WE HAVE THIS HUGE POPULATION THAT IS AGING AND WE HAVE THIS SOCIETY THAT WANTS TO PRETEND THAT EVERYONE IS YOUNG.”

— Gerontology professor
Dr. Rebecca Adams
Gerontology professor Dr. Rebecca Adams is on a mission. Like all of our faculty in the School of Health and Human Sciences, she wants to do her part to make the world safer, healthier, more just. Rebecca’s calling is to prepare her students for what she refers to as the “Silver Tsunami” — when an unprecedented number of aging baby boomers collides with a culture unwilling or unable to manage the issues of growing old.

As you’ll read on page 12, one way she’s carrying out her mission is by “Keeping it real in the classroom.” Rebecca is tackling the issues of aging with hands-on learning that stops her students in their tracks and makes a lasting impression about what it’s like to age. It’s an important topic, to be sure. I’m also excited that this class, and the program as a whole, is moving forward one of HHS’s strategic initiatives: to develop interdisciplinary and interprofessional curricular, research and career training programs.

Gerontology is by no means limited to our school; its reach is boundless, really. With an emphasis on interprofessional education, this is true of all our disciplines. We’re inviting and attracting students from all corners of campus — nursing, sociology, business and management — to add their field of study to the equation. How can we solve problems together? Bringing together different fields and professional experiences allows us to learn with, from and about each other — no matter how disparate the disciplines may seem. It enables students to bridge fields and forge exciting, important career paths, and makes them eminently employable with a range of skills that our communities and organizations need.

Our “Breakout HHS” news section will give you a feel for the breadth of our work — read about the outstanding achievements of our collective departments as they define their own ways of making the world safer, healthier, more just. Our students are eagerly part of the action. Take nutrition major Levi Saavedra, who recently earned an award when his passion to fight hunger started a movement. Levi shows us that at HHS, education is about more than a degree; it’s about making a difference.

I couldn’t be prouder. Thank you for reading this issue of HHS Online and for being a part of the excellent work that we’re doing.

Celia Hooper, Dean and Professor

“No matter our fields of study or areas of expertise, we share a common bond: the desire to make the world a safer, healthier, and more just place. This is our promise. This is what we stand for in the hearts and minds of everyone we serve. This is why people come to the School of Health and Human Sciences — to teach, to partner, to make a difference.”

BY THE NUMBERS: NATIONAL RANKINGS

2nd: The online Master of Education program in Early Childhood Education  
5th: The doctoral program in Human Development and Family Studies  
21st: The doctoral program in Kinesiology  
30th: The Master of Speech and Language Pathology  
78th: The Master of Social Work (jointly offered with N.C. A&T)
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_In the Fast Lane_ With unprecedented enrollment growth of 29 percent in the last two years, Kinesiology is now the third-largest department at UNCG and a preferred major for undergraduates preparing for allied health professions._
INAUGURAL DEAN’S LECTURE SERIES FEATURES EXPERT ON REPETITIVE BRAIN TRAUMA

HHS launched its inaugural Dean’s Lecture Series on Nov. 9, 2016, with a lecture by Dr. Robert Stern, one of the foremost experts on chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE).

Stern, a professor of neurology, neurosurgery, and anatomy and neurobiology at Boston University School of Medicine, spoke about the long-term effects of repetitive brain trauma often resulting from contact sports or military combat. The event was part of UNCG’s War & Peace Imagined event series.

Stern currently leads a collaborative study funded by a $16 million National Institutes of Health grant that investigates early diagnoses for living CTE patients. He serves on the Mackey-White Traumatic Brain Injury Committee of the NFL Players Association and appears frequently in national and international print and broadcast media for his work on CTE.

Stern’s other major areas of funded research include the assessment and treatment of Alzheimer’s disease, the cognitive effects of chemotherapy in the elderly, thyroid-brain relationships, and driving and dementia.

The Dean’s Lecture Series is supported by the Ethel Martus Lawther Fund.

— Campus Weekly

INSTITUTE MAKES INROADS

More than 300 colleges and universities across the nation are implementing interventions developed by The Institute to Promote Athlete Health and Wellness, impacting the lives of more than 100,000 student-athletes.

IPAHW, which tackles critical health and social issues that affect student-athletes as well as the institutions they attend, partners with the NCAA, the NFL Foundation, the NAIA, the National Center for Drug Free Sport and others to conduct this important work.

