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# Bagwell College OF EDUCATION

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2022-23 YEAR IN REVIEW

## KSU Receives Computer Boost

WITH NEW FUNDING FROM  
GOOGLE AND KAPOR CENTER

## CALL ME MISTER® and KSU

PARTNER TO INCREASE THE NUMBER  
OF BLACK MALE EDUCATORS

## Interactive Technology LEADS TO RELEVANT RESEARCH

HOW THE NEXUS OF HOPSCOTCH  
AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE EASES  
ANXIETY ABOUT CONDUCTING  
RELEVANT RESEARCH

**FACEBOOK**

**INSTAGRAM**

**USE SOCIAL MEDIA  
TO STAY IN  
TOUCH WITH  
BAGWELL COLLEGE  
OF EDUCATION**

**@BagwellCollege**

**YOUTUBE**

**TWITTER-X**

This year the Bagwell College of Education has been refreshing all of its social media platforms! Whether you are an incoming or current student, staff member or Bagwell alumnus, our social media platforms will help you stay up to date with everything going on in the Bagwell College.

You can access all of our official social media accounts through our [linktr.ee/bagwellcollege](https://linktr.ee/bagwellcollege). This is conveniently located in the bio of each of our accounts for easy navigation between platforms.

Our main accounts are not the only ones that are being refreshed, so check out our department social media accounts as well. Many of our departments, including **Bagwell Advising and Student Success Center**, have their own pages for more detailed and relevant updates.

**What's new? Our YouTube Channel!**

You will find alumni testimonials and interviews uploaded throughout the year.



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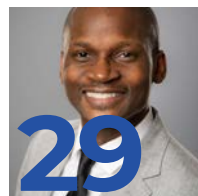
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## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



“

WE ENJOY CHALLENGING THE MAINSTREAM APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING SO THAT OUR GRADUATES ARE BETTER PREPARED TO TEACH IN THE HIGH-TECH, MULTICULTURAL CLASSROOMS OF THE 21ST CENTURY.

DEAN EPPS

**T**hank you for your interest in the Bagwell College of Education at Kennesaw State University. During our 45-year history, we have experienced incredible growth and have become a leader in the preparation of elite teachers and effective educational leaders. We are consistently one of the top producers of teachers in Georgia and have developed a reputation for innovation that keeps us at the forefront of merging education with technology. We enjoy challenging the mainstream approaches to teaching and learning so that our graduates are better prepared to teach in the multicultural, high-tech classrooms of the 21st century.

Our 2022 – 2023 Year-in-Review Magazine is designed to provide you with a glimpse into our partnerships, our people, our innovations, our research, and our proven ability to capture technology for effective educational use. You will learn about several of our cutting-edge labs that provide our students and our K-12 partners with the latest technology in our industry.

In four short years, our award-winning Interactive Research Methods Lab has attained global credibility in the field of research, and this remarkable story is symbolic of the Bagwell College advantage that our students enjoy.

Our iTeach unit in Bagwell's School of

Instructional Technology & Innovation (SITI) employs dozens of experienced educators who consult with K-12 teachers and leaders and are experts in Instructional Technology, Personalized Learning, Maker-Ed, and Social and Emotional Learning.

The SITI Innovation Lab is our incubator for educational innovation, providing an atmosphere in which imaginations run wild! It's where teacher candidates experiment with and nurture high-impact, relevant pedagogies designed for success in a quickly changing world.

Our AVATAR lab provides teacher candidates with a mixed-reality environment to receive real-time feedback as they engage with avatars, which are programmed to simulate multicultural students of varying age groups. The avatars are played by actors in KSU's theatre program.

Now, more than ever, we are experiencing educational shifts brought on by advances in technology and research, and we are positioned to provide leadership during these always interesting and frequently challenging times.

We are fortunate that our amazing partners – from pre-schools to K-12 schools to corporations and non-profit agencies – recognize that it is up to the community as a whole to provide ALL children with a quality education that prepares them to thrive in society. At KSU, seven colleges share in the

AN

preparation of future educators and educational leaders as members of the EPP, Education Preparation Provider. (More about the EPP below)

Most notably, we take great pride in our remarkable students, so we are providing a glimpse of their clubs and cultural groups that help create a strong sense of belonging, purpose and camaraderie within the college. Our people – students, faculty and staff - are the best!

I am delighted to share the highlights of the last academic year with you. We have a passion for providing Georgia's students with a quality education that is designed to ensure success in the 21st-century workforce. In the Bagwell College, we believe that education is a lifelong process that influences lives in profound ways; therefore, our goal is to create a future in which all of

Georgia's students and educators are poised to achieve success.

Sincerely,



Adrian L. Epps, Ed.D.  
Dean and Chantal & Tommy Bagwell Endowed Dean's Chair

## DEANS OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROVIDER [EPP] COLLEGES AT KSU

At Kennesaw State University, we believe that preparing great teachers comes from a well-rounded education that includes gaining valuable expertise from various experts in their field. While Bagwell College of Education takes the lead, other colleges at KSU play an important role in the success of our students, and they are listed below with a photo of their dean. Teacher preparation is a campus-wide responsibility at KSU, and the Bagwell College of Education is grateful for the priority KSU places on preparing great teachers for 21st century classrooms.



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Interim Dean  
College of the Arts



Dr. Juliet Langman  
Dean  
Graduate College



Dr. Karen Kornweibel  
Dean  
Journey Honors College



Dr. Monica Swahn  
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Dr. Betty L. Siegel Distinguished Chair in Health and Wellness  
Wellstar College of Health and Human Services



Dr. Sumanth Yenduri  
Dean  
College of Computing and Software Engineering



Dr. Catherine Kaukinen  
Dean  
Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences



Dr. Vishnu Suppiramaniam  
Interim Dean  
College of Science and Mathematics

## PARTNERSHIPS

# PARTNERS ARE ESSENTIAL TO HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS

In the 21st century, preparing quality-driven, inclusive, innovative educators has reached the pinnacle of importance. High quality education, mentoring, coaching, and induction support have never been more important for new teachers and leaders. We are fortunate to have established partnerships with many preschools, K-12 schools, corporate, and non-profit communities that support our students.

On the next page, you will find “Partnership Spotlights” that will provide snapshots of the many ways collaborators help to provide a formidable and successful career path for new teachers and educational leaders.

Below you will find a list of the Bagwell College’s VIPs... our **Very Important Partners!**



## SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Atlanta Public Schools  
 Bartow County Schools  
 Calhoun City Schools  
 Cartersville City Schools  
 Cherokee County Schools  
 Cobb County Schools  
 City of Decatur Schools  
 Clayton County Schools  
 Columbia County Schools  
 DeKalb County Schools  
 Douglas County Schools  
 Fayette County Schools  
 Floyd County Schools  
 Forsyth County Schools  
 Fulton County Schools  
 Gordon County Schools  
 Gwinnett County Schools  
 Hall County Schools  
 Marietta City Schools  
 Paulding County Schools  
 Pickens County Schools  
 Rockdale County Schools  
 Rome City Schools  
 Walton County Schools  
 Whitfield County Schools

## KSU PARTNERS

College of the Arts

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning  
 College of Computing and Software Engineering  
 College of Science and Mathematics  
 Graduate College  
 KSU Journey Honors College  
 Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences  
 Wellstar College of Health and Human Services

## CORPORATE, GOVERNMENTAL & COLLEGIATE PARTNERS

Chantal and Tommy Bagwell  
 Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation  
 Georgia Aquarium  
 Georgia Department of Education  
 Georgia Power Company  
 Georgia Professional Standards Commission  
 Google  
 Kapor Center  
 PNC Bank  
 UL-Fire Safety Research Institute (Underwriters Laboratories Solutions)  
 Universidad Complutense de Madrid  
 Universidad del Rosario, Columbia

## PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHTS

### BAGWELL'S AVATAR LAB AND THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Model Induction Program for Special Education Teachers is designed to improve the retention of new special education teachers through high quality mentoring, coaching, and induction support. This professional learning program is part of a 2020 U.S. Department of Education \$500,000 Provider Retention Grant to the Georgia Department of Education that is renewable for up to five years. One of the participating school districts, Marietta City Schools, recently celebrated their induction cohort completing the year-long professional learning program using the AVATAR lab.



(PLE) to teachers participating in the GRE4T grant with GaDOE. Teachers take the three courses in the endorsement from SITI and GaDOE pays for the courses through the GRE4T grant. The PLE prepares educators to personalize learning for K-12 students through competencies such as executive functioning, learner agency, asset-based dispositions, and growth and mastery mindset.

