Ed Morales

Great businesses are built on great stories.

For 25 years, the Terry College of Business has offered a stage where executives, entrepreneurs, politicians, coaches and a pair of Hall of Fame quarterbacks contributed lessons in leadership, innovation and resilience that inspire audiences long after the applause fades.

Debuting in March 2000 as a breakfast series by the UGA Alumni Club and later the Terry Executive Education Center, the original mission of Terry Third Thursday (TTT) endures: to bring nationally distinguished speakers to offer local and global perspectives on business.

With 252 events to date and more ahead, here are a few speakers whose big ideas still resonate.



THE BEGINNING: MARCH 16, 2000

**Jeff Arnold (AB '18)**

*Then CEO, Healthon/WebMD; co-founder and executive chairman, Sharecare*

The series' goal was to weave the Terry College into the fabric of Atlanta's business community, and choosing Jeff Arnold as its inaugural speaker more than fulfilled that purpose.

Arnold came to TTT as the founder of Atlanta-based WebMD less than a year after its multibillion-dollar merger with Healthon. While Arnold paused his studies in 1993 to pursue a pharmaceutical job (he later earned his degree), he noted the importance of UGA and the state of Georgia when forming WebMD and his first company, Quality Diagnostic Services.

Recently reflecting on his TTT speech, Arnold recalls how his time at UGA provided the building blocks of his success, empowering him to "overcome fears, take risks and think big."

"I learned that it takes much more than just having a big idea. You have to be able to anticipate opportunities as well as obstacles to chart a clear path and articulate that plan to your team in a way that motivates and aligns them to execute on a common vision," he says.

Even with the dot-com boom happening on the West Coast, Arnold stayed committed to his Southern roots.

“I believed in the people and was confident that what I learned at UGA could apply to the business, like the importance of relationships and purpose. ... That philosophy hasn’t failed me yet.”

After leaving WebMD, Arnold formed The Convex Group with several other UGA grads. It was instrumental in the growth of HowStuffWorks, an award-winning online resource, which he sold to Discovery Communications. In 2010 he co-founded digital health company Sharecare.

“The promise of eliminating the fragmentation and making health care more frictionless and accessible is the idea that fueled WebMD, and it’s the same premise at Sharecare,” he says. “However, now we have much more advanced technologies. ... As people realize the potential of these technologies and their ability to democratize knowledge, I get even more excited because the pace of change is much faster than it used to be.”

Arnold has accomplished much in the decades since his TTT speech, but he is not resting on his laurels.

“It’s been 25 years, and a lot of progress has been made,” he says. “But there is so much left to do, and I don’t feel like I have as much time to get it done. There’s a sense of urgency — and responsibility — that comes with that.”

**“MANAGING SUCCESSFULLY THROUGH AN ECONOMIC CRISIS”: JULY 17, 2008**



**Ken Jackson**  
(BBA '79,  
MAcc '80)

*Then CFO, Shaw Industries*

If ever there was a time for serious discussion about the future of business, it was 2008. Amid the Great Recession triggered by

the collapse of the housing market, Ken Jackson took the TTT stage to counsel a roomful of wary businesspeople.

Shaw, a leader in flooring and other surface solutions for residential housing and commercial spaces, is owned by Berkshire Hathaway, and Jackson remembers preparing financials to share with Warren Buffett.

“We prepared this exhaustive analysis,” Jackson says. “During that meeting in the fall of 2006, we told him we saw a bit of softening in the marketplace. We were concerned about the next six months. Warren says, ‘I don’t think I’d be worried about the next six months. You might need to be concerned about the next two years.’ And of course, he was right.”

“It’s amazing to look back,” Jackson continues. “The quote I told was a classic Warren Buffettism: ‘Only when the tide goes out do you find who was really swimming naked.’ A lot of businesses tied to the housing industry did not survive that economic downturn.”

Jackson detailed strategies to oversee the downturn: manage cash flow, learn from past cycles, look at every expense, and broaden your business. But it was people he stressed the most.

“We made it through that, and the company continues to do exceptionally well. I think it was because we didn’t panic,” Jackson says. “We communicated most with our customers and employees.”

Jackson recalls attending a CFO meeting where he learned a nugget of strategy that changed his company’s approach. He sees TTT similarly: an opportunity for business leaders to discover one idea that improves their market position.

“If people are serious and want to improve the results of their businesses and operations, they can learn about new, timely topics, listen, and get an idea that helps their business.”

**“DEVELOPING THE ATLANTA BELTLINE”: APRIL 16, 2015**

**Jerald Mitchell**

*Then economic development director, Atlanta BeltLine; founder, Beaten Path*



Turning abandoned landscapes into thriving connectors requires community support, which can be challenging to inspire. Jerald Mitchell highlighted how public-private partnerships and targeted investment in distressed neighborhoods can unlock economic transformation.

“The BeltLine serves as a good blueprint for communities as they think through who and what they want to be,” Mitchell says of the 22-mile loop of trails, parks and transit that connects Atlanta neighborhoods. “(It) garnered a level of support and engagement that many people may not have expected. ... I have an enormous amount of pride and gratitude for the opportunity to be one of the people who developed (its) economic development strategy.”

Mitchell recalls a grocer resisting a plan to link the BeltLine with the store, arguing traffic came from cars, not pedestrians. His team enlisted trail counters to show nearly 70% of traffic was coming from the BeltLine through pathways created by walkers over time.

“People will tell you what they want and what they will abide, and if you are too rigid about your process or your construct, they’re going to circumvent it,” he says.

Mitchell left in 2020 to work his magic in Columbus, Georgia, as Chamber of Commerce CEO and head of the Columbus Development Authority, where he helped enliven the city’s riverfront and rejuvenate the historic minor league baseball stadium. He has since founded Beaten Path, a company

dedicated to promoting redevelopment potential to communities.

He sees TTT as a way for attendees to imagine new courses of action.

“(It) gives people the opportunity to connect with other leaders who might be going through similar things and help them understand ways to resolve challenges or issues more effectively and more quickly.”