Interventions developed by the institute address such issues as alcohol, tobacco and drug use among athletes, the complex relationship between alcohol use and sexual risk-taking, and the under-reporting of concussions. IPAHW is now expanding into the unregulated use of dietary supplements among student-athletes.

THE BIG 100

GENETIC COUNSELING: 100 PERCENT of graduates secured jobs in the field within six months and 100 PERCENT passed the American Board of Genetic Counselors exam.

GERONTOLOGY: 100 PERCENT placement rate for graduates of the Gerontology MS and MS/MBA dual degree programs.

NUTRITION: 100 PERCENT of the department’s interns passed the national Registered Dietitian exam.

KINESIOLOGY: 100 PERCENT of Master of Science in Athletic Training graduates passed the Board of Certification Examination for Athletic Trainers.
NEW FACULTY
FACES
2016
ASHA HONORS

The American Speech Hearing Association honors Hooper and Flynn at convention

Dean Celia Hooper received the 2016 Honors of the Association from the American Speech Hearing Association (ASHA) at the group’s annual convention Nov. 17-19 in Philadelphia, Pa.

The honor, which recognizes members for distinguished contributions to the discipline of communication sciences and disorders, is ASHA’s highest distinction.

Dr. Perry Flynn received a 2016 Fellows of the Association, which recognizes outstanding achievement in clinical education, academic teaching, research and publications.

ASHA has 182,000 members.

BRIEFS

The Communication Sciences and Disorders Advisory Committee at Longwood University recognized Dr. Robert Mayo with the Friends of the Communication Sciences and Disorders Award for his contributions to the establishment and success of a new CSD graduate program. Mayo has taught a course on craniofacial anomalies for Longwood since the program’s inception in 2006.

Dr. Susan Phillips, former director of the New Faculty Mentoring Program, is offering a seminar for advanced doctoral students across departments at UNCG on strategies for success as a new faculty member. Topics include five-year planning, internal funding, university review processes, budgeting and time management.

ART, AGING AND ALZHEIMER’S

Collaborative, interdisciplinary research focuses on wellbeing of older adults

In a collaborative research project supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, Dr. Sudha Shreeniwas is examining the impact of structured, creative visual arts programs on the wellbeing of aging adults with cognitive limitations.

ARTmail for Alzheimer’s is a partnership between HDFS and the Creative Aging Network-NC.

The eight-week project includes two exchanges of artwork created by residents of two memory care centers. Each participant is paired with a partner from the other center and builds upon the artwork the partner sends to them. The program will culminate with a public exhibition of the artwork for participants, friends and family.

The overall research goal is to improve the quality of life of seniors with varied cognitive abilities and to build the capacity of community arts organizations to better serve them.

Undergraduate and graduate students are involved in the project at all stages, gaining hands-on experience in gerontology research and community programming for seniors. They will collect data through the spring of 2017, then begin analyses and dissemination.

Dr. Cheryl Buehler, director of Graduate Studies and winner of the 2016 HHS Graduate Mentoring Award, was also the school’s nomination for the UNCG Graduate Mentoring Award.

The awards recognize a faculty member who demonstrates excellence in mentoring graduate students. Mentors can take many roles, from working one-on-one in advising, teaching on research activities to supervising multiple students in research labs, practica or clinical settings.
HEAVY-HITTERS

Human Development and Family Studies brings in more dollars in external funding than any other department at UNCG. Now in its 17th year, the state-funded Rated License project, designed to improve the quality of child care services throughout the state, brings in about $3.5 million every year and has secured more than $50 million over its lifetime.

Dr. Linda Hestenes received continued funding from the N.C. Division of Child Development for the day care rating assessment project, an extraordinary vote of confidence from the state.

BOIT TAKES RESEARCH ABROAD

African diaspora faculty member heading to Tanzania

Dr. Rachel Boit was awarded a fellowship by the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program to travel to Tanzania to work with faculty at the Institute for Educational Development at Aga Khan University.

Boit was among 70 African diaspora scholars to receive the fellowships to travel to Africa beginning in December. Her fellowship will take place during the summer of 2017, when she will work to evaluate the current early childhood curriculum at the university and explore the involvement of teachers and parents in gender awareness and literacy stereotypes.

A native of Kenya, Boit’s research and teaching focus is on early childhood educational theory and practice. Through her scholarship, she prepares pre-service teachers who are aware of the importance of developing the whole child.