### ITEACH & MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

As part of the Mississippi Connects project, the Mississippi Department of Education (MDE) established a Digital Learning Coach program to provide individualized support to administrators and teachers as they



implement digital learning best practices to improve student outcomes. Beginning in June 2021, MDE partnered with iTeach to implement a comprehensive professional development program focused on supporting Digital Learning Coaches in their practice. Support from iTeach addresses six key areas: (1) one-on-one coaching, (2) self-paced coaching modules, (3) facilitation of collaborative monthly meetings, (4) facilitation of professional development events, (5) delivery of webinars, and (6) monthly consulting meetings with MDE leadership. Through this partnership, iTeach has implemented an effective model for virtual coaching support.

### FAST START ACADEMY PARTNERSHIP WITH MARIETTA CITY SCHOOLS

Megan Adams, associate professor of reading education and Sanjuana Rodriguez, associate professor of reading and literacy education lead a 22-year partnership with Marietta City Schools to offer the Fast Start Academy, a four-week summer program housed in KSU's Bagwell College of Education. In the Fast Start Academy, KSU students and faculty provide tutoring and educational

activities for elementary school children who are below grade level in reading. The academy is provided at no cost to families in an effort to improve



literacy skills and provide positive role models. Marietta City Schools provides breakfast and lunch for the students and offers them bus service to and from the KSU campus. Drs. Adams and

Rodriguez have led this program for several years. "I think what's most important about Fast Start is the impact on kids that the University is having," said Rodriguez. "It's a way for us to serve our local community while also being a great opportunity for our teacher candidates." Adams added that "Fast Start is even more important now than ever before as research indicates many K-12 students suffered academic and/or social setbacks during the Covid pandemic."

### THE INNOVATION LAB INSPIRES K-12 PARTNERS TO JOIN IN THE FUN

For the last five years, the Bagwell College's Innovation Lab has been the place to go to encourage creativity and let the imagination



run wild. And it's not just popular with our college students. When our K-12 district partners found out about it, they wanted to share in the experience. Workshops and lessons were created for many different grade levels, some workshops for teachers only, and others designed for K-12 students to enjoy. K-12 visits have inspired some schools to create their own Innovation Labs. "I have provided consulting services with districts that want to start their own innovation labs," said Helen Maddox, instructional technology coach and manager of Bagwell's Innovation Lab. "I met with Clarkdale Elementary at their school along with iTeach consultants to assist them in planning their new lab called The Nest." Several other schools are pursuing onsite labs, and we envision innovation labs becoming popular in an increasing number of K-12 settings.

### ROCKDALE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND BAGWELL'S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP PARTNER TO PROVIDE A NEW DIMENSION TO LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Bagwell's Department of Educational Leadership partners with Rockdale County Public Schools to offer embedded leadership development in concert with Rockdale's



ASPIRE leadership cohort and REAL leadership academy, which are designed for individuals who want to become entry-level leaders in the school district. Leaders developed in both programs have unprecedented opportunities for 'learning while doing' in real school

environments with regular support from seasoned leaders. This thoughtful, intentional programming, coupled with standards-based leadership development across the partnership, represents a level of leader preparation rarely matched in any field.

### GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HIRES SITI TO OFFER THE PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENDORSEMENT AS PART OF THE GRE4T INITIATIVE

The School of Instructional Technology & Innovation (SITI) is partnering with the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to offer the Personalized Learning Endorsement

THANKYOU, 2022-2023 DONORS

**\$1,000,000**

Chantal and Tommy Bagwell

**\$100,000 - \$999,999**

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Google, LLC  
Mitchell Kapor Foundation  
Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.

**\$40,000 - \$99,999**

Mr. Don Johnson  
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# COMPUTER EDUCATION: Boost with new funding from Google, Kapor Center

**B**agwell College of Education is enhancing its computer science teacher education resources, thanks to grants from Google and the Kapor Center.

Google's grant will help Bagwell expand computer science teacher preparation offerings, recruitment, and support, while the funding from the Kapor Center for STEM education will support work to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in computer science education.

"These grants will help us bolster our efforts in computer education and enable us to diversify the pool of educators in that field, both critical areas of need in Georgia and in the region," Dean Adrian Epps said.

Jobs in computing fields are expected to grow 13% by 2026, yet just 46% of Black and Hispanic students say they have classes in computer science in their high schools, compared to 52% of white students. In addition, just 31% of female high school students say computer education is important, while 49% of male students feel that way. At KSU, these grants will fuel the effort to change some of those perceptions.

The Google grant will help Bagwell launch and attract educators for its currently offered computer science endorsement certificate and its planned computer science concentration within the Master of Arts in Teaching program. In addition, the Bagwell College will hire a full-time administrator dedicated to recruiting undergraduates receiving degrees in education from Georgia's historically black colleges and universities to KSU's Master of Arts in Teaching program. Once here, students can earn a supplementary certification in computer science education.

"Google is proud to support KSU's work to develop the computer science teacher workforce in Georgia," said Shanika Hope, director of Google's Education for Social Impact team. "Investing in educators is critical to ensuring students from every background can access a computer science education and the future opportunities this can unlock." For Google, this investment is part of a larger initiative to fund computer science education-focused nonprofit organizations reaching underserved students in major urban centers and rural communities.



Based in Oakland, California, and founded by Mitchell Kapor, the inventor of Lotus 1-2-3 software, the Kapor Center is dedicated to diversifying education in STEM fields. "The Kapor Center is proud to support Bagwell College in its efforts to build more equitable pathways into computer science," said Allison Scott, CEO of the Kapor Center. "Higher education has a critical role to play, both in creating opportunities

for students and in ensuring that the companies that wield such profound influence in our lives are informed by and reflect the full diversity of the communities they impact."

Epps said Bagwell has a partnership in the works with KSU's College of Computer Science and Engineering to enhance curricula, as well as a plan for outreach into local schools to improve computer science education through internships and communities of practice for STEM teachers of color in Georgia.



**THESE GRANTS WILL HELP US BOLSTER OUR EFFORTS IN COMPUTER EDUCATION AND ENABLE US TO DIVERSIFY THE POOL OF EDUCATORS IN THAT FIELD, BOTH CRITICAL AREAS OF NEED IN GEORGIA AND IN THE REGION.**

**DEAN EPPS**

# ACCREDITATION REVIEW APPLAUDS OUR LEADERSHIP IN USING RIGOROUS ISTE TECHNOLOGY STANDARDS

**O**n February 9, 2023, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) voted to accept the recommendation of the GaPSC Fall 2022 Continuing Approval Review for Kennesaw State University. Continuing approval indicates that the KSU Educator Preparation Program (EPP) meets each of the six Georgia standards: 1) Content and Pedagogical Knowledge; 2) Clinical Partnerships and Practice; 3) Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity; 4) Program Impact; 5) Provider Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement; and 6) Special Georgia Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs. The GaPSC Fall 2022 Continuing Approval Review for Kennesaw State University indicated the EPP met all standards, without any areas of concern, and exceeded Standard 1.5 in Technology.

For Standard 1.5, the GaPSC review team noted, “Through all programs, the EPP ensures that candidates model and apply technology standards as they design, implement, and assess learning experiences to engage students and improve learning and enrich professional practice. This was particularly noteworthy in the ways in which the EPP utilized the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) standards as a baseline to develop even more rigorous standards. Even prior to the need to complete clinical practice experiences online due to COVID, the EPP was proactive and added a criterion to a key assessment to assess technology usage and integration and added online blended learning into clinical experiences. It is also evident through triangulated data, including interviews and documentation, that candidates and completers are leading the integration of technology-enhanced learning and providing professional learning related to technology in schools.”

“We were pleased with the GaPSC’s recognition of our decision to prioritize technology standards several years ago,” said Melissa Driver, associate dean for curriculum catalyst and innovations. “Our programs are known for quality and innovation, and we are proud to prepare educators who are well-trained and equipped to teach and lead with technology.”

As a part of the larger EPP review, 38 individual certification areas were evaluated on their discipline-specific educator preparation standards along with the Content and Pedagogical Knowledge and Special Georgia Requirements for Educator Preparation Programs approval standards. These programs included Initial Teaching, Endorsements, and Service and Leadership programs, several of which are taught throughout the university in the College of the Arts, Wellstar College of Health and Human Services, and the Norman J. Radow College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The EPP dedicated extensive time to preparing for this reaccreditation, with preparations culminating in 2022 for the written report and site visit. This included 1466 individual evidence files prepared and submitted for review by the GaPSC site review team in advance of the site visit in November 2022. Faculty, staff, college leadership, students, alumni, and community partners participated in 25 group interviews over two days including:

- 52 Faculty, including 31 Program Coordinators
- 25 P-12 Partners including 2 Superintendents, 3 Principals, and 2 State Leaders
- 13 Staff
- 36 Current Students
- 33 Former Students

Kennesaw State University continues to be one of the top producing educator preparation providers in the state of Georgia. We are proud of our students, partners, faculty, staff, and administration who consistently strive to ensure high quality programs to prepare educators to teach and lead in schools across the state, nation, and globe. We are grateful for our partners at the GaPSC and the site review team who volunteered their time and efforts to provide meaningful feedback throughout the process. The Bagwell College of Education is committed to continuous improvement and providing exceptional educator preparation for teachers and leaders.