**“INSIGHTS IN LEADERSHIP”: JANUARY 17, 2019**

**Linda Matzigkeit**

*Chief administrative officer, Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta*



TTT speakers often tell the audience about their roles and how they achieved them, but other speeches explore professional growth. Children’s Healthcare’s Linda Matzigkeit explained the skills required to oversee human resources, legal, marketing, compliance, wellness, communications and strategic planning.

“I felt like the audience was really engaged in wanting to become better leaders and excited about getting tips about how to be a leader,” she says.

One tip was dreaming big, which in 2019 included improving childhood obesity, for which Georgia ranked 49th in the country. Matzigkeit’s charge was finding ways to lower that ranking, which is now 30th.

In years since, dreaming big manifested itself in other ways. The biggest: the Arthur M. Blank Hospital.

“A year ago we opened on a 75-plus acre campus, and it’s beautiful,” Matzigkeit says. “That was dreaming big.”

During the pandemic, Children’s stepped up to address the mental health issues of Georgia’s kids. It hired a renowned psychiatry expert, launched

an effort to prevent behavioral mental health from becoming a crisis, and used a comprehensive approach to train parents, physicians, teachers, school nurses and counselors to better address mental health, while also launching an ad campaign on raising resilient kids.

“We have taken on behavioral and mental health from a prevention standpoint and from a care standpoint,” says Matzigkeit. “We opened a new outpatient center for kids in crisis, trying to keep them out of emergency departments, and that has been very successful.”

She sees TTT as a valuable source for gaining and sharing information.

“It provides access to a number of different industries and issues, but also some of the top issues... tangible things people can walk away with,” she says. “Certainly, child health is something that is very important, because kids are our future.”

**“FIRESIDE CHAT WITH GENUINE PARTS COMPANY”: SEPTEMBER 18, 2025**



**Paul Donahue**  
*Non-executive chairman, Genuine Parts Company*

**Will Stengel**

*President and CEO, Genuine Parts Company*



As TTT passed 250 events, listening to the executive leadership from Atlanta’s Genuine Parts Company proved a fitting testament to notions of value and longevity.

“We’ve been around for a long time, and we just keep on keeping on,” said

Paul Donahue, who stepped down as CEO in 2024.

“The culture at Genuine Parts is one of the pieces of its special sauce,” said Will Stengel, the company’s sixth CEO in its 97-year history. “What was important for me to do well was respect the past and balance the future.”

During the chat, Donahue and Stengel considered topics discussed by previous TTT speakers.

Like Arnold, Stengel addressed the need to remain relevant in the world of artificial intelligence. “As business leaders, we have a meaningful responsibility to make sense of it ... so we aren’t waking up one day seeing someone create something that is a surprise to us.”

Like Jackson, Donahue discussed the importance of employees. “All of our revenue is generated by our front-line workers,” he said, “If you want to understand your business and what works and what doesn’t, get out and work with the front-line workers.”

Like Mitchell, Stengel emphasized “understanding the needs of your customers and designing technology around those needs to make sure you’re solving the right problem and getting a return on your investment.”

Donahue reflected on the process of ensuring a smooth CEO transition, noting continuity is crucial for long-term success. And Stengel stressed the importance of people. “There’s nothing more important ... probably 60-plus percent of my time is focused on people.”

This shared focus is foundational — not only to Genuine Parts’ near-century of success but also to initiatives like TTT, which has thrived for 25 years by telling great stories about strong leadership. ■

**TTT SPEAKERS**  
*by the numbers*

**100** CEOs **25** founders

**10** UGA head coaches

**6** VPs

**4** UGA athletics directors

**2** NFL Hall of Fame quarterbacks

**1** NBA All-Star



Illustration by Shaw Nielsen

# MARKET VALUE

Consumers perceive cost differently based on the size of products for sale

By Merritt Melancon (ABJ '02, MA '19)

Is it better to buy mandarin oranges by the fruit or by the pound? How about grapefruit? Watermelon?

University of Georgia marketing researchers found that shoppers' perceptions of the value of grocery staples vary depending on the physical size of the product and how the price is presented. Specifically, shoppers perceive that larger items are a better deal when sold by the pound, but smaller items are a better deal when sold by the unit — even when the prices are essentially the same.

**Sarah Whitley**, assistant professor of marketing at Terry, joined co-authors **Julio Sevilla**, Terry marketing professor, and Seattle University marketing professor Mathew Isaac to publish "Units or Pounds? How Anchoring on Salient Price Information Influences Perceptions of Product Value" in the *Journal of Marketing Research* this summer.

Whitley was inspired by a moment of shock at a cash register when a melon in her cart cost close to \$10.

"They were \$1.99 a pound, and I thought, 'That's a good deal!'" she says. "So I got one, and when I checked out, it was \$8. I thought to myself, 'Why didn't I anticipate that it would cost that much?' For some reason, even though I knew this melon weighed more than a pound, my brain was still focusing on the first number that I saw."

Whitley wanted to understand why her brain fixated on the per-pound price of her prize melon and how the phenomenon, which psychologists call anchoring bias, might affect how we buy groceries.

She worked with Sevilla, whose past research focused on how customers perceive display space, packaging and the size and selection of products, to measure how grocery shoppers perceive produce prices.

Their team ran a series of 14 studies with nearly 9,000 participants in which they were asked to rate the value of produce items of different sizes. Some items were priced per pound, others per item, but the overall price was the same in each comparison.

Overwhelmingly, when larger items were sold per pound, they were rated as much better deals. When smaller items were priced by the unit, they were rated as a better deal. Even when shoppers were given a per-pound price and knew exactly how much an item weighed, they were still more likely to pick up a small item if it had a per-unit price and a large item if it was priced by weight.

**YOU COULD PRICE THE HEALTHIER FOODS IN A WAY THAT MAKES THEM MORE ATTRACTIVE.**

"There's this insufficient adjustment that we're doing around the anchoring process," Whitley says. "The first number we see holds so much weight, regardless of whether another pricing format is given. People just kind of look at the first number and make their decision."

In field experiments at an upscale deli counter, shoppers bought more small items (risotto cakes and salmon filets) when they were priced per unit rather than per pound. In another study, researchers selling small bags of trail mix in a university student union increased sales by 90% by pricing the bags per unit versus per pound.

Our brains run on cognitive shortcuts, and anchoring bias — when a person relies too heavily on the first piece of information offered when making decisions — is a powerful one, Whitley says.