Now in its fourth year, the Carnegie program has helped 239 African-born scholars who live and work in North America to connect with their peers at universities throughout Africa. The program is designed to build capacity at the host institutions in Africa, and to develop long-term, mutually-beneficial partnerships between the universities. The fellowships are funded by Carnegie Corporation of New York and managed by the Institute of International Education.

— Campus Weekly

Dr. Deborah Cassidy, who had recently retired from UNCG after 26 years as an early childhood professor and researcher, died July 20. She was serving as president of the Governing Board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Cassidy, who focused her life’s work on advocating for early childhood educators and high quality early learning, took a four-year leave from teaching to serve as director of North Carolina’s Division of Child Development and Early Education.
Dr. Judy Kinney teaches Brianna Martin how to ride the handcycle (a bicycle that is hand-driven for people with disabilities). These skills are taught in Therapeutic Recreation courses such as CTR 437 Facilitation Techniques.
FULFILLING ITS MISSION
Community and Therapeutic Recreation earns outstanding accreditation review

The department received a glowing accreditation review from the Council on Accreditation of Parks, Recreation, Tourism and Related Professions, sponsored by the National Recreation and Park Association.

Among the findings:
The department’s mission, strategic plan and curriculum are relevant to the mission of the university and school.

Faculty are very attentive to the curriculum and committed to serving students at a high level to meet their educational and professional needs.

Recreation and park professionals are well-connected to the program in myriad ways.

Students are highly satisfied with the professional and career advising they receive from faculty.

BRIEFS

Dr. Benjamin Hickerson is a co-principal investigator on a research team that will study the impacts of park renovations on neighboring communities in Philadelphia, Pa.

Funded by the William Penn Foundation, the study is part of a larger planning project in Philadelphia known as “Reimagining the Civic Commons,” which fosters civic engagement, economic opportunity and environmental sustainability in the city. Hickerson is conducting the study with colleagues from Pennsylvania State University.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD
New leadership for the Department of Nutrition

Dr. Ron Morrison and Dr. Lauren Haldeman have been appointed chair and associate chair, respectively, of the Department of Nutrition.

Morrison, an associate professor, holds a bachelor’s degree in biology and a PhD in physiology, both from East Carolina University. His research focuses on the cellular and molecular mechanisms that regulate the development of obesity in children and obesity-related diseases.

Haldeman, an associate professor and director of undergraduate studies, earned master’s and doctorate degrees in nutritional sciences, both from the University of Connecticut. Her research on the effects of health perceptions, barriers, food insecurity and psychosocial issues on the dietary behaviors of Latinos and African-Americans in the Piedmont Triad has led to the development of targeted nutrition education interventions and materials for these audiences.

Members of the Nutrition Club, an undergraduate organization that hosts speakers on topics such as nutrition wellness, dietetics and science, participated in the Crop Walk and Kids Backpack program, addressing food insecurity needs in the community.

Members of the Nutrition Graduate Student Association taught basic nutrition education classes for various groups in the community, including churches, the elderly, and the Army and Navy Reserves.
THE INTERSECTION OF ALCOHOL AND SEX

STI rate among college students alarming

Dr. David Wyrick, an associate professor and director of the Institute to Promote Athlete Health and Wellness at UNCG, received continued funding from Pennsylvania State University for development of an online program designed to prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among college students.

The project, “The Intersection of Alcohol and Sex: Engineering an online STI Prevention Program,” aims to develop a new, more potent behavioral intervention that will reduce the incidence of STIs among college students in the United States.

“One in four college students is diagnosed with an STI at least once during their college experience. Sexual activity when drinking alcohol is highly prevalent among college students,” according to Wyrick’s abstract. “Few interventions have been developed that explicitly target the intersection of alcohol use and sexual risk behaviors, and none have been optimized.”

— Campus Weekly

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

With health coaches now covered under the Affordable Care Act, Public Health Education has developed a health coach training program to help students and health professionals obtain the skills required for the increasing number of health and wellness coaching careers across the nation.

Seizing on the rare opportunity to impact the healthcare system in this area, as well as certify health and wellness coaches both nationally and locally, the department has conducted four Health Coach Certification trainings and five trainings on motivational interviewing in the past year while also hosting an inaugural conference on health coaching.

Health coaching can include a focus on diet, exercise, weight loss, managing chronic conditions and more.

BRIEFS

Dr. Mike Perko’s new children’s book — “How to Eat, Leap and Sleep Like a Superhero” — was a Bronze prize winner in the National Health Information awards. Published by Welcoa, it is the only one of its kind to use national health recommendations for children to “reveal the superpowers of a healthy lifestyle.” Perko’s research focuses on young athletes and their use of sport performance products.