## RESEARCH WITH RELEVANCE

# KSU-Georgia Aquarium partnership takes teachers from rivers to reefs

A NEW PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY AND GEORGIA AQUARIUM IS TAKING GEORGIA K-12 SCIENCE TEACHERS INTO THE GREAT OUTDOORS SO THEY CAN BRING HANDS-ON LESSONS BACK TO THE CLASSROOM.

**T**hrough the Aquarium's revamped Rivers to Reefs program, three KSU Bagwell College faculty and Georgia Aquarium staff will take area science teachers from the rivers of Atlanta, Georgia to the state's coast to learn about water ecosystems and water quality in their communities. The partnership centers around lessons developed by the Aquarium and a water curriculum toolkit developed by Bagwell's Anna Arias, associate professor of elementary science education, and assistant professors of science education Rasheda Likely and Jessica Stephenson Reaves.

"This partnership allows us to leverage the knowledge and resources of the Aquarium staff with our own knowledge and experience as educators," Arias said. "The teachers can see how scientists at the Aquarium learn about water organisms and ecosystems and research the impacts of pollution, and as education professors, we bring knowledge of how to convert these concepts into curriculum, and investigations that teachers can bring back to their classrooms."

Following the lead of Molly Johnson, Georgia Aquarium's manager of education programs, and her team, Arias, Likely and Stephenson Reaves will support a group of 16 science teachers from Title I schools across

Georgia on a weeklong trip with stops for lessons along the way. The group will begin their trip at the Aquarium, where they'll undergo training on water quality testing, pollution and water ecosystems.

The rest of the week includes visits to Panola Mountain, Juliette Dam, Piedmont Wildlife Refuge, a canoe exploration of the Altamaha, Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers, and stops at the salt marshes and estuaries on Skidaway Island near Savannah. The travel and training culminate in exploration of Gray's Reef, where educators will investigate plankton and learn about the impacts of microplastics on water ecosystems. The partnership will not only benefit K-12 teachers in the area, but also allow both KSU and Georgia Aquarium to research what participating teachers take away and how they use it in their classrooms, both from the Aquarium's lessons and the use of the KSU water curriculum toolkit.

"KSU has been instrumental in



developing techniques for data collection throughout the trip," Johnson said. "Georgia Aquarium is working to develop local advocates and stewards for Georgia's waterways, and partnerships like these are an important component of instilling a sense of passion for our environment."

In addition to benefiting children in the classroom with the knowledge teachers will bring back from their trip, the KSU team will use the Rivers to Reefs program as a research opportunity. Their research will help KSU educators learn more about how K-12 teacher professional development opportunities with meaningful experiences outside the classroom can be provided in the state. "In experiential or outdoor

Continued on p.12

AQUARIUM PARTNERSHIP CONT.



education, teachable moments are around every bend in a river, or every curve on a trail,” Stephenson Reaves said. “Part of what we’ll be doing is highlighting these exciting and unplanned learning opportunities that happen along the way, and making connections to the content standards, classroom activities, and other resources that support student learning based on the experiences that teachers are having.”

For Likely, the trip and research combine personal passions, from diversity and inclusion to a love for the water as a native Floridian. “I think that with this KSU team and the partnership with Georgia Aquarium, we can create an inclusive, equitable, and accessible space for teachers and learners to experience science knowledge together,” she said.

Arias said the partnership centers on one of our most basic needs — water — and allows participating teachers to establish an important connection between the waterfronts and drinking water in their communities, and sources of water ecosystems around the state.

“Water is a key part of all of our lives. We use water every day for eating, cooking, cleaning, and we know our water and wildlife resources are intrinsically tied to clean water,” Stephenson Reaves said. “The best way to engage the public in conservation is through education programs that teach the importance of these resources and how we can protect these resources for future generations. Everyone has a connection to water, and as educators if we can leverage those personal ties and experiences, we can make the message of conservation more personal and meaningful.”



**T**wo Kennesaw State University faculty members have received a Spencer Foundation grant for a research project to incorporate Asian American history in Georgia school curriculum.

Bagwell College of Education faculty Theresa Alviar-Martin, an associate professor of curriculum and instruction and Sohyun An, a full professor of social studies education, say the \$50,000 grant is the outcome of a grassroots effort from Asian American students, parents and teachers in the metro Atlanta community. An said the effort to develop Georgia curriculum that includes the diverse and complex stories of Asian American history was bolstered by both an increase in violence against Asian Americans across the U.S.

**DRIVEN TO LEARN:**  
**Discovering better approaches to helping the grieving**

# Kennesaw State faculty

## receive grant for K-12 Asian American studies research

during the coronavirus pandemic and the March 2021 spa shootings in Acworth and Atlanta that claimed the lives of eight people, six of whom were Asian immigrant women.

“The shootings were right in our backyard, so it really became a moment of reckoning for students, parents, teachers and others in the Asian American community in Georgia,” An said. “And we concluded that education is the key to stopping hate against the Asian American women, elders, and students. If our students grow up learning that Asian American history is part of American history, they don’t see Asian Americans as foreigners, or a dangerous threat to the nation.”

The research combines An’s background in Asian American studies and social studies education, Alviar-Martin’s expertise in decolonial and global citizenship education, and the pair’s plans to co-author a book on similar topics. The book aims to center and uplift diverse and complex stories of Asian American students, parents, and educators and their grassroots organizing for K-12 Asian American studies and ethnic studies education in Georgia’s public schools.

“In education, when people teach about world history, it’s usually from a very Western lens. The stories are usually told from the colonizers’ point of view, so it’s often about conquest and wars,” said Alviar-Martin, who noted her own heritage from the Philippines,

which was a colonial territory of Spain and later the U.S. “The curriculum doesn’t always critically consider how society is shaped by people who are affected by those conflicts historically and presently.”

Alviar-Martin and An say their primary research question is, “Who is advocating for K-12 Asian American studies in Georgia’s public schools, and what are their goals, successes, and challenges in advancing an accurate and inclusive history curriculum?”

Alviar-Martin said the recent rise in incidents of Asian hate were hurtful and disempowering for the Asian American community in Atlanta, but they have also been a catalyst for parents, students, teachers, and scholars including faculty members at KSU to stand up to demand ethnic studies for all and educational justice.

“We want to connect the common themes in experience from people we have talked to within local Asian American communities to include in the larger collection of literature detailing the experience of Asian American families living in the U.S.,” Alviar-Martin said. “And we think it’s appropriate that this is happening in Atlanta, which is very much known as a cradle of civil rights.”

The Spencer Foundation has been funding research exclusively in the area of education since 1971.

Curiosity drives Chinasa Elue even when she is hurting. After her mother passed away in 2019, Elue was still processing her grief when the spread of coronavirus turned into a deadly pandemic. In early 2020 that upended lives around the world, including her workplace, Kennesaw State, and other colleges and universities across the nation.

Her own pain inspired Dr. Elue, an associate professor of educational leadership and higher education in the Bagwell College of Education, to examine more broadly and deeply how grieving affects others. She was particularly interested in higher education settings as the pandemic increased incidences of loss – not just death, but loss of normalcy as people isolated and distanced physically to protect themselves from the virus.

“I began interviewing leaders across the country, particularly those in higher education to understand how they were responding to the large amounts of loss caused by the pandemic,” she said. According to Elue, it’s important that institutions of higher learning and other organizations create an atmosphere where their constituents feel they can safely share and process grief in order for them to be able to continue with their day-to-day activities.

“Grief exhibits itself differently in individuals, so not everyone

is going to have a similar grieving process,” Elue said. “We have to be willing to normalize conversations around grief. It’s seen as taboo.

We all want to be happy and smile all the time, but we do ourselves a disservice not to have these conversations.”

Elue’s research team includes a graduate research assistant and four undergraduate student researchers. She said being able to involve students in her research is gratifying in that mentoring a new generation of students feels like “giving back to a field that has given so much to me.”

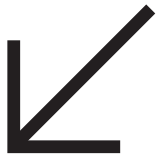
A self-described lifelong learner, Elue grew up in Stone Mountain, Georgia and says that she chose to pursue graduate education at the highest level because she wanted to impact the lives of students.

Last year, she led the launch of a new program, the Master’s in Educational Leadership with a concentration in Higher Education and Student Affairs, a collaboration between KSU’s Division of Student Affairs and the Bagwell College.

The program is specifically designed for higher education professionals interested in moving into leadership roles in areas that most impact students, particularly student affairs, university administration, and college athletics administration.



INTERACTIVE RESEARCH METHODS LAB (IRML)



# BAGWELL COLLEGE'S INTERACTIVE RESEARCH METHODS LAB BREAKING THE MOLD FOR ACADEMIC RESEARCH

**W**hen Iván Jorrín-Abellán began teaching at Kennesaw State University, he saw his graduate students experiencing the same frustration that he had in completing his own dissertation; they were struggling with what steps to take to conduct research most effectively.