Whitley's research could be used by stores to help maximize the sale of produce and deli products, but it could also encourage shoppers to buy healthier items or discourage them from buying junk food.

"This effect could be used to nudge healthier behaviors," she says. "You could price the healthier foods in a way that makes them more attractive. For less healthy items, a consumer protection agency might price them in a way that makes them less appealing from a value standpoint. We do not test this specifically, but we do demonstrate that a simple change in how the price format is presented can really change people's behavior."

**THE FIRST NUMBER WE SEE HOLDS SO MUCH WEIGHT.**





PFARRER



BENDLE



CHRIST



CARPENTER



GERVAIS



HUBER



HUMPHREYS



HUND



RAGIN



RETTL



SMITH



STEUER

The Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and Georgia Life Sciences recognized UGA Executive Education with the Golden Helix Phoenix Award for the Sustainable Development Experience (SDX) program developed for Boehringer Ingelheim. In addition to Terry Executive Education administrators, the award honored instructors, including associate dean for research and executive programs **Mike Pfarrer**, marketing professor **Neil Bendle**, Sara and Dan Boyd Professor of economics **Meghan Skira**, Institute for Leadership Advancement lecturer **Onyedika Ekwerike** and MBA lecturer **Nathan Stuck**.

**Margaret Christ**, director of the J.M. Tull School of Accounting and J.M. Tull Chair in Accounting, and **Tina Carpenter**, Dan Smith Professor of Accounting, received the 2025 Deloitte Foundation Wildman Medal Award at the American Accounting Association's summer conference in Chicago on Aug. 4. The award recognized the impact of Christ and Carpenter's 2021 paper, "The Data Analytics Journey: Interactions Among Auditors, Managers, Regulation, and Technology," published in *Contemporary Accounting Research*.

The National Science Foundation granted **Martin Gervais**, professor in the John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics, \$86,345 to fund a study

of consumer expenditures during and after World War II. The goal is to create a database of Census Bureau records of consumer spending. This period was marked by growth in household incomes and a decrease in income inequality but has been understudied due to a lack of robust data.

The Brookings Institution granted **Tobias Huber**, assistant professor in the C. Herman Terry Risk Management and Insurance Program, \$5,000 to launch his study, "Hurricane catastrophe models: What they tell us about current climate risk and how insurers use them to set prices."

**Jeff Humphreys**, director of the Selig Center for Economic Growth, received a \$42,596 grant from the Sea Island Company to update the Selig Center's study of Sea Island in Glynn County, Georgia.

**John Hund**, associate professor of finance, was invited to present at the 12th annual Conference on Financial Market Regulation hosted by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission in May in Washington, D.C. He presented his paper, "The Rise of Investor Sophistication and the Decline of Underwriting Profits in the Municipal Bond Market."

**Marc Ragin**, associate professor in the C. Herman Terry Risk Management and Insurance Program, will serve as the primary investigator at UGA for a

\$500,000 National Science Foundation grant that will fund the Center for Innovation in Risk, Catastrophes and Decisions (CIRCAD). The project is an interdisciplinary effort involving the insurance industry and multiple faculty from UGA and Duke University.

The Rockwood Foundation granted assistant professor of finance **Daniel Rettl** \$82,099 to study the long- and short-term consequences of seasonal illnesses. Rettl examines the impact of employee health on a firm's overall well-being.

The Spencer Educational Foundation and the Wholesale & Specialty Insurance Association granted **Rodney Smith**, associate director of the C. Herman Terry Risk Management and Insurance Program, \$33,646 to develop a course on alternative risk treatment. The graduate and undergraduate courses will cover self-insurance, multinational insurance and excess and surplus lines.

**Ralph E. Steuer**, Sanford Family Distinguished Chair of Business in the Department of Finance, received the Richard Price Award from the Chinese Academy of Sciences at the 12th International Conference on Information Technology and Quantitative Management. The award was for contributions to the theory and application of data science. ■

# class notes



A marketing and communications expert with extensive experience in the agricultural industry, **Wendy Brannen** (BBA '94) was recently hired as a VP with the National Pork Producers Council.

### Where did Terry take you?

Submit your class notes online, upload photos, share a promotion.

[terry.uga.edu/news/terry-magazine](http://terry.uga.edu/news/terry-magazine)

#### 1965-69

**Jamie Boswell** (BBA '67) of Athens was elected chair of the Georgia Department of Transportation's State Transportation Board. The president and owner of the Boswell Group, he serves as the 10th Congressional District's representative for the STB and was previously vice chair.

#### 1970-74

**Robert Chanin** (BBA '70) of Atlanta joined Raymond James & Associates as a financial advisor. He specializes in high-net-worth clients and joins the company from Stifel, where he managed approximately \$750 million in client assets.



**Charles Schulze** (BBA '74) of Greenwood, S.C., was appointed to the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education by Gov. Henry McMaster. An experienced CPA and financial forensics specialist, he operates an accounting firm and previously spent nearly 40 years with Elliott Davis LLC.



**Howard Young** (BBA '82) of Atlanta was elected to serve a two-year term as chair of the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. A former Terry Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, he is the president of General Wholesale Beer Co. and has served on the UGA Foundation board since 2019.

**Jack Corgel** (BBA '71, PhD '79) of Ithaca, N.Y., was named a senior advisor to Woodworth Core Group, a provider of customized lodging research, valuation and advisory services. He is an emeritus professor in the Nolan School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University.

#### 1975-79

**Steve Jones** (BBA '78, JD '87) of Atlanta was elected to serve as emeritus chair of the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. The senior U.S. district judge for the Northern District of Georgia, he has been a UGA Foundation emeritus trustee since 2022.

**Bryceon Sumner** (BBA '78) of Dallas, Texas, joined marine transportation company Foss Maritime as CFO. He has extensive CFO and COO experience in the public and private sectors, most recently serving as CFO with Texas educational technology provider Academic Partnerships.

#### 1980-84

**Ira Gleser** (BBA '81) of Atlanta published *Stewardship for Business*, a practical playbook for building stronger, more valuable customer relationships. The founder of Amplify Marketing Communications, he has more than 25 years of experience in business development and marketing.