Dr. Paige Hall Smith, professor of public health education and director of the Center for Women’s Health and Wellness at UNCG, appeared as a guest on the VoiceAmerica Health and Wellness Channel show “Born to be Breastfed” in August. Her research interests include women’s health, breastfeeding and feminism, gender-based violence and healthy sexuality.

Dr. Amanda Tanner has received continued funding from Wake Forest University Health Sciences for a project that focuses on HIV infection among homosexual men who are racial or ethnic minorities. The project aims to develop an intervention that tailors use of social media to improve engagement and retention in care and health outcomes for underserved, underinsured and hard-to-reach young minority men with HIV.
Eleven Kinesiology faculty were recognized for their excellence in teaching, research and service:

**ANNE BRADY**: HHS Teaching Excellence Award

**DONNA DUFFY**: HUMARTS Award; HHS Community Engaged Scholar Award

**CATHY ENNIS**: Exemplary Paper Award, Research on Learning and Instruction in Physical Education, American Educational Research Association

**DIANE GILL**: Distinguished Contributions to Science and Research in Exercise and Sport Psychology Award, American Psychological Association

**TOM MARTINEK**: Program Dedication Award, University of Puerto Rico de Las Piedras; Thomas Martinek Community Service Award, UNCG Middle College

**KAREN POOLE**: The Mary Frances Stone Teaching Excellence Award, HHS

**LOUISA RAISBECK**: Jo Safrit Measurement Award

**CHRIS RHEA**: NIH Student Loan Repayment program

**RANDY SCHMITZ**: Fellow, National Athletic Trainers’ Association; Jo Safrit Measurement Award

**SANDY SHULTZ**: Hall of Fame, National Athletic Trainers Association

**AARON TERRANOVA**: HHS Outstanding Teaching Award

Dr. Allan Goldfarb received new funding from mediUSA for a study to evaluate energetic and biomechanical measures related to cycling performance and the effect of custom cycling orthotics on the outcome variables. Cycling efficiency is an important aspect for performance. A key factor that can improve biomechanical efficiency and possibly prevent injury is the position of the foot within the cycling shoe and the transfer of forces to the pedals.

**KINESIOLOGY ON THE RISE**

Kinesiology is now the third-largest department at UNCG, offering BS, MS, MSAT, EdD and PhD degrees to more than 750 undergraduate majors and 135 graduate students.

With unprecedented enrollment growth of **29 percent** in the last two years, Kinesiology is a preferred undergraduate major for students preparing for allied health professions such as PT, PA, AT and Cardiac Rehab. These professions are expected to grow at a rate of **21-45 percent** from 2012 to 2022, far outstripping the average job growth rate of **12-13 percent**, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
AFRICAN-AMERICAN FATHER-SON INTERVENTION

Research garners department’s first NIH grant

Dr. Tanya Coakley, an associate professor, became the first social work faculty member to receive a grant from the National Institutes of Health for her innovative new project—“Father intervention to prevent at-risk sexual behaviors in African-American boys.”

Coakley’s research has focused on the African-American family for most of her career. African-American males ages 13 to 29 are disproportionately affected by unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Little research has been conducted specifically on African-American fathers and their sons, her abstract says.

There also is a lack of research examining whether and how African-American fathers overcome barriers, such as their lack of knowledge and attitudes regarding talking with their sons about sexual health. Coakley aims to develop and test an innovative father-son intervention to prevent at-risk sexual behaviors in the target population.

Known to be community-engaged and innovative in her methods, Coakley plans to conduct research in African-American barber shops.

BRIEFS

Dr. Melissa Floyd-Pickard, department chair, received continued funding of $750,000 from the Center for Mental Health Services for the project “JMSW Behavioral Health Workforce Education Training Grant.” The Joint Master of Social Work Program, offered by UNCG and N.C. A&T, educates future social work clinicians who are committed to social justice, diversity and inclusion. The program will provide stipends to graduate students for experiential training and will recruit incoming students who intend to serve at-risk children and adolescents.

Dr. K. Jay Poole, an assistant professor, received renewed funding from Cone Health Foundation for “Partnership to Address Co-Occurring Disorders in Vulnerable Populations.” Poole’s research interests include gender and sexuality identity, clinical social work practice and gerontology in social work practice.