"The teaching and learning of research methods is usually frightening for students and faculty, and research methods courses are the ones our students postpone until the last possible semester," said Jorrín-Abellán, KSU's research catalyst associate dean and Professor of Educational Psychology. "Why is that? One plausible answer is the lack of attention and subsequent scarcity of innovation in the teaching of research methods."

That was Jorrín-Abellán's inspiration to establish the Interactive Research Methods Lab (IRML) in KSU's Bagwell College of Education. The lab opened in November 2019 and

serves as an innovative space to support students and faculty as they plan and develop their research designs for their undergraduate research assignments, master capstone projects, research proposals and dissertations.

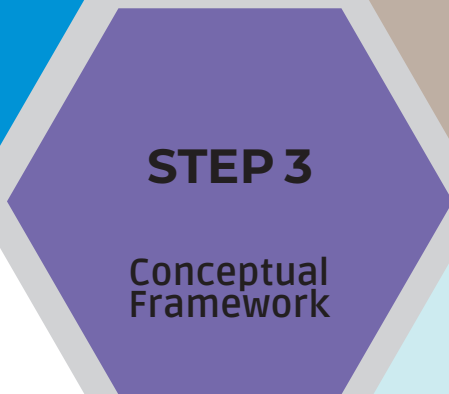
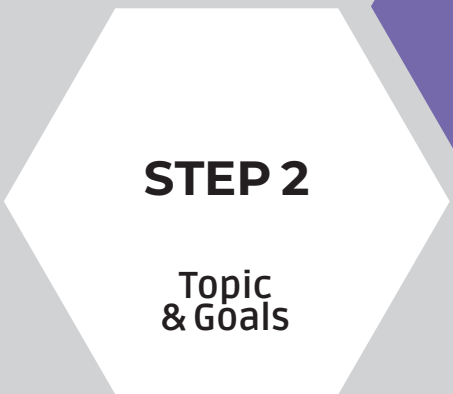
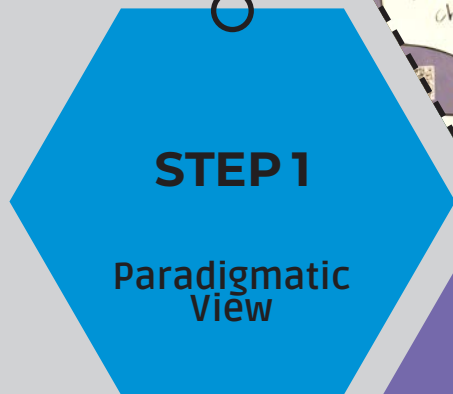
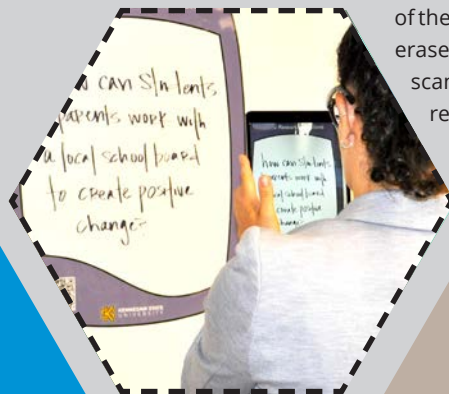
The IRML is based on the Hopscotch model, a research framework and web-based tool that Jorrín-Abellán developed in 2015. Hopscotch uses textual, multimedia and web resources to guide the user through a nine-step process, including the research topic and goals, the conceptual framework, research questions and design, data gathering and analysis, and the ethical principles guiding a study.

Visitors can seek help with their research in person at the lab located in the Chantal and Tommy Bagwell Education Building, but the main reason the IRML has received global attention is its innovative approach to online interaction. IRML's website includes a 360-degree virtual tour, replicating the experience students have in the physical lab.

The lab's physical space also includes decals of each step of the Hopscotch model posted on dry-erase walls with QR codes that can be scanned to provide an augmented reality experience.

With a cell phone or a tablet, the scans and

**Hopscotch Model**  
Create your Research Design



subsequent questions guide participants through a research design process. Then, they receive copies of their research design via email to be worked on or shared at any time.

“The IRML is one of, if not the first, lab in the U.S. to provide users with personalized instruction and practical experience in the process and strategies involved in generating research designs using multimedia and augmented reality contents,” Jorrín-Abellán said.

In only four years, the IRML has received national and global awards, as well as received registered visits from at least 65 countries. Additionally, the virtual lab became a necessity as student research continued throughout the pandemic.

In February, the lab received a prestigious University System of Georgia Board of Regents’ Award. Each year, one award is handed out in each of the categories throughout the University System of Georgia.

Jorrín-Abellán and the 12 other members of his team earned the Regents’ Teaching Excellence Award for a Department or Program. In an award application to the USG, KSU Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Ivan Pulinkala said the IRML and its Hopscotch tool had “tapped into a critical need worldwide,” and he estimated the lab and tool had supported “over 100,000 students, scholars and community leaders both in Georgia and around the world.”

Only months after receiving the Regents’ Award, Jorrín-Abellán and Olga Koz, senior research support librarian and librarian professor of library science, earned a global SAGE Innovators Award for “Integrating Resources into Research Design.” In its award notice, the organization touted

the IRML team’s Hopscotch research design web-tool in its ability to aid novice researchers in “the development of solid and well-informed research designs.”

And those who have benefited from the IRML agree.

Wendy Sanchez, professor of mathematics education, said she’d at first been intimidated to seek help at the IRML. But once she got to work with a methodologist and used the lab facilities, she said she began sailing through her research processes.

“I recall the first time I sat in the first version of the IRML for a demonstration of its capabilities,” Sanchez said. “It was not unlike seeing the first commercials for the iPhone — ‘there’s an app for that.’ When it comes to teaching research, ‘there’s an IRML for that.’”

Jaia Isbell, a former KSU undergraduate and now a fourth-grade teacher in Atlanta, worked on a research team studying belongingness in the math classroom in her senior year. She said when she began, she had no idea what

conducting good research looked like and was intimidated by what she assumed would be an arduous process.

“Working in the lab reaffirmed my belief that I will never stop learning,” Isbell said, adding that she would be starting work toward a master’s degree the following fall and planned to continue engaging in research. “I know I am capable of conducting research because of my time in the Interactive Research Methods Lab.”

Koz said the IRML focuses on experiential learning and well-thought research, but its design includes considerations for comfort and creating a welcoming, engaging atmosphere that promotes collaboration.

“Ideally, the IRML should be a place where researchers, students, and methodologists from all KSU colleges collaborate and learn from each other,” Koz said. “The quality of the research design is much better if researchers from different disciplines work together. The lab is also a learning space. Teaching how to conduct research studies is challenging, especially with changes in methodologies and the constant

Continued on p.16

**STEP 7**

**Data Analysis**

**STEP 9**

**Ethics**

**STEP 8**

**Trustworthiness and Validity**



**IRML** 360  
Interactive Research Methods Lab

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

[IRML.kennesaw.edu](http://IRML.kennesaw.edu)

IRML CONT.



THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF RESEARCH METHODS IS USUALLY FRIGHTENING FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY, AND RESEARCH METHODS COURSES ARE THE ONES OUR STUDENTS POSTPONE UNTIL THE LAST POSSIBLE SEMESTER.

DR. JORRÍN-ABELLÁN

development of analytical and data collection instruments.”

Koz, who works mostly with online students, said even with all its high-tech characteristics, the IRML will continue to innovate ways to make creating research projects and proposals even simpler and cross-disciplinary. But she said the team’s passion has been noticed by organizations outside education as well and has the ability to help those organizations solve problems, evaluate trainings and even design think tanks.

Jorrín-Abellán said he never dreamed of his Hopscotch model developing into a lab using augmented reality and helping design research for people across the world, but when users of his research techniques were lacking a social space to discuss their difficult research decisions, the idea was born.

Nevertheless, the IRML team isn’t done expanding its reach yet, said Jorrín-Abellán. Two new branches of the lab recently opened in the College of Computing and Software Engineering and at KSU’s Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. In November 2023, another will open at Universidad del Rosario in Bogotá, Colombia.

“We would eventually like every school and high school in Georgia to have a branch of the lab so teachers can innovate following a research-based approach, and students can learn better how research and science work,” Jorrín-Abellán said.

STUDENT SUCCESS



Interactive Research Methods Lab  
KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY



# ESTABLISHING new traditions

In the spring of 2022, the Dean of the Bagwell College of Education, Adrian Epps, introduced the Teacher Pinning Celebration as a tradition that is held in conjunction with the annual Honors Ceremony the week of spring commencement. Pinning ceremonies are a symbolic, time-honored tradition marking the occasion when one is formally welcomed into the teaching profession.