**Charlie Fiveash** (BBA '83) of Clarkesville was named executive director of the Georgia Department of Agriculture's Rural Center for Innovation and Prosperity. He has over 35 years of

experience in commercial real estate, economic and workforce development and previously served as executive director of Partnership Habersham.

**Bob Giannini** (BBA '83) of Lawrenceville is completing his second term of service on the State Bar of Georgia's disciplinary board. He also serves on the Gwinnett County Indigent Defense Governing Committee and as chair of the criminal law section of the Gwinnett Bar Association.



**Laku Chidambaram** (MBA '84) of Norman, Okla., was named dean of the Michael F. Price College of Business at the University of Oklahoma. Prior to being named interim dean in 2024, he served as senior associate dean for academic programs and engagement overseeing master's, executive and undergraduate programs.

**Stacy Chick** (BBA '84) of Smyrna was named non-executive board director for Dxcover, advising and supporting the company in its go-to-market, business development and fundraising strategies. An executive for global pharmaceutical and oncology diagnostics companies, she has been an advisor to the company since 2021.

#### 1985-89



**Paige Tom** (BBA '85) of Augusta was promoted to the position of executive director of the Augusta Symphony. She has over 35 years of experience in accounting. For the past four years, she served as finance director for the Augusta Symphony and Miller Theater, the orchestra's home venue.

**Todd Shutley** (BBA '85) of Brookhaven was named COO of Radiance Solar, a solar engineering, procurement and construction company. He has extensive leadership experience and joins the firm from InLight Real Estate Partners, where he also served as COO.

**Jon Wilhoit** (BBA '85) of Marietta became a professional entrepreneurial operating system implementer with EOS Worldwide. The transition comes after a long career in enterprise software and executive search firm ownership.

**Carol Yancey** (BBA '85) of Atlanta was elected to serve on the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. A former Terry Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, she retired as EVP and CFO at Genuine Parts Co.

**Bob Ray** (BBA '87) of Perry was appointed to serve on the Georgia Rural Development Council by Gov. Brian Kemp. He is a managing member of Ray Family Farms. Before returning full-time to agriculture, he served for 15 years as president and CEO of Flint Energies.

**Eric Cross** (BBA '89) of Johns Island, S.C., was hired as chief revenue officer for Dragos, an operational technology cybersecurity company. He has more than 20 years of experience in technology and cybersecurity, most recently serving as chief revenue officer for Reltio.

**Ben Land** (BBA '89, JD '92) of Atlanta was appointed to the Supreme Court of Georgia by Gov. Brian Kemp. He served on the Georgia Court of Appeals since 2022 and won election for a six-year term in 2024. He was previously a superior court judge on the Chattahoochee Judicial Circuit.

#### 1990-94

**Trey Googe** (BBA '91, JD '94) of Atlanta was elected to serve as secretary of the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. He is chairman and CEO at Yancey Bros. Co. and has served on the UGA Foundation board since 2020.

**Matt Clark** (BBA '92, MAcc '93, MBA '04) of Mableton was elected as chair of the foundation of the Georgia Motor Trucking Association and appointed to the GMTA's finance committee. He is the founder of Veritas CFO, which provides fractional CFO services to companies in the transportation and logistics industry.

**Scott Hunter** (MBA '92) of Alpharetta was named CFO of InCommunity, a nonprofit organization supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. He has more than 30 years of experience as a financial and operations executive in health care, manufacturing and commercial banking.



**Chris Allen** (BBA '92) of Playa del Rey, Calif., was appointed EVP and health system CFO at University of Chicago Medicine. He joins UChicago from Keck Medicine of USC, where he served as CFO for the university's health system.



**John Turner** (AB '89) of Birmingham, Ala., was elected to serve on the board of directors for Southern Company. In addition, he was elected to serve as treasurer for the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. He has more than four decades of experience in the financial services industry and is chairman, president and CEO of Regions Financial Corp.

**Julie Schertell** (MAcc '92) of Alpharetta was named CEO of paper company Pixelle Specialty Solutions. A leader in the specialty materials industry with more than three decades of experience, she was formerly president and CEO of Mativ.

**Maximilian Foerst** (MBA '93) of Fourqueux, France, was named president and CEO of Carl Zeiss Meditec, a medical technology company. As head of Zeiss Greater China since 2009, he was responsible for all business activities in the company's strongest market by revenue.

## CLASS NOTES

**Wendy Brannen** (BBA '94) of Washington, D.C., joined the National Pork Producers Council as VP of communications and marketing. She has directed agriculture trade associations and their marketing and communications programs for 20 years, most recently as senior director of marketing and communications for the American Soybean Association.

**Christa McDonald** (BBA '94) of Blackshear was promoted to SVP of operations at Waycross Bank & Trust. An experienced financial and technology professional, she has been with the bank since 2017 and previously served as a VP.

### 1995-99

**Drew Healy** (BBA '95) of Nashville, Tenn., joined Pinnacle Financial Partners as a financial advisor specializing in small business investment companies. He has more than two decades of experience in investment banking and commercial banking and was previously managing director at Capital Alignment Partners.

**Chris Ahrenkiel** (BBA '98) of Atlanta joined Cushman & Wakefield as Atlanta



**Jeff Martindale** (MBA '97) of Chattanooga, Tenn., finished the 2025 Tokyo Marathon, completing a 14-year journey to earn the Six Star Medal for completing all six Abbott World Marathon Majors: New York, Boston, Chicago, Berlin, London and Tokyo. He retired from FedEx in 2024 after nearly 25 years with the company.



**Angie Brown** (BBA '98) of Atlanta was named EVP and CIO for The Home Depot overseeing technology strategy, infrastructure, cybersecurity and software development. A 27-year veteran of the company, she was most recently SVP of information technology.

managing principal. He has more than 20 years of industry and community leadership experience and was formerly EVP with Selig Enterprises.

**Paul Hammes** (AB '92, MBA '98) of Clemmons, N.C., received the American Hospital Association 2025 Grassroots Champion Award for the state of North Carolina. He has served as CEO of Hugh Chatham Health for the past 12 years.

**Lonnie Joyce** (BBA '98) of Thomaston was selected by the Upson County Board of Commissioners as the sole finalist for the position of county manager. He joined the City of Thomaston as finance director in 2017 and was recently named assistant city manager.