KEEPING PEACE, ADVANCING HEALTH

Civil-Military symposium hosted at UNCG

HHS and the Department of Peace and Conflict Studies were among the hosts of the Joint Civil-Military Interaction (JCMI) Key Leader Symposium, held Nov. 16-18 at UNCG’s Elliott University Center. This year’s theme was “Advancing Health through Civil-Military Interaction.”

The purpose of UNCG’s JCMI Research and Education Network, established in 2016 by faculty members in Peace and Conflict Studies, is to bring civil and military actors and scholars together to investigate issues impacting civil-military interaction in peacekeeping and humanitarian actions.

Speakers included researchers in global public health, health education, public and international affairs, and political science — in addition to retired U.S., Brazilian and German army officers. The symposium focused on violent conflict, humanitarian assistance and military medicine in areas such as Sudan and Nepal.

Dr. Thomas Matyók, JCMI executive director and UNCG Peace and Conflict Studies chair, helped plan the symposium. Other hosts included the Department of Political Science, International Global Studies and Lloyd Honors College.

— Campus Weekly

The department collaborated with the International Global Studies Program to offer a monthly lunch-and-learn series, featuring talks by visiting Fulbright Scholar Dr. Yuriy Loboda, Dr. Jeremy Rinker and Dr. Thomas Matyók.
GENETIC COUNSELORS ON THE JOB
Program receives glowing reviews from students, employers

In a recent survey of Genetic Counseling Program graduates and their employers, 100 percent of responding employers said they would hire a UNCG graduate again, saying they were “very satisfied” with the performance of their employees.

In addition to a 100 percent passing rate on the American Board of Genetic Counselors exam, the survey found that more than 70 percent of graduates are involved in the education of future genetic counselors, medical students or residents.

GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM

GERONTOLOGY PROGRAM GROWS
Students can now pursue a minor or post-baccalaureate certificate

Last fall the Gerontology Program began offering a 15-hour undergraduate minor in gerontology.

A minor in gerontology attracts undergraduates of any major at UNCG who are interested in a career in aging or personally interested in the topic. The minor is of special interest to undergraduates planning to pursue careers in the allied health fields, with businesses or nonprofits providing services or products to older adults and their families, or after attending graduate school as researchers in their respective fields.

Working with the Gerontology Program director and their own major advisor, students have an opportunity to complete a program of study customized to help them meet their personal or career goals. The minor consists of five 3-credit hour courses, one of which is required and all of which must be outside of the student’s major.

Students learn about the aging experience, analyze current opportunities and constraints on how people age, and interpret data and apply theories of aging to gain perspective on their own futures as older adults.

Gerontology also began offering its 16-hour post-baccalaureate certificate online this fall.

UNDERSTANDING OLDER CONSUMERS
Lunch & Lunch features Hwang

Gerontology hosted a UNCG GROWTH Lunch & Learn in October featuring Dr. Jiyoung Hwang, an assistant professor of marketing in the Bryan School of Business and Economics.

Hwang’s discussion, “Don’t refer to me as old or aging: Understanding older consumers,” focused on how best to approach this growing market, providing case studies of success and failure when branding to older consumers. Despite the dramatic rise in numbers of older consumers, there remains a lack of understanding about this promising consumer group.

Lunch & Learn presentations, sponsored twice each semester by Gerontology and HHS, are designed to facilitate transdisciplinary conversations and encourage aging-related research, teaching and community-university partnerships.
At the request of Dr. Rebecca Adams, one student arrived for class with his arm bound by a sling. Another taped down two fingers on her left hand to limit its use. Yet another wore multiple ankle weights that affected her mobility.

Rebecca, a professor who teaches “Critical Issues in Aging” at UNCG, brought cotton balls for her students to stuff in their ears.

“You guys know I already come impaired, right? I have hearing aids and did not wear them tonight,” explained Rebecca, the director of UNCG’s Gerontology Program. “Put these in your ears — this is what it sounds like.”

Her mission: to prepare students for what she calls the “Silver Tsunami” — when an unprecedented number of aging baby boomers collides with a culture unwilling or unable to manage the issues of growing old.

According to the Population Reference Bureau, a Washington, D.C.-based group that analyzes demographic, social and economic trends, the number of Americans ages 65 and older is projected to more than double over the next four decades, from 46 million to more than 98 million. That, in turn, will fuel a huge increase in the number of older adults in need of elder care.

“Quite frankly, there is some absurdity involved in this situation that gerontologists study and think about,” Rebecca says. “We have this huge population that is aging and we have this society that wants to pretend that everyone is young. We are not prepared.