Historically, pinning ceremonies denote a milestone in an educator's life and profession. For new educators, the pin signifies that they are prepared to serve society as teachers of our young people. For existing educators who are furthering their careers, the pin symbolizes their commitment to their profession, and often, their readiness for additional professional responsibilities.

Candidates who receive an undergraduate degree are presented with a Bagwell College of Education silver pin that signifies their association with the university and represents their

membership in the honorable profession of teaching. Graduate students who are furthering their careers in education are honored with a gold pin.

While graduation highlights the completion of academic study, the pinning celebration marks the important transition from student to teacher and from teacher to leader. It formalizes the commitment educators have to the communities they serve and signifies that the recipients have achieved the required character and competence to effectively engage in the practice of teaching.

In addition to the pins, faculty, students, and staff developed the official Bagwell College Teacher's Creed and the Bagwell College Leader's Creed, both of which are read aloud before the actual pinning takes place.

The Pinning & Honors Celebration has been held in the auditorium in the Dr. Bobbie Bailey and Family Performing Arts Center in the College of the Arts.

## 2022-2023 BAGWELL SCHOLAR AWARDS

Honors Celebrations have been held annually at the college level since KSU became too large to host a university-wide honors celebration. Faculty in the Bagwell College of Education select one outstanding student from each of our programs to receive the Bagwell Scholar Award based on distinguished achievements in the major field as well as notable accomplishments in extracurricular, civic, or professional activities. These scholars are honored every spring during the week of graduation.

Each Bagwell Scholar selects one faculty member to honor who has been important to their success. The names of the 2023 Bagwell Scholars and the faculty they selected to honor appear below.

### UNDERGRADUATE HONOREES

Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education B-K

**Allana Alexander**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Raynice Jean-Sigur

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education P-5

**Erik Vu**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Sohyun An

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education P-5

**Susannah Herron**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Sohyun An

Bachelor of Science in English Education

**Joshua Pitts**

Faculty Honoree: Mrs. Michelle Goodsite

Bachelor of Science in Health & Physical Education

**Cade Loden**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Monica Gerda

Bachelor of Science in History Education

**Catherine Maciejewski**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Charles Wynn

Bachelor of Science in Mathematics Education

**Braden Poteete**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Brian Lawler

Bachelor of Science in Middle Grades Education

**Mary Mitchelson**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Kristie Smith

Bachelor of Arts in Modern Language & Culture

**Janelisse Erazo**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Ana Rodriguez Padial

Bachelor of Music in Music Education

**Isabella Giordano**

Faculty Honoree: Dr. Nancy Conley

Continued on p.18

GRADUATE HONOREES

Master of Arts in Teaching Mathematics  
**Stephen Ridley**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Brian Lawler

Master of Arts in Teaching Secondary English  
**McCall (Kristin) Mullee**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Michelle Devereaux

Master of Arts in Teaching Special Education  
**Catherine Batchelor**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Katie Bennett

Master of Arts in Teaching TESOL  
**Erin Hegeman**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Zurisaray Espinosa

Master of Education in Educational Leadership  
**Kristin Williams-Luthi**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Sheryl Croft

Master of Education in Elementary & Early Childhood Education  
**Taresa Lee**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jinhee Kim

Master of Education in Instructional Technology  
**Jane Langan**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Matthew Wilson

Master of Education in Secondary & Middle Grades Education  
**Emily Wynn**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jennifer Dail

Master of Education in Teacher Leadership  
**Alicia Freeman**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Miyoshi Juergensen

Master of Education in TESOL  
**Judith Silue**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Amanda Richey

Master of Education in Special Education  
**Veronica Otto**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Vidya Munandar

Education Specialist in Curriculum & Instruction  
**Tamika Parkinson**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Nichole Guillory

Education Specialist in Educational Leadership  
**Jessica O'Kelley**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Albert Jimenez

Education Specialist in Instructional Technology  
**Meghan Strickland Wiggins**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Jabari Cain

Education Specialist in Secondary & Middle Grades Education  
**Christina Rodriguez**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Megan Adams

Education Specialist in Secondary & Middle Grades Education  
**Celeste Lizama**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Darren Crovitz

Doctor of Education in Instructional Technology  
**Christopher Akins**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Tiffany Roman

Doctor of Education in Secondary & Middle Grades Education  
**Melissa Paurowski**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. David Glassmeyer

Doctor of Education in Secondary & Middle Grades Education  
**Juliann Noble-Healy**  
 Faculty Honoree: Erin Adams

Doctor of Education in Teacher Leadership  
**Joanne Gauthier**  
 Faculty Honoree: Dr. Miyoshi Juergensen

THE OUTSTANDING DISSERTATION AWARD



The purpose of the Bagwell College of Education Outstanding Dissertation Award is to honor the student whose dissertation exemplifies high quality empirical educational research, informs educational policy and/or practice, and embodies the purpose of the Bagwell College Doctor of Education degree. This prestigious award is presented annually.

The 2023 Bagwell College of Education Outstanding Dissertation Award recipient, was **Dr. Monica Morall-Baker** for her dissertation titled,

“Adopting a Critical Culture Stance Towards Literature to Engage Multiply-Marginalized Students within Non-Traditional Settings.”

Dr. Morall-Baker is an English Language Arts instructor at a suburban nontraditional high school in Atlanta, Ga. She is putting her research into practice by serving her students through culturally responsive education practices to foster engagement and empowerment, particularly in students who have been marginalized and/or placed at risk for failure. She was the 2022 recipient of the Georgia Association of Teacher Educators Distinguished Dissertation in Teacher Education Award.

Congratulations to Dr. Camille Sutton-Brown for her excellent mentoring as Dr. Morall-Baker’s dissertation chair throughout the process.

Thank you to all faculty and graduates who submitted a nomination. The dissertations reviewed were of high caliber, creating a very competitive process.

CALL ME MISTER®

# Call Me MISTER and KSU

## partnering to increase the number of Black male educators



**K**ennesaw State University received initial funding from Georgia Power and subsequent funding from PNC Bank and the Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation for an initiative to increase the number of African American male teachers.

Call Me MISTER (Mentors Instructing Students Toward Effective Role Models), a program launched in KSU's Bagwell College of Education, provides academic support, mentorship, tuition assistance, and job placement assistance to promote success among Black male teacher candidates. The program began in the fall of 2021 in the Bagwell College and welcomed the initial cohort, two of whom have graduated and are enjoying full time teaching positions.

"Schools and communities are growing increasingly diverse and, while school systems throughout the country have recognized the importance of Black male teachers, they often struggle to recruit and retain them," said Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College of Education. "We believe that the Call Me MISTER program will exponentially enhance the Bagwell College's commitment to increasing Black male presence in the teaching field."

Students of color represent more than half of the public-school population in the

United States, but Black males account for less than two percent (2%) of the teacher workforce, according to the National Center of Education Statistics. As part of Call Me MISTER's efforts to narrow that gap, participants are engaged in mentorship, learning opportunities, and academic support.

Call Me MISTER students participate in service-learning projects with local school districts and meet regularly with mentors, their cohort and the director of Kennesaw State's program, Dr. Jabari Cain. The students' teacher training includes sessions in the Bagwell College's mixed reality Avatar lab, where they interact with several avatars representing diverse groups of students in classroom settings.

According to Dr. Cain, an associate professor in the School of Instructional Technology & Innovation, the Call Me MISTER program at KSU provides a vital support system for pre-service male teachers of color. "These participants recognize the significance of their roles in education and the profound influence they can have on all children, particularly those from marginalized communities," he said. "Therefore, the program emphasizes the necessity of thorough preparation through community service, monthly webinars, and mentorship."

Call Me MISTER began at Clemson University and has expanded to schools in seven states and the District of Columbia. With funding from Georgia Power and more recently, additional funding from PNC Bank and the Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation, Kennesaw State is the second university in Georgia to establish a CMM program.

"At Georgia Power, we believe in the importance of having strong male role models in classrooms across our state to educate and uplift the next generation," said Britt Fleck, regional director at Georgia Power and a KSU Foundation trustee. "We are proud to support the Call Me MISTER program at Kennesaw State University, where they are preparing students to be influential educators in our communities for decades to come."

“

**IT'S IMPORTANT FOR ALL STUDENTS TO HAVE TEACHERS WHO LOOK LIKE THEM. LESS THAN TWO PERCENT OF TEACHERS IN THE U.S. ARE BLACK MALES.**

**DR. JABARI CAIN**

# KSU STUDENTS

## are prepared for changing classrooms

Education is one of those unique fields in which many describe their choice to become a teacher as a calling. Their passion has given them the strength to weather many challenges. However, over the past two years, most specifically due to COVID-19 and other stressors in the classroom, teachers have been considering leaving the profession at higher rates than in years prior.

While the challenges remain, the next generation of educators in Kennesaw State's Bagwell College of Education are hopeful and ready to make a positive impact.