**Hardman Knox** (BBA '98) of Atlanta was elected to serve on the University of Georgia Foundation Board of Trustees. An experienced real estate investment professional, he is principal of Hight Knox Properties.

**Ryan Hawes** (BBA '99) of Newnan was appointed as CFO of LiveOak Fiber, a regional broadband service provider. He has more than two decades of experience in financial leadership, most recently serving as CFO of Fastwyre Broadband.

### 2000-04

**Tyler Cook** (BBA '00) of Decatur was named SVP, CFO and treasurer for Georgia Power. She has been with the utility for 25 years and previously served as SVP of finance and enterprise transformation for Southern Company.

**Cheryl Blake** (BBA '01) of Canton joined Alliant Insurance Services as SVP within the company's employee benefits group. She has served in multiple leadership roles throughout her career, including more than two decades with OneDigital.

**Jenny Bryant** (BBA '01) of Newnan joined Sterling Seacrest Pritchard as director of carrier relations. She has more than 24 years of experience in the insurance industry and most recently served as director of strategic partnerships and programs at The Hartford.

**Paul Kolevsohn** (BBA '01) of Atlanta joined Stockbridge as managing director, leading investment research and strategy. He has more than 20 years of experience and joins the company from Mercer Alternatives, where he served as partner and head of North American real estate.

**Kristie McMahan** (MBA '03) of Decatur joined American Pride Bank as EVP and chief credit officer. She has nearly 25



**Jordan Kiel** (BBA '03) of Atlanta was elected to the Young Harris College board of trustees. A Certified Private Wealth Advisor, he has extensive experience working with high-net-worth families and closely held businesses as president of Georgia wealth management with Northern Trust Corp.



**Amy Geiger** (BBA '04) of Smyrna joined Fulcrum Equity Partners as CFO. She has more than two decades of experience leading financial transformation at public and private companies, previously serving as managing director and head of personal CFO services at Pathstone.

years of banking experience and has held a number of senior leadership roles, most recently as director of commercial administration with Colony Bank.

**Eric Rein** (BBA '03) of Canton joined Pinnacle Financial Partners as SVP and financial advisor. He was most recently SVP with Renasant Bank and previously held leadership positions with Wells Fargo and State Bank & Trust.

**Christine West** (BBA '04) of Mount Juliet, Tenn., was named VP and chief underwriting officer for education with insurance provider CM Regent. She has more than 20 years of experience in the education insurance market, most recently as lead director for educational institutions at The Hanover Insurance Group.

### 2005-09

**Steven Hornyak** (BBA '06) of Cordele was named chief innovation officer for the Houston County School District. He has been with the district for 17 years as a teacher and administrator, most recently serving as director of district and school effectiveness.

**Katie Curtis** (BBA '07, MAcc '07) of Decatur was promoted to VP, controller and principal accounting officer with Oglethorpe Power Corp. Prior to joining the utility in 2021, she held various tax and accounting oversight roles at Fortune 500 companies.

**Pete Frayser** (BBA '07, AB '07) of Atlanta was named president of BETCO Inc., a North Carolina-based manufacturer of metal building systems. Prior to taking the role he worked as chief commercial officer at Janus International, Betco's parent company.

**Jon Rier** (BBA '07) of Charleston, S.C., was promoted to co-CEO of Refuel Operating Co., a convenience store and retail fuel operator. He joined the company in 2019 as CFO and previously spent 14 years with RaceTrac Petroleum.

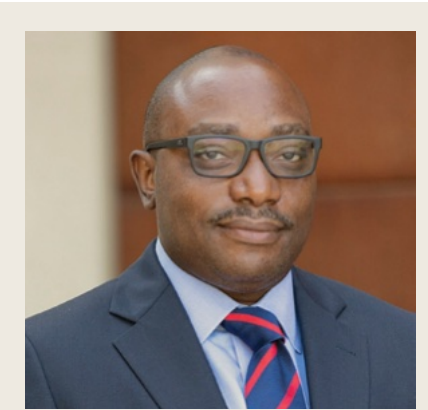
**Chris Ascari** (BBA '09) of Atlanta joined Noble Investment Group as director of finance. He has nearly 15 years of experience in real estate finance and previously worked at EY-Parthenon's transaction real estate group.

**Michael Henson** (BBA '09, JD '12) of Atlanta joined business law firm Barnes & Thornburg focusing on high-value real estate transactions. He previously served as a partner with Morris, Manning & Martin.

**Barton Lowrey** (BBA '09, BSEd '09) of Atlanta was named VP of community development for the Metro Atlanta Chamber. He has extensive experience in economic development, most recently serving as director of statewide projects at the Georgia Department of Economic Development.



**Ansley Nixon** (AB '05, BBA '05) of Atlanta joined real estate investment and management company Coro Realty as EVP of capital markets. She has two decades of experience and joins the firm from Jamestown LP, where she led acquisitions and strategic transactions across the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic.



**Jide Wintoki** (PhD '08) of Lawrence, Kan., was hired as dean of the University of Kansas School of Business. He joined the school in 2008 and most recently served as associate dean of graduate programs. In addition, he is a member of the leadership team for the university's Environmentally Applied Refrigerant Technology Hub Engineering Research Center.

**Dave Osborne** (MBA '09) of Atlanta was named CEO of Conga, a revenue lifecycle management software company. A seasoned technology leader with more than 25 years of experience across multiple areas, he previously served as CEO of Caseware.

**Kathleen Sherwood** (BBA '09) of Winston-Salem, N.C., was named to the Most Powerful Women in Banking NEXT 2025 list by *American Banker* magazine. She works as a direct-to-consumer lending leader with Truist.

**Lea Stevens** (BBA '09) of Savannah was promoted to SVP of sales with CSI Leasing, an IT equipment leasing company. She has been with the company for 10 years and previously served as a VP.

**Ryan Wood** (BBA '09) of Nashville, Tenn., joined Colliers as executive managing director and brokerage leader for the company's Nashville market. She has more than 17 years of financial services experience, most recently as market director for UBS Wealth Management.