“I am very proud of UNCG for continuing its commitment to gerontology because it shows some vision about what is needed, as opposed to what just happens to meet enrollment targets at this moment.”

As Rebecca herself is quick to point out, she’s an older adult teaching a class about older adults — she helped start UNCG’s Gerontology Program in 1983 — and her teaching is informed by personal experiences. The program now is part of HHS, which prides itself on dedicated faculty who enhance student success through relevant and transformational teaching.

Rebecca is one fine example.

“I am very comfortable talking about age-related changes that I notice in myself,” she says. “It helps me teach. It puts people at ease and makes it clear that it is OK to talk about those things. It is personal for me now.”

Rebecca strives to make it personal for her students, too, by keeping it real in the classroom. During a recent class they opened small boxes — called “aging kits” — containing bulky work gloves, a bottle of pills, a sewing kit and five pairs of glasses designed to mimic vision-related conditions older adults often struggle with, such as macular degeneration and glaucoma.

She asked the students to try basic tasks while wearing...
the gloves and various glasses: empty the pill bottle and sort the contents by color, thread the needle, remove a nickel or dime from your wallet, tie someone else’s shoes.

Epic failure ensued.

“I would just close my eyes all day if my sight was like this,” Stephen Simpson complained.

“I am never going to buy shoes with laces again,” added Ana Herrera. “It’s very simple, but it makes a point.”

Mission accomplished. Although not all of the students in this class will end up working directly with older adults after they graduate, most will benefit from the lessons learned here.

“We want to train our students to be able to be empathetic to older adults, and understand what their needs are and what their world view is through their physical and cognitive lenses,” Rebecca says. “One of the reasons we have so many international students and scholars is they take what they learn in the U.S. and start services back in their own countries when they leave here. It enhances the learning for everybody and I just love it.”

That’s exactly what Hamza Moafa plans to do when he finishes his doctorate in nursing at UNCG. One of two nursing students in Rebecca’s class, he earned a bachelor’s degree in nursing in Saudi Arabia, then completed a master’s in the field at the University of Miami. At UNCG, he plans to focus his research on diabetes and adherence to medication among older adults.

The aging kit exercise opened his eyes to at least one reason why older adults may have trouble taking medications correctly.

“I wasn’t able to see the colors of the pills. This showed me how vision issues can affect adherence to medication,” says Hamza, adding that he encourages fellow nursing students to take the class because of the holistic view of older adults it provides.

“This is one of the benefits I got from this class, experiencing the health problems myself. I can feel it and it makes me more passionate about my research,” he says. “No matter how much you know about an issue, you will never understand it unless you experience it.”

Interdisciplinary learning is another strength of the Gerontology Program, Rebecca notes.

“That’s really the whole wonder of this class. Now interprofessional training is becoming a catchword — learning that others in other professions can contribute. In Gerontology that’s what we’ve been doing since we started.”

The Gerontology Program offers an MS in Gerontology, an MS in Gerontology with an Aging and Business Concentration, an MS in Gerontology with a Non-Profit Management Concentration, a dual degree with an MS in Gerontology and an MBA in Business, and a post-baccalaureate certificate, now available online. Last fall, the program brought back its undergraduate minor in Gerontology.
Epic Failure  Wearing bulky gloves and glasses designed to mimic macular degeneration, glaucoma and other conditions older adults often struggle with, students in Dr. Rebecca Adams’ gerontology class try mightily to perform simple tasks such as removing pills from a medicine bottle and sorting them by color. The exercise is designed to increase understanding of the daily challenges many older adults face.
Dr. Susan Calkins’ long-term, NIH-funded research looks at the social and emotional development of children.

A 2-year-old child is handed a box that seems impossible to open. What does she do? Ask her mother for help? Or become frustrated and begin to cry and scream?

Seventeen years ago, this is where Dr. Susan Calkins’ current research began. As she’s investigated how humans react in challenging situations, she’s been able to identify how interconnected happiness and success are to our ability to respond with the proper emotions when under stress.

Susan is a Bank of America Excellence Professor in the Department of Health and Human Sciences. She’s the type of investigator that sticks with the same thread and the same participants for many years. Longitudinal studies and basic bench science, she asserts, are critical to achieving her ultimate goal: to shed light on early human development so that other researchers can develop the interventions needed to help our children be successful.

