41st Annual Alumni Awards Celebration

SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2019
The following individuals, businesses, and organizations helped to make this year’s Alumni Awards event a success.

Camille Kesler (BSFCS ‘94), Alumni Awards Selection Committee Chair
Charlie Mustard (Jittery Joes)
David Weeks (Barbaritos and Dunkin’ Donuts)
FACS Alumni Association Board of Directors
Heidi Hensley Art
Lisa Bellwin (BSFCS ‘90), Alumni Awards Committee Co-Chair
Marian Proper (BSFCS ‘84), Alumni Awards Committee Co-Chair
Nicholas Lindell, (AB ‘18, BMUS ‘18, BS’18, MS ‘20), Student Musician
UGA Alumni Association
UGA FACS Student Ambassadors
Wier/Stewart, Media Partner
Dear FACS Alumni and Friends of the College,

On behalf of the FACS Alumni Association Board, I welcome you to the 41st Annual Alumni Awards event. We are so pleased that you have joined us for this day of celebration.

Invigorated by a yearlong celebration of our 100-year anniversary throughout 2018, the College of Family and Consumer Sciences is already looking ahead to our second century with ambitious goals of building upon its legacy of leadership and service.

During the centennial year celebration, we published a pictorial history book, hosted a gala that recognized more than 100 people who have made significant contributions to the college and established a special centennial endowment scholarship. We learned much about what makes our college unique.

Our commitment to public service, outreach, teaching and research was prevalent from the beginning and still drives us today.

As we look to the future, we seek to commit to a culture of diversity and inclusion, engage with and energize our alumni and continue to enhance our facilities to provide world-class research and training opportunities.

Our college is strong and well-positioned to continue producing successful, motivated graduates.

Thank you for your support of FACS!

Sincerely,

Sandra Whaley Derrick

Alumni Board President
2018-2019
Welcome and Introductions ................................................................. Sandra Whaley Derrick  
Alumni Board President

Alexis Morgan  
Director of Alumni Relations

Invocation ................................................................................................ Jake Conner  
FACS Student Ambassador

Brunch

Luncheon Speaker .................................................................................. Keturah Orji  
BSFCS ’18, MS ’20

Awards Presentation ............................................................................... Camille Kesler  
Past President

Presenters

Pacesetter Award .................................................................................... Sarah Beth Massengale  
FACS Student Ambassador

Creswell Award ....................................................................................... Tracey Brigman  
Clinical Assistant Professor

FACS Appreciation Awards ................................................................. Michael Rupured  
Extension Financial Management Specialist and Assistant to the Dean for Family and Consumer Sciences Education

Outstanding Service Award .................................................................. Natalie Morean  
FACS Student Ambassador

Emily Quinn Pou Professional Achievement Award ............................ Anne Sweaney  
Emeritus Faculty

Distinguished Alumni Award ............................................................... Katrina Bowers  
Senior Director of Development and Alumni Relations, Terry College of Business

Honor Hall of Recognition Induction ..................................................... Linda Kirk Fox  
Dean

Closing ..................................................................................................... Beth Schuler  
President-Elect
FACS Alumni Association Board of Directors 2018-19

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Chair, Student Engagement

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Vince Vance, BSFC ’09

Caitlin Mitchell, BSFC ’16

Greg Vessels, AB ’76

FACS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS
Alumni Awards Event  |  UGA Trivia Night  |  Homecoming Tailgate  |  Dogs with the Dean
FACS Convocation  |  Designing Dawgs  |  UGA Financial Planning Alumni Group

FACS SOCIAL MEDIA
For the latest updates on FACS news and events, connect with us on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter and Instagram.

[Facebook] [Twitter] [Instagram] [LinkedIn] UGA FACS Alumni
Keturah Orji is a 2018 graduate of the financial planning program. She recently completed a standout career as a student-athlete, graduating summa cum laude and as an esteemed member of the Blue Key Honor Society. She is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Sport Management and Policy.