### 2010-14

**Kyle Thompson** (AB '10) of Winder was appointed as solicitor general for Barrow County by Gov. Brian Kemp. An assistant district attorney with the Walton County District Attorney's Office, he previously served as an assistant DA in the Western Judicial Circuit.



**Will Keyes** (BBA '10, BS '10, MA '10, JD '13) of Macon was appointed by Attorney General Pamela Bondi as the U.S. attorney for the Middle District of Georgia, the district's top-ranking law enforcement official. He joined the Department of Justice as an assistant U.S. attorney in 2018.

**Brittany Bryant** (BBA '11) of Thomasville was promoted to executive director of marketing and public relations for Southern Regional Technical College. She has over 15 years of marketing, communications, fundraising and management experience and previously served as director of marketing and PR.

**Lindsey Neal** (MBA '11) of Roswell received HousingWire's 2025 Marketing Leaders award. She is an EVP with Depth, a provider of marketing services for technology companies serving the



**Torrie Gold Bullock** (BBA '13) of Jackson, Wyo., joined St. John's Health Foundation as development officer. A board-certified health and well-being expert, she spent seven years with St. John's Health as a wellness coordinator and lifestyle coach.

residential mortgage finance, FinTech and regulatory technology industries.

**Noah Hoppe** (MBA '12) of Bucyrus, Kan., joined White Lodging, an urban and lifestyle hospitality development and management company, as EVP and CFO. He previously spent nearly two decades with Hyatt Hotels, where he held a variety of senior finance roles.

**Tucker Compton** (BBA '13) of Savannah joined the board of directors of the Savannah Book Festival. A client advisor at Sterling Seacrest Pritchard, he is actively involved in the Savannah community and sits on several boards.

**Brad Beringer** (BBA '14) of Marietta joined AccessHope, a provider of cancer care support programs, as VP of business development. He previously spent five years with mental health company Headspace, where he managed the enterprise sales team.

**Austin Todd** (BBA '14) of San Angelo, Texas was elected to serve a one-year term as vice president of the University of Arkansas School of Law's Law Alumni Society. An instructor at the Air Force Judge Advocate General's School at Maxwell Air Force Base, he was previously assistant staff judge advocate and victims' counsel within the Air Force JAG Corps.

**2015-19**

**Buck Patton** (BBA '15) of Nashville, Tenn., was promoted to SVP and senior wealth advisor at Truxton, a boutique private bank and wealth management

firm. He has been a VP with the firm since 2022.

**Sophie Gatchell** (BBA '16, AB '16) of Ball Ground was promoted to senior director of central operations at TailorCare, a health care startup. She has been with the company since 2023 and was previously director of market operations.

**Meg Bennett** (BBA '17) of Hull is a client executive with credit reporting agency TransUnion. An experienced real estate finance and technology professional and Certified Mortgage Banker, she was named a National Mortgage Professional 40 Under 40.

**Blake Bethea** (BBA '18) of Athens joined Chatham Capital Group as a principal. An experienced corporate finance professional, he previously held senior finance positions at Cox Enterprises and Walmart.



**Tim Eber** (BBA '18) of Venice, Calif., was promoted to principal with Nolan Capital, a Southern California investment firm. Formerly a VP with the company, he joined in 2022 from Truist Securities.

**Ben Price** (MBA '18) of Watkinsville was named president of Kevin Price Construction, which has overseen construction of numerous government and industrial projects in Georgia over 35 years. He has been with the company since his teenage years and formerly served as a VP.

**Larry Richardson** (MBA '18) of Senoia was elected chairman of the board



**Lainn Wilson** (BBA '14, MS '16) of Martinez was named head coach of the Santa Cruz Warriors, the G League affiliate of the NBA's Golden State Warriors. A member of the Warriors' 2022 NBA Championship basketball operations staff, he is entering his fifth season with the organization after spending the previous four seasons as its head video coordinator.

of directors for AmeriPro Health. He co-founded AmeriPro in 2018, serving initially as COO and rising to EVP and chief business officer. He became CEO earlier this year.

**2020-24**

**Matt Hashemi** (BBA '20, MBA '24, JD '24) of Roswell joined the Atlanta office of Smith, Gambrell & Russell as an associate in the firm's construction and energy practices. He formerly held a similar position with Mercer Thompson.

**Joe Burnett** (BBA '21, MS '21) of Canton was appointed as director of bitcoin strategy for Semler Scientific, a health care technology company.



**Jake Fromm** (BBA '22) of Athens joined Sterling Seacrest Pritchard as a client advisor concentrating on commercial property and casualty risk management. A decorated former starting quarterback for the Georgia Bulldogs, he also played for several teams in the National Football League.

He previously served as director of market research at Unchained, a bitcoin focused financial services company.

**Harrison Bell** (BBA '22) of Decatur was promoted to director for investments and structured credit with real estate development firm Trilogy Investment Co. He previously served as a senior associate for the company's investments team.

**Mitchell Clifford** (BBA '23) of Acworth joined the Marietta office of Harry Norman Realtors as a real estate advisor. He previously worked in a similar role for Sotheby's International Realty Atlanta division.

**Warren Yancey** (AB '11, MBA '23) of Buford joined wealth management firm Persium Group as head of marketing. He has more than a decade of marketing experience in the financial services industry, most recently as director of channel marketing for Transamerica.

**Victoria Matise** (BBA '24) of Snellville joined Wallick Investments as an investment advisor representative involved in business development, client relations and corporate operations. She is also a member of the WI Fidelis Index committee.

**John McClung** (MAcc '24, MS '25) of Leesburg joined the Albany office of Draffin Tucker as an associate providing accounting, audit and advisory services.