Susan’s research focuses on what’s known as self-regulation: the constant monitoring and controlling of our own behavior — the foundation of strong mental health, academic achievement and healthy social relationships.

“It’s not enough to know that kids change. We must know why,” Susan reasons. Only then can we put programs and strategies in place for our schools, homes and communities.

Now the toddlers she once tested with activities like the box challenge are college students. Susan has followed them from infancy to adulthood, collaborating on a variety of studies that look at the role of parenting, exercise and health in the social and emotional development of children.

Over the course of her long-term, NIH-funded study, Susan has worked side-by-side with faculty across a number of departments and disciplines, including Laurie Gold in Kinesiology, Susan Keane and Lilly Shanahan in Psychology, as well as Esther Leerkes and the late Marion O’Brien in Human Development and Family Studies.

Collaborative, interdisciplinary research is a strong suit within HHS.

“We have some real talent at UNCG,” Susan says. “Putting together researchers from a variety of fields makes a big difference in being able to do research that ultimately leads to interventions that could impact people’s lives.”
Impacting Lives  Dr. Susan Calkins, Bank of America Excellence Professor in HHS, collaborates with faculty across a number of departments and disciplines in her quest to understand the foundations of strong mental health, academic achievement and healthy social relationships.
Early detection of risk factors could help protect North Carolina children

All told, 874 children in North Carolina attempted suicide during the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, according to the N.C. Department for Health and Human Services. Of these attempts, 56 resulted in death. Elementary school students accounted for 66 of the attempts overall, and two of the deaths.

UNCG Assistant Professor of Social Work Dr. Danielle Swick hopes that early detection of risk factors and preventative interventions can reduce suicide attempts in the future. She and Dr. Stephanie Daniel of the Wake Forest School of Medicine are analyzing data from more than 4,000 students in three counties to determine which mental health risk factors are the most common and, thus, what problems should be targeted first for intervention. They want to reach the greatest number of at-risk kids as early as possible.

The data were collected by administering a risk assessment tool to students that came to school-based health centers in the three counties between 2011 and 2015. The counties represent the various communities across North Carolina: one rural, one suburban and one semi-rural.

School-based health centers are convenient, trusted, affordable and widely-used. In the suburban and semi-rural counties studied, 90 percent of students utilized health services provided by their school. In the rural county, 50 percent used them.

“School-based health centers provide an invaluable service to children and their families, particularly around prevention and risk identification,” Danielle explains. “Really getting in there early to help children, ultimately, saves so much down the road. And it saves money.”

At the centers, students can easily access services — such as mental health counseling — in a familiar environment without drawing the attention of their peers, helping to circumvent issues related to the stigma around mental illness.

Danielle found that the single-most common risk factor across all three counties was having an in-school or out-of-school suspension. She also found that far more students were sexually active in the rural county than in the suburban and semi-rural counties. Additional analyses will determine if there are notable differences across race, age or gender. Understanding which students are facing what risks forms the basis of deciding which interventions school-based health centers should implement and how.

Interventions can, for example, focus on teaching students coping skills or how to form healthy relationships with others, all of which are protective factors against developing a mental illness.

By treating students who are already suffering as early as possible and stepping in to solve potential problems before they even develop, the school systems will help students succeed not just academically, but in every respect.

“If a child can’t sit still in their chair in the classroom, because they’re experiencing behavioral challenges, they’re not going to be able to learn,” Danielle says. “How can you expect a child to learn if they’re experiencing either mental health challenges or physical health challenges? It’s really important that the school-based health center is an integrated model and addresses the needs of the whole child.”

— Olivia Wood
Office of Research and Economic Development
MORE THAN A DEGREE — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Nutrition student’s passion to fight hunger starts a movement on campus

Nutrition major Elisven “Levi” Saavedra received the Community Impact Award from the North Carolina Campus Compact for his work with UNCG’s Food Recovery Network (FRN). The award is the highest given by the statewide compact of colleges and universities with a shared commitment to community engagement.

FRN is a national nonprofit that works to connect students on college campuses to fight food waste and hunger. The UNCG chapter, founded in 2015 by Levi and several fellow students, recovers surplus food from UNCG Dining Services that otherwise would be thrown away and donates it to nonprofit agencies that feed people in Greensboro.

What started as five students with a passion to fight hunger has transformed into a growing student organization with an executive board, recovery leaders and dozens of active members. UNCG’s FRN, one of 161 chapters across 39 states, conducted its first recovery on April 30, 2015. Since then, the student organization has recovered more than 8,000 pounds of perishable food from campus dining halls. FRN recovers the food several times a week and delivers it to the Salvation Army of Greensboro and Greensboro Urban Ministry.