### BRITTANY AGUILAR, SENIOR

Acworth native Brittany Aguilar said she's known she wanted to work with children since she was young. The early childhood education major said her passion for education began when she decided as a young student that she wanted

to be a teacher who could represent the Latinx community and give other Spanish-speaking students someone to look up to.

"I want to add to that percentage of teachers who are coming from minority backgrounds," Aguilar said. "It's important for students to see their own culture reflected in their education."

Aguilar is active in organizations focusing on cultural awareness, including KSU Latinx Teachers and Recruitment,

Retention, and Progression to Graduation for Hispanic and Latino Students. She recently received an award for summer research that explored the teaching of math to elementary students in both English and Spanish.

Aguilar said she isn't concerned about there being a robust next generation of teachers because of the range of skills she and her colleagues have picked up in their coursework. Not only is she ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) endorsed, but she says KSU's instructional tech classes have given her confidence with classroom technology, enough to have her sights set on a master's degree in the subject.

"I know there will be lots of challenges in the future, but I'm so passionate and so are most teachers because we understand how important the work is," Aguilar said. "It's hard to put into words, but besides family, we know we are the first people who will have a large impact on students' lives."



### ERIK VU, SENIOR

Erik Vu, an early childhood education major from Riverdale, Georgia, wasn't always sure he'd be a teacher. But volunteering in a kindergarten class with his sister a few years ago ignited his passion for educating youth.

"To hear students tell me that they understand and feel they can complete a task after learning something new makes me happy," he said. "Being part of that was special."

Through student teaching, Vu said he has only become more passionate. He said he understands the challenges that face him as a future teacher but said he is not discouraged.

"I think it's important for teachers to continue doing what they do because they represent a bridge to support and guide students into a successful future," Vu said.

Equally important, he said, future teachers will need to be empathetic, flexible and equipped to support students academically, as well as emotionally.

Vu worked alongside Aguilar in Bagwell's Fast Start Academy, where program coordinators said the two went above and beyond, building relationships with local students who needed extra support reaching their literacy goals.

"I've learned to create lessons that supported all students, whether that means students with disabilities, English learners, gifted students or students who just need some extra support," Vu said. "I want to be a teacher who tries to understand what the student is experiencing and can give them what they need."

## MARIYAH RICHARDSON, JUNIOR



Mariyah Richardson, junior and early childhood education major, said her love of teaching comes from her passion for inspiring others. But inspiring others took on new meaning for her when she was a student teacher.

"I had a student come up to me and say, 'Wow, I like your skin,' which made me realize that I was probably the first Black teacher she ever had and what it meant to her to see someone in my role who looked just like her," Richardson said.

A Bagwell ambassador and member of several on-campus organizations, including Black Teachers Matter and Black Wall Street, Richardson hopes that her membership in these organizations will serve to support other Black students.

"On campus, being involved helps me be a better educator. People feel like they can come to me to ask questions or confide in me," Richardson said.

Professors say Richardson is a passionate advocate for education and is inspiring those who are next in line to become teachers. She was one of the featured panelists during a recent "Educators of Tomorrow" event, where she spoke to more than 250 high schoolers interested in becoming teachers.

Looking toward her career in education, Richardson said she understands feelings of burnout from teachers who have been pushing through the past two years of obstacles to a normal school year. But she said she's ready to face what challenges may come and maintains it's important to inspire the next generation of teachers, and other vocations, by example.

"We inspire these kids to be what they want to become," she said. "Without educators, there would be no doctors, no lawyers. In order to get to those careers, you have to get through us."

# STUDENTS ENJOY belonging in the Bagwell community



## EDUCATORS OF TOMORROW

Professional Association of Georgia Educators [PAGE], both of which encourage student membership.

The major EOT project for spring 2023 was planning and hosting the weeklong EduOwl event to celebrate the education profession. EOT members held EduOwl field day complete with games, prizes, 360° camera fun, face painting and food. Black and Gold Day, when EOT members, faculty and staff wore school colors, was a huge success and included a book fair to donate books to local schools. A tour of Bagwell College labs and facilities for new students ended with an ice cream social, completing the celebration.

"EOT is close to my heart and I'm so proud to be a part of an organization that is rooted in building strong educators and supporting them in their endeavors," said Gracie Proux, EOT president.

"EOT promotes the growth of future educators," said EOT vice president Ashley Williams. "It allows students to gain connections and relationships with faculty and students at KSU."

Spring semester brought Raynice Jean-Sigur, professor of early childhood education, into the mix as the director of Education Student Services. Drs. Jean-Sigur and Delacruz are proud of what this newly formed organization was able to accomplish this year.

In the fall of 2022, Traci Redish, associate dean for strategic partnerships and priorities, and Stacy Delacruz, professor of reading education, worked with students to establish the Educators of Tomorrow [EOT] registered student organization. The mission of EOT is to connect students interested in the field of education with the Bagwell College and provide them with opportunities for professional growth through speakers, social and professional events, collaboration, networking, and a variety of activities.

EOT members meet monthly in a hybrid format to socialize and to share information about topics of interest for future teachers including advisement and placement for field experiences. Lunch and Learn events have taken place with professional organizations such as the Georgia Association of Educators [GAE] and the

## BLACK TEACHERS MATTER



Black teachers matter (BTM) is a local KSU student organization that is championed by Jillian Ford, associate professor of social studies education; Lateefa Id-Deen, associate professor of elementary mathematics education; and Marrielle Myers,

associate professor of mathematics education. The BTM vision is “a world where Black education is acknowledged, explored and celebrated.”

The group’s mission is “to help educators navigate and center a variety of Black perspectives in the field of education as well as challenge system norms. BTM strives to provide opportunities to build community, engage in productive dialogue, and conduct research while examining critical issues pertaining to Black Education.”

This active group of future educators held several events on campus, sponsored fundraisers, and provided community service at a local school. Since its inception, the group has been for

undergraduates, but they received a grant to begin an induction group for BTM alumni during the 2023-2024 school year.

Members enjoy the many social and educational experiences that BTM provides. One member said that growing up, she never had an African American teacher, and she joined BTM because “I felt like I can relate to it because it promotes Black educators.” Another member said “I like that BTM is very inclusive. I definitely felt heard, which made me keep showing up, because I didn’t feel ignored anymore. So that was probably the greatest thing that BTM gave me.”

BTM holds a Sankofa Celebration at the end of each academic year to honor their graduating seniors. The word Sankofa means “to retrieve” in the Akan Twi language – that “it is not taboo to go back for what is at risk of being left behind.” Students’ families attend, and during this time, graduates are given encouraging messages, they reflect on their experiences in BTM, they engage in a Water Ceremony, and are presented with gift bags. This tradition commemorates the triumphs and achievements of our Black teacher candidates. Drs. Ford, Id-Deen and Myers are incredibly proud of these students and the life-long community they have created through Black Teachers Matter.

## MAESTR@S DEL FUTURO



Four years ago, students of Latin heritage reached out to Sanjuana Rodriguez, associate professor of reading and literacy education, and Paula Guerra, professor of mathematics education, with an interest in creat-

ing a group that would focus exclusively on supporting Latinx students in the college.

Platicas Con Maestras, which translates to Informal Conversations with Teachers, was the initial protocol established and subsequently, the group became a Registered Student Organization

as Maestr@s del Futuro, Teachers of the Future.

Through this vibrant community, Latinx students meet on a regular basis, create and/or experience culturally relevant programming, engage in undergraduate research, form mentoring relationships with Latinx teachers, and establish a network of life-long friends and colleagues.

This year, the group had a graduation celebration that included their families and a keynote by Jamie Garcia Caycho, a science teacher who was the first Gwinnett County School District Teacher of the Year of Latin descent. Each graduate received a Maestra pin and beautiful flowers. The ceremony closed with inspiring words from the grandfather of one of our students. Drs. Rodriguez and Guerra are proud of this group of students who have become extended family.

## BAGWELL STUDENT AMBASSADORS




The mission of the Student Ambassadors program is to develop student leaders who serve as official hosts of the Bagwell College of Education facilitating events, promoting student engagement, and

supporting student success through community outreach and recruitment.

Students selected as Student Ambassadors serve as hosts at a variety of events sponsored by the College and the University. They meet with prospective students, facilitate College

orientation activities, provide tours of the Bagwell College facilities, support outreach and recruitment initiatives, and provide support for open houses, career days, alumni functions, high school student activities, seminars, and receptions. Student Ambassadors engage with potential students, alumni, donors, and community members and play a key role in fostering relationships and promoting a positive, caring, diverse and inclusive culture in the Bagwell College of Education.

Bagwell College Student Ambassadors develop leadership, communication and networking abilities that are important career skills. Student Ambassadors are well-respected leaders in the college and will have opportunities to provide valuable feedback to college administrators on various topics impacting KSU and the Bagwell College of Education.



# Kennesaw State Bagwell College alum making waves at Georgia Aquarium

**A**s senior manager of education programs at Georgia Aquarium, Kennesaw State University alum Bailey Dawson has a more vibrant classroom than his days as a Cobb County and Marietta City school teacher. But he says even a few years ago, he never would have expected to be teaching among schools of fish.