**2025-**

**Sam Naeher** (BBA '25, BSEd '25) of Athens joined the University of Georgia baseball staff as director of baseball operations. He served as a student manager for the baseball program during the 2023 and 2024 seasons. ■

**1940s**

**Frances M. Register** (BBA '48), Blackshear, Aug. 19. **Ivrin 'Sonny' L. Levy** (BBA '49), Augusta, June 12.

**1950s**

**Robert E. Brown** (BBA '50), Marietta, Aug. 7. **James 'Pope' P. Davis Jr.** (BBA '50), Pine Mountain, May 12. **Charles 'Buddy' J. Shinker** (BBA '50), Atlanta, Aug. 24. **Thomas G. Cousins** (BBA '52), Atlanta, July 29. **Paul N. Rohrabough** (BBA '52), Decatur, April 18. **Robert I. Schwartz** (BBA '52), Macon, July 21. **Roland C. Stubbs Jr.** (BBA '53), Sylvania, May 3. **Dewey E. Teal** (BBA '53), Carrollton, July 16. **David W. Bishop** (BBA '54), Atlanta, July 31. **William L. Crowe** (BBA '55), Athens, April 22. **Toby R. Bonner** (BBA '56), Gainesville, June 15. **Manuel Cohen** (BBA '56), Mount Pleasant, S.C., May 8. **George L. Walters** (BBA '56), Roswell, Aug. 9. **Col. Willie 'Bill' A. Coleman** (BBA '57), Savannah, April 23. **Duane Grice** (BBA '57), Augusta, July 25. **Ernest E. Mitchell** (BBA '57), Savannah, April 7. **Darwin H. Samples** (MBA '57), Newton, N.C., Aug. 24. **Harmon L. Barnard Jr.** (BBA '58), Carol Stream, Ill., July 3. **William 'Breck' B. Brigham** (BBA '58), Augusta, Sept. 17. **James E. Coleman Jr.** (BBA '58), Grayson, Aug. 13. **Frederick Gilmer Jr.** (BBA '58), Greenville, S.C., May 31. **H. Perry Michael** (BBA '58, LLB '61), Dunwoody, June 3. **Capt. Roger L. Shadburn** (BBA '58), Thomson, April 10. **Robert L. White** (BBA '58), Naples, Fla., July 6. **John R. Frith** (BBA '59), Salado, Texas, July 29. **Thomas 'Tippy' J. Kempton** (BBA '59, MBA '60), Sandy Springs, April 8. **Patrick O. Meadows Sr.** (BBA '59), Brunswick, June 28. **Leon D. Odom Jr.** (BBA '59), Cordele, Aug. 28.

**1960s**

**Melvyn H. Carter** (BBA '60), Albany, June 9. **L.W. 'Pete' Linch** (BBA '61), Abilene, Texas, May 28. **Judy W. Lyle** (BBA '61, MEd '74), Gainesville, June 22. **Ellis A. Mansour** (BBA '61), Newnan, Sept. 13. **Joe Berger Jr.** (BBA '62), Matthews, N.C., July 12.

## CLASS NOTES: PASSINGS

**John A. Cumbee Jr.** (BBA '62), Albany, Aug. 11. **C. Talmadge Garrison** (BBA '62), Dawsonville, Sept. 26. **Gloria 'Dody' J. Jackson** (BBA '62), Maringouin, La., Sept. 24. **Wyckliffe A. Knox Jr.** (BBA '62, LLB '64), Augusta, Aug. 9. **William 'Buddy' F. Scott** (BBA '62), Peachtree City, Aug. 16. **Larry H. Capel** (BBA '63), Dalton, July 25. **Clyde J. Childers** (BBA '63), Carmel, Ind., Aug. 31. **Wayne C. Exley** (BBA '63), Americus, April 27. **Roy V. Price Jr.** (BBA '63), Atlanta, June 28. **Kenneth W. Chandler Sr.** (BBA '64), Midway, May 25. **Gregory F. Holcomb** (BBA '64), Athens, June 26. **Kenneth J. Seitz** (BBA '64), Atlanta, April 16. **James T. Wilson Jr.** (BBA '64, LLB '66), Augusta, July 19. **James 'Tom' T. Cook** (BBA '65, MAcc '66), Woodstock, June 25. **Wilton L. Reddick** (BBA '65), Leesville, S.C., Sept. 1. **James W. Reeder** (BBA '65), Savannah, Aug. 24. **Richard A. Slaby** (BBA '65, LLB '65), Augusta, April 5. **Howe D. Whitman Sr.** (BBA '65), Atlanta, July 9. **Mark A. Bell Jr.** (BBA '66), Milledgeville, Sept. 19. **Francis 'Brookie' E. Brooks Jr.** (BBA '66), Nashville, Tenn., June 14. **J. Samuel Espy Jr.** (BBA '66), Savannah, April 7. **John F. Tolson Jr.** (BBA '66), Lookout Mountain, April 19. **J. Randall Avery** (BBA '67), Cairo, April 7. **Randall A. Clegg** (BBA '67), Lula, Sept. 21. **Janet A. Griffith** (BBA '67), Athens, Aug. 20. **John 'Mike' L. M. McGarity** (BBA '67), Monroe, May 27. **George E. Patton Sr.** (BBA '67), Lilburn, Aug. 10. **James A. Power** (BBA '67), Canton, May 9. **Raymond H. Seagers Jr.** (BBA '67), Edgewood, N.M., May 24. **Zack H. Williams Jr.** (BBA '67), Atlanta, Aug. 19. **Capt. Lanier 'Jeff' J. Bishop Jr.** (BBA '68), Headland, Ala., May 5. **Stephen W. Evans** (BBA '68), Knoxville, Tenn., May 23. **John M. Sherman** (BBA '68, MBA '72), Albany, Aug. 16. **Raymond 'Lin' L. Smith Jr.** (BBA '68), Talladega, Ala., Aug. 27. **Jeryl E. Tuten Sr.** (BBA '68), Jacksonville, Fla., June 30. **Richard J. E. Estes** (BBA '69), Atlanta, April 27. **Patrick E. Hardie** (BBA '69), Macon, April 19. **Charles L. Lyon** (BBA '69), Tucker, April 11. **Cormac M. McGarvey Jr.** (BBA '69), St. Simons Island, July 16.