The group has created an inclusive community at UNCG that focuses on food insecurity and nutrition, food waste and sustainability, and fighting hunger.

Campus Compact, a national coalition of nearly 1,100 colleges and universities dedicated solely to campus-based civic engagement, enables campuses to develop students’ citizenship skills and forge effective community partnerships.

LIVING OUR “SERVICE” MOTTO

Two HHS seniors named Spartans of Promise

Remi Olagoke, a speech language pathology major from Raleigh, North Carolina (pictured, left), and Joshua Parish, a health studies major from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were among the 10 outstanding seniors named 2016 Spartans of Promise by the UNCG Alumni Association.

The honor, supported each year by the Alumni Association and its 50th Reunion class, recognizes UNCG seniors who have excelled in both academics and service endeavors.

Remi is a member of the African Student Union, where she participated in Medicine Bottles for Congo. Active in the UNCG community and service, she is a recipient of the Bronze and Silver Leadership Challenge Medallion and a Purpose & Vision Navigator Trainer. After graduation this spring, she plans to pursue a master’s degree in speech pathology and become a licensed clinical speech language pathologist working in a hospital or private practice.

Joshua is a nontraditional student in the Public Health online degree program. While having a family and full-time career serving as the Fire Captain and Paramedic Director of the Milwaukee Fire Cadet Program, he continues to achieve academically and serve his community. He is a CPR instructor and serves as the Run Captain of the Black Men Run Milwaukee club and Vice President of the Milwaukee Brotherhood of Firefighters. He has made the Dean’s and Chancellor’s list and received many service awards.

The award recipients were recognized in October at the Alumni of Distinction Awards Dinner, a signature Homecoming event.
The annual HHS Donor Appreciation Celebration was held Nov. 1 in the Leonard J. Kaplan Center for Wellness. Chancellor Franklin D. Gilliam and Jackie Gilliam joined Dean Celia Hooper in thanking our generous donors. More than 200 students are supported through HHS scholarships and many receive the benefits of our program support from donors. Alex Bastin, a Community and Therapeutic Recreation student, spoke on behalf of these students. Top left: Pat Hielscher ’66 MS ’70, Lynwood Johnson and Dr. Virginia Stone Johnson ’70; Top right: Dr. Sandra Shultz (KIN), Dr. Catherine Ennis ’77 (KIN), Kathi Lester ’09, MA ’12, president of the HHS Alumni Association; Bottom left: Jane Lawrence ’66, Dr. Mark Fine (HDFS), and Nadine Allen; Bottom right: Dr. Stuart Schleien (CTR), Alex Bastin ’17, and Dr. Leandra A. Bedini (CTR)

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS CULTURES
“Global citizen” sets out to make the world a better place

Lisanne Bluemel, a 2016 graduate of UNCG with a master’s degree in Peace and Conflict Studies, is interning with the Global Opportunities Center in Greensboro. Originally from Iserlohn, Germany, Lisanne also is a part of the Opportunity Greensboro Fellows Program, which aims to retain local talent in the area and selectively chose 36 fellows for its first cohort.

Opportunity Greensboro is a consortium of business and higher education leaders who are working to further the connections between businesses and universities. Through a national model of collaboration, the consortium strives to create for Greensboro a competitive advantage for business growth.

As the GO Center’s Community Engagement Coordinator, Lisanne focuses on program development and has further explored her personal interest in international higher education.

Lisanne, who describes herself as a global citizen, has studied and lived in Latvia, the Netherlands, India, Pakistan and the U.S. As for the future, she hopes to further contribute to the “bridge-building process” between different nationalities and cultures and thus add to a more peaceful society.
Top, left to right: HHS faculty, staff and alumni participate in the UNCG homecoming parade. Student Success Navigator Bill Johnson is joined by his wife Rebecca Johnson ’90 and Kathi Lester (president of the HHS Alumni Association and executive vice president of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce) along the parade route. Bill is joined by students J’Dari and J’Dia Lott in the HHS tent. KIN Department Chair Sandy Shultz is joined by Associate Professor Chris Rhea and students Yuki Sugimoto and Chanel Lojacono.

Above: Dean Celia Hooper learns of her election as Ms. Homecoming 2016. Right: Dean Hooper takes a ride during the Homecoming parade and proves she’s got the beauty queen wave down pat.