For 11 years, Dawson taught in Cobb County and Marietta City schools, most recently as a middle school teacher at Marietta Middle School. During that time, he earned both a master's in instructional technology and a specialist degree in educational leadership from KSU's Bagwell College of Education.

Now, he oversees all education activities at the aquarium, including programming, developing curriculum, securing grants, running professional development for educators and establishing partnerships with community organizations, as well as with other aquariums and zoos.

Under his leadership, Georgia Aquarium has become the world's only STEM-certified aquarium and has added classroom space packed with interactive technology, such as small underwater drones, microscopes, and interactive boards.

Dawson said the instructional technology education he received at KSU has helped guide him in his role at the aquarium.

"I was able to use everything that I learned through my master's program and carried it over with some of the programs that I've implemented here – everything from virtual programming to the interactive boards that we have here at the aquarium," he said.

An Alabama native, Dawson grew up in an educator's household, watching his father work as a teacher and eventually retire as a principal. He said when he began pursuing an education career, he didn't see the possibilities for what he refers to as informal education. Growing up in a low-income area, Dawson said most people idealized following money over their true passions. But, he said, he decided partway through college that he would take a leap of faith and follow his love for education. Dawson graduated with a bachelor's degree in health education from Alabama State University in 2008, an accomplishment he said played a "major role" in his future.

It was only by happenstance years later, he added, that he was introduced to the director of Georgia Aquarium while teaching in Marietta and learned not all educators are in the classroom.

"I never visited an aquarium growing up and didn't know the world of informal education. I didn't know there were so many opportunities for those who want to educate in different ways," Dawson said.

Shortly after that chance meeting, Dawson was offered a job as a curriculum specialist at Georgia Aquarium and began work at the downtown Atlanta attraction in 2019.

Dawson said he loves to see the eyes of children who visit Georgia Aquarium light up as they watch Beluga whales swim by, or touch a stingray in the interactive tanks, because he said he can see their excitement to learn.

Adrian Epps, dean of the Bagwell College, said he's watched

Continued on p.24

GEORGIA AQUARIUM CONT.



with pride as Dawson has excelled and moved Georgia Aquarium's educational goals forward.

"In our partnership efforts with Georgia Aquarium for the past several years, I have observed Bailey's leadership influence in broader educational communities," Epps said. "He has increasingly earned the respect of others and been given the opportunity to lead more responsibili-

ties in the aquarium's educational operations."

Brian Davis, president and CEO of Georgia Aquarium, said Dawson continues to impress and is recognized nationally for his innovation, including serving on the board of the National Marine Educators Association.

"He is committed to building partnerships that engage students and provide innovative learning opportunities, including remotely operated vehicle workshops for girls and integrating aquaculture systems in classrooms," Davis said. "His commitment to community, education and conservation is refreshing and a testament to the positive role educators play in shaping the future for us all."

# ALUMNI SUCCESS

A Bagwell College alumna and a Bagwell College advisory board member are two of the **2023 Top 100 Influencers in**

**Educational Technology** according to *EdTech Digest*, which referenced these honorees as "The Minds Behind What's Now and What's Next."



Amy Vitala, Ed.D., is the Chief Learning Officer for MobileMind. She earned her Ed.D. at KSU in Teacher Leadership for Learning with a concentration in Instructional Technology and was a part-time assistant professor in the School of

Instructional Technology and Innovation for eight years. Prior to that time, she spent more than ten years teaching in the Cobb County School District.

Katherine Jill Hobson is the Chief Technology Officer for Gainesville City Schools. Prior to serving in this position,



Hobson was the Director of Instructional Technology for Forsyth County Schools for almost 16 years. Earlier in her career, she was a senior education strategist at Promethean, and a program manager at IMS Global Learning Consortium. A dedicated edtech advocate and leader, Hobson currently serves on the Advisory Board for the Bagwell College School of Instructional Technology and Innovation.

## BAGWELL ALUM IS A FINALIST FOR 2024 GEORGIA TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Katheryn (Katie) Stewart, a seventh-grade language arts teacher and gifted coordinator at Chattanooga Valley Middle School in the Walker County School District, was one of the ten finalists for 2024 Georgia Teacher of the Year. Stewart earned her master's degree in Educational

Leadership from KSU and is currently enrolled in KSU's doctorate

of education in teacher leadership program.

Stewart, a 13-year teaching professional, has worked as a teacher in three states and in one foreign country but she is most proud to be recognized in the community her family calls home. "I have learned so much about curriculum, coaching, educational policy and social science research at KSU," she said. "My graduate work at KSU has had an unparalleled impact on my teaching."

## COBB COUNTY'S ESOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Congratulations to Roseann Gapusan for being named ESOL Teacher of the Year for Pebblebrook High School and all of

Cobb County School District. Gapusan is a 2021 Bagwell College graduate with an MAT in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.



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[kennesaw.edu/ldt](http://kennesaw.edu/ldt)

# TWO KSU FACULTY RECEIVE Prestigious 2023 Regents' Awards

TWO KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY FACULTY MEMBERS EARNED 2023 UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA BOARD OF REGENT'S AWARDS, AND BOTH ARE AFFILIATED WITH THE BAGWELL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION.



Jorrín Abellán, Research Catalyst Associate Dean, heads the Bagwell College of Education's Interactive Research Methods Lab [IRML] and received the Regents' Teaching Excellence Award for a Department or Program on behalf of the IRML team. Diana Gregory, professor of art education in the College of the Arts, received the Regents' Scholarship of Teaching

and Learning Award.

"Dr. Jorrín Abellán and Dr. Gregory represent the excellence of KSU faculty, dedicated to student success and our academic mission," said Ivan Pulinkala, KSU provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. "These recognitions from the USG evidence the impact KSU faculty are having across our community and beyond."

The IRML, which opened in 2019, is an innovative space to support students and faculty as they plan and develop research designs for undergraduate research assignments, master's degree capstone projects, research proposals, and doctoral dissertations. The USG's award notice called the IRML an outstanding program that promotes integration of research processes in education and whose success extends beyond the institution and the state. Jorrín Abellán joined KSU in 2014 and soon after, developed the award-winning Hopscotch Model, an interactive webtool that helps novice researchers generate quality research designs.

In her award notice, the USG praised Gregory's "sustained and dedicated contributions to the

scholarship of teaching and learning," and her record of service and advocacy at various levels, including her individual classroom, in her department's development of a master's degree program, and on an international level through her leadership roles.

Gregory, who joined KSU in 2002, has served as a fellow for Creativity and Innovation at the KSU Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and chair of the Inclusive Education Department in the Bagwell College of Education. In 2009, she received the National Art Education Association Southeastern Higher Education Teacher Award, and in 2012 she was named the Georgia Art Education Association Teacher of the Year.

The Regents' Awards are prestigious honors announced annually recognizing scholarship, online teaching, student success, curricular innovation, and overall program excellence.



“

DR. JORRÍN ABELLÁN AND DR. GREGORY REPRESENT THE EXCELLENCE OF KSU FACULTY...

DR. IVAN PULINKALA  
PROVOST & EVP FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

## BAGWELL COLLEGE PROFESSOR earns award from national association



**S**ohyun An, professor in the Bagwell College Elementary and Early Childhood Education Department, received the 2022 Distinguished Researcher Award from the American Educational Research Association [AERA] Special Interest Group on Research on the Education of Asian Pacific Americans.

“It was a big surprise. I did not know I had been nominated,” An said. She has been a member of AERA, the nation’s leading professional organization devoted to educational research, since 2009. As a leading scholar of curriculum and pedagogy of K-12 Asian American studies and critical war studies, An’s research has inspired others to work to stop anti-Asian racism and other forms of oppression.

“My ultimate goal as a researcher is to transform school curriculum toward one that hurts less and heals more, one that all children can see themselves accurately and fully represented, and learn the humanity of their own and others,” she said. A well-known expert in her field, An has been interviewed and cited in prominent media outlets, including CNN, Time, New York Times, Washington Post, Reuters, Vox, and USA Today related to her teaching practices and research.

## BAGWELL COLLEGE FACULTY earn 2023 KSU Foundation Awards



**DR. YI JIN**

**T**his year, two of the ten annual Kennesaw State University Foundation Awards were earned by Bagwell College faculty. The rigorous selection process is managed by the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and includes input from college deans and faculty.

Dr. Yi Jin, associate professor in the School of Instructional Technology and Innovation received the KSU Foundation Outstanding Online Teaching Award, and Dr. Chinasa Elue, associate professor of in the Department of Educational Leadership received the KSU Foundation Diversity and Inclusion Award.

Dr. Jin has been teaching at KSU for more than five years at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. She is described by her students as “a great communicator” and someone who “is great to work with for improving your craft.” She served on the committee that redesigned curriculum to align with the revised ISTE and PSC standards. Jin also served on the Instructional Design Committee that designed our new undergraduate Learning, Design and Technology program.