### 1970s

**Robert G. Atkins Jr.** (MBA '70), Charlotte, N.C., May 21. **Joseph M. Gregg** (BBA '70), Wilmington, Del., June 30. **Maj. Gen. Frank F. Henderson** (MBA '70), Rockport, Texas, Sept. 4. **David G. Newton** (BBA '70, MBA '74), Griffin, Sept. 6. **John R. Sheats**

(BBA '70), Winder, Sept. 20. **Gerald B. Goodman** (BBA '71), Cuthbert, Aug. 19. **Davis T. Haynes** (BBA '71), Englewood, Tenn., June 26. **William K. Holmes** (BBA '71), St. Simons Island, May 2. **Stephen G. Mahon** (AB '71), Cleveland, Ala., May 25. **Patricia L. McCarrey** (BBA '71), Fayetteville, Aug. 8. **J. Clifford 'Cliff' McCurry** (BBA '71), Savannah, July 31. **Claude 'Adam' A. Ralls Jr.** (BBA '71), Tucker, Aug. 15. **A. G. Wells Jr.** (BBA '71, JD '74), Hinesville, July 4. **Dewey 'Herby' H. Beggs Jr.** (BBA '72), Canon, Aug. 13. **H. Cleveland Roby Jr.** (BBA '72), Richmond Hill, Aug. 12. **Richard G. Walker** (BBA '72), The Villages, Fla., May 1. **B. Frank Borah** (BBA '73), Byron, Sept. 8. **Johnnie 'Lee' L. Clark** (PhD '73), Atlanta, Aug. 2. **Charles E. Izlar** (BBA '73, MBA '74), Savannah, June 24. **Stanley E. Teem** (BBA '73), Ringgold, May 6. **W. Gary Veal** (BBA '73), Canton, Sept. 8. **Robert N. Burkett** (BBA '74), Tyrone, Sept. 13. **Bobby D. Cook** (BBA '74), Crawford, Aug. 25. **Robert B. Cunningham** (BBA '74), Athens, May 12. **Allan L. Davis** (BBA '74), Round Rock, Texas, July 25. **Donald E. Duke** (PhD '74), Tampa, Fla., April 14. **James 'Bo' P. Firestone** (BBA '74), Rome, May 19. **John F. Jones** (BBA '74), Washington, June 8. **Theron 'Ed' E. Morrison Sr.** (BBA '74), Murfreesboro, Tenn., July 17. **Perry R. Smith** (BBA '74), Macon, Aug. 18. **Jon S. Spencer** (BBA '74), Statham, Sept. 3. **Jerry E. Whiteside** (BSA '59, MBA '74, EdD '85), St. Simons Island, Aug. 24. **James W. Dinnan** (BBA '75), Cleveland, July 1. **J. Philip Hester Sr.** (BBA '75), Gainesville, July 24. **Terry L. Langston** (BBA '75), Buford, April 23. **Sandra W. Wooley** (BBA '75, MBA '79), Brentwood, Tenn., Sept. 7. **Dozier R. Howard Sr.** (BBA '76), Atlanta, June 19. **Michael E. Amos** (MBA '77), Statham, April 29. **Sallyanne C. Barrow** (MAcc '77), Stephens, July 5. **David C. Dorminey** (BBA '77, MBA '78), Evans, Aug. 18. **Kenneth L. Orr** (BBA '77), Flowery Branch, June 27. **James 'Alan' A. McLure** (BBA '78), Macon, May 11. **William T. Bradfield** (BBA '79, MAcc '80), Marietta, Sept. 30. **Barbara 'Bobbie' A. Farnham** (AB '79), Hilton Head Island, S.C., Sept. 20.

### 1980s

**Debra Silverthorn** (BBA '80, MAcc '81), Riverside, Conn., Aug. 21. **Stephen R. Dunn** (BBA '81), Eclectic, Ala., April 17. **Robert S. Yarbrough Sr.** (BBA '81), Columbus, Aug. 20. **Andrew Q.**

**Bairstow Sr.** (AB '82), Atlanta, Aug. 17. **Daniel N. Hannon** (BBA '83), St. Simons Island, Aug. 18. **Martha K. Lester** (AB '83), Cumming, June 18. **William A. Jennings** (BBA '84), Hickory, N.C., July 23. **Amanda G. Prus** (MMR '84), Cincinnati, Ohio, April 4. **Christopher D. Sherlock** (BBA '84), Monroe, July 12. **Edward 'Ned' H. Baker** (BBA '87), Cropwell, Ala., May 28. **Elizabeth W. Gandy** (BBA '87, MBA '89), Decatur, July 10. **Stacey W. Voshall** (BBA '87), Cumming, July 1. **Laura L. Thomas** (BBA '88), Washougal, Wash., June 9. **Theresa W. Burt** (BBA '89), Kodak, Tenn., Aug. 10. **Kurt J. Knotts-Simmons** (BBA '89), Lawrenceville, Sept. 12.

### 1990s

**Heather H. Dyke** (BBA '92), Brookhaven, May 5. **Mary 'Katherine' K. Carr** (BBA '93), Stone Mountain, Sept. 1. **Robert C. Sheffield Jr.** (BBA '93), Mint Hill, N.C., Aug. 26. **Sean P. Dwyer** (BBA '94), Atlanta, Aug. 12. **Kimberly G. McCleary** (BBA '94), Athens, May 18. **Julie D. Prefontaine** (BBA '99), Atlanta, July 29.

### 2000s

**Ralph 'Trip' E. Kennickell III** (AB '01), Savannah, Aug. 2. **Margaret M. Bryant** (BBA '02), Marietta, June 4. **Evan K. Schuetz** (BBA '02), Alpharetta, Aug. 25. **Nicole K. Curran** (BBA '03), Brookhaven, April 30. **Matthew B. Ray** (BBA '03), Cordele, Aug. 1. **J. Matthew Garrett** (BBA '06, MEd '08, PhD '14), Atlanta, July 5.

### 2020s

**Samuel Negron Jr.** (MBT '23), Demorest, June 30. ■

# A financial partner grounded in your growth.

We work with businesses to power what's next—opportunities, ideas and meaningful change. Synovus brings financial expertise to help you lead with lasting impact.



Start your journey  
at [synovus.com](https://synovus.com).

**SYNOVUS**  
get there



Synovus Bank, Member FDIC



TERRY COLLEGE OF BUSINESS  
600 South Lumpkin Street  
Athens, Georgia  
30602

NON-PROFIT  
ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Progress Printing Plus

# FULL-TIME. PART-TIME. ONLINE.

The Terry College of Business offers four MBA options and five specialized master's programs providing in-person and virtual instruction. Discover the right fit to help you take the next step in your career.

[terry.uga.edu/degrees-and-programs](http://terry.uga.edu/degrees-and-programs)