Dr. Elue joined KSU in 2016 and is a champion of diversity and inclusion within KSU and beyond. She is intentional about embedding diversity, equity and inclusion into her research, teaching, service, and her work in the community. Elue and colleagues created the Black Women School Leaders Research Collective, which was awarded a Bagwell College research team grant to research ways to support Black women school leaders as they navigate their leadership pathways.



**DR. CHINASA ELUE**

## BAGWELL COLLEGE FACULTY AWARDS



Each spring semester, the Bagwell College of Education's Faculty Council posts a Call for Applications designed to encourage, reward, and publicly recognize sustained excellence in teaching. The application process is open to all Bagwell College faculty members, and winners at the college level are encouraged to apply for the KSU Foundation Award in a similar category.

We are proud to recognize the faculty members who earned the 2023 college level awards.



**Dr. Jayoung Choi**  
Outstanding  
Innovation Award



**Dr. Yi Jin**  
Outstanding  
Junior Scholar Award  
Outstanding  
Online Teaching Award  
Outstanding  
Scholarship of Teaching  
& Learning Award



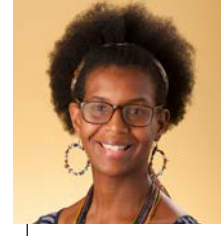
**Dr. Sanjuana Rodriguez**  
Outstanding  
Senior Scholar  
Award



**Dr. Paula Guerra**  
Outstanding  
Diversity Award



**Dr. Tiffany Roman**  
Outstanding  
Early Career Award



**Dr. Camille Sutton-Brown**  
Outstanding  
Student Success  
Award

## BAGWELL COLLEGE Distinguished Staff Award



Alaine Malveaux was honored with the 2023 Distinguished Staff Award. Alaine is the office manager for the Secondary and Middle Grades Education Department. She has been at KSU for six years and is active in campus activities. Alaine has served on the college's Staff Development & Advisory Council for three years, two of which she served as president. As said by an SMGE faculty member, "Her positivity and the joy she takes in her work... reminds us to find joy in serving others and to strive to be as effective as possible each day."

## 2023 SAGE INNOVATORS AWARD



Dr. Olga Koz and Iván Jorrín Abellán have won the 2023 Sage Innovators Award for the project: Integrating Resources into Research Design.

Established by Technology from SAGE, a portfolio of digital services from Lean Library, Talis, and Adam Matthew, in partnership with Electronic Resources and Libraries (ER&L), the Technology from SAGE Innovators Award recognizes technological innovations in e-resource librarianship, especially in support of pedagogy and/or research workflows across campus.

These innovations use technology to remove barriers to knowledge, reflecting the spirit of innovation upon which Technology from SAGE was launched. Together with the KSU Sturgis Library, the Interactive Research Method's Lab was the 2023 winner of this prestigious global award.

# KENNESAW STATE SUMMER

## program aimed at increasing minority educators



**B**uilding on the success of an initiative to increase the number of Black male teachers, Kennesaw State University is giving younger local students of color a chance to explore life as education majors and teachers.

The Future MISTERS Academy, a three-day summer

camp hosted at KSU, invites middle and high school students from metro Atlanta school districts to learn what it takes to become a teacher, tour KSU's campus, visit Bagwell College of Education's Innovation Lab and dine at The Commons.

"A lot of these students have never been to a college campus, so that by itself is an eye-opening experience. We want them to know their life is just beginning with that high school diploma," said Jabari Cain, Call Me MISTER program director and assistant professor of instructional technology. "We want this visit to be the jumping off point for them to realize that a career in education is both realistic and rewarding, and we want to start to help young students realize they can be a role model for the children who come after them."

The Future MISTERS Academy was born from the Call Me MISTER program, first established at Clemson University and implemented at Kennesaw State in Fall 2021. Since its inception at Clemson, the program has expanded to schools in seven states and the District

of Columbia.

Students of color represent more than half of the public school population in the United States, but Black teachers account for 8% and Black males only 2% of the teacher workforce, according to the latest available data from the National Center of Education Statistics.

While Call Me MISTER is part of the effort to narrow that representation gap, Cain and other Bagwell leaders realized they needed to capture the attention of younger students to establish a pipeline of education interest starting in K-12 to college and then into the workforce. And so, in Summer 2022, the Future MISTERS Academy was established.

Alexander Shannon is in his 26th year teaching, with 16 of those years at Tapp Middle School in Powder Springs, Georgia. Cain described him as an enthusiastic chaperone at last year's Future MISTERS Academy, and Shannon says he'll return with the same vigor to chaperoning this year because he knows how important initiatives like this are.

"It's about seeing yourself in a male teacher of color. If you don't see that representation, it's hard to become something you don't see," he said. "The average male teacher of color was exposed to the idea of becoming an educator much later in life than the average white, female teacher. When young people see themselves in an authority figure who comes from the same place culturally or from the same kind of background, they tend to do better."

One study by the National Bureau of Economic Research concludes that Black students randomly assigned to at least one Black teacher in grades K-3 are 13% more likely to graduate from high school and 19% more likely to enroll in college than their same-school, same-race peers.



## SPRING STAR STAFF AWARD RECIPIENT

**A**my Jordan, administrative assistant in the Bagwell Advising and Student Success Center, was named the KSU Staff Senate Star Staff Award recipient for the spring, 2023 semester. Amy has been at KSU for almost three years, and during that time, has developed a reputation as a "go to person" for students, staff and faculty. Students are vocal about how much "they love Ms. Amy." She is especially dedicated and sensitive to the needs of each student. It's not unusual to see students sitting in Amy's office to discuss their day or seek her assistance. The KSU Star Staff Award is given out three times a year, one each semester, to recognize employees who excel in their professional, community and collegial engagement at KSU.

# Kennesaw State Celebrates appointment of Adrian Epps to Chantal and Tommy Bagwell Endowed Dean's Chair

**A**drian Epps was installed as the Chantal and Tommy Bagwell Endowed Dean's Chair in a celebration held at Kennesaw State University. As the endowed chair, Epps will be able to bolster education research and student and teacher opportunities. The endowed dean's chair was made possible by a \$1 million contribution from Chantal and Tommy Bagwell.

Two generations of Bagwell's have provided support to Kennesaw State University and its faculty, staff, students and alumni. The Bagwell College of Education was named for Clarice and Leland Bagwell in 1996. The College is housed in the Chantal and Tommy Bagwell Education Building, named after Clarice and Leland Bagwell's son and daughter-in-law, and Epps' appointment to the chair is a result of the continued generosity of Tommy and Chantal.

"Your family means a great deal to us as an institution, and we are forever grateful for the investment that you have put into this institution," Kennesaw State President Kat Schwaig said. Reflecting on her previous roles at KSU, Schwaig noted, "It's an honor to be a dean, but it's an honor also to carry the name of an individual who invests in this place."

Tommy Bagwell said the more he had gotten to know Epps, the more impressed he became with him. He said Epps' background in science and his reputation as a visionary throughout his career in education foreshadows a bright future for Bagwell College with him at the helm. "I think he's a great fit for KSU, and I'm optimistic that we will be very proud to have him as that chair," Tommy Bagwell said.

Epps said being named as the Chantal and Tommy Bagwell

Endowed Dean's Chair is "about getting the work done." He said it was his goal to place Bagwell College at the center of influencing student success in education across Georgia and beyond. Epps said the key to reaching that goal is innovation, partnerships and producing future-ready educators to fill needs in the state. "I really do believe that this college is one of the best institutions in this country to be at the epicenter of changing what we do in education," Epps said.

Lance Burchett, vice president for University Advancement and

CEO of the KSU Foundation, said the Bagwells' gift will have a lasting positive impact on the College. "An endowed chair is an academic position supported by earnings from an endowment. These funds supplement and support the chair holder's teaching and research endeavors and are essential, dare I say, critical for attracting and retaining exceptional faculty and academic leadership," Burchett said.

Epps was named dean of Bagwell College in May of 2021 after previously serving as interim dean for a year. A recognized education leader in Georgia and beyond,

Epps served as an associate dean in KSU's College of Science and Mathematics for 12 years before serving as the interim provost and vice president of academic affairs at Dalton State College. Prior to joining KSU, Epps worked for Atlanta Public Schools as a high school science teacher, middle school assistant principal and various district-level positions.

The investiture ceremony was also attended by the KSU Foundation board and board of trustees, KSU staff, leading education officials and family and friends of Epps.





2022-23 YEAR IN REVIEW MAGAZINE



I REALLY DO BELIEVE THAT THIS COLLEGE IS ONE OF THE BEST INSTITUTIONS IN THIS COUNTRY TO BE AT THE EPICENTER OF CHANGING WHAT HAPPENS IN EDUCATION.

DEAN EPPS

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Dean

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**KENNESAW STATE**  
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