The Georgia track and field legend became one of the most decorated Bulldogs ever during her time in Athens. She is a 15-time All-American, an eight-time NCAA individual national champion in the triple and long jumps, and the 2018 recipient of the NCAA Woman of the Year Award. She most recently received the 2018 Bowerman Award, which is given each year to the top collegiate student-athlete in the sport of NCAA track and field.

She also served three years on the UGA Athletic Association Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and took on the role of vice-president her senior year.

Off the track, she has enjoyed serving her community through an after-school mentoring program she established for middle school girls that emphasizes self-worth, the importance of education, social media influences and the power of perseverance.
This award is given to an individual who has graduated from the College within the past 10 years and who actively promotes the beliefs and values of Family and Consumer Sciences.

You can say this for Ivy Odom: she knows how to set goals and achieve them.

“I knew at age 13 that a career in FACS was meant for me, (but) when I walked under Pou's Pillars for the first time as a freshman, I didn't believe that the time I'd spend in Dawson Hall would change my life forever,” Odom said.

Since graduating from UGA in 2015 with a BSFCS in consumer journalism and a B.A. in Spanish, Odom has completed the culinary arts program at L’Academie de Cuisine in Maryland, followed by a culinary apprenticeship at Empire State South in Atlanta.

In 2016, Odom was selected for the Test Kitchen Fellowship at Meredith Food Studios, which produces photo, video and digital content for various Meredith Corp brands such as Southern Living, Real Simple and Food & Wine.

During her time in this position, Odom took on tasks far beyond the scope of her role.

“Early on I identified her as someone special,” said Allison Long Lowery, director of Meredith Food Studios. “Even as a fellow, our term for an intern, she was exceeding our expectations by taking on projects for recipe development, raising her hand for special assignments and troubleshooting our processes. She also delivered exemplary work that met the high standards of our brands.”

Following the end of her fellowship, Odom was hired as the full-time Test Kitchen Assistant in October 2017.

Since that time, “she has established herself in the food media world in a substantial way,” said Katie Barreira, Test Kitchen Director.

“For the last year, Ivy has been a leader among the Test Kitchen Assistants,” Barreira said. “She is a creative powerhouse, having tested and developed dozens of original recipes for nearly all of our brands.”

“Her on-camera charisma, her gift for storytelling and her passion for Southern cuisine have blossomed into the Southern Living video series Hey Y’all in which Ivy stars,” Barreira said. “Not only is Ivy the talent, she pitches and develops the content for every episode. Her food, her home kitchen and her modern Southern roots are the heart of the series.”

Odom’s passion for her work has made an impression on her co-workers.

“She has won the attention of many people in leadership at Meredith not only for the high quality of work she delivers, but also for her work ethic, and the pure heart and soul she pours into what she does,” Lowery said. “These are qualities we rarely find in such a young employee, but Ivy is well beyond her years and truly functions as a pacesetter in our group.”
Named for the first dean of the College, this award recognizes a current or retired faculty or staff member who has provided leadership in motivating and guiding students.

Ask her students and colleagues about Brenda Cude, and you’ll hear the words leader, mentor, researcher, innovator and role model.

Chief among the descriptors, though, is teacher. Cude is a born educator and cherishes the interactions with students.

“I have learned that by teaching in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences, I have the power to change the quality of our students’ lives and to empower them to do the same for others,” Cude said. “No one could ask for more than that.”

Cude, a Georgia Athletic Association Professor of Family and Consumer Sciences, came to UGA as professor and head of the department of financial planning, housing and consumer economics in 1998 and quickly established herself as a respected researcher in the area of consumer decision-making.

She also has served as the department’s undergraduate coordinator since 2006 and has taught 12 different courses at UGA, including six she created.

One of them, a one-hour course on money management, was largely designed by six students Cude recruited specifically for the project. The experience proved insightful, Cude said.

“Because of the advice of the students, the course was more comprehensive and student-centric than it would have been if I had planned it on my own,” she said. “From the combination of working with FACS students to design the course to actually teaching the course to students, I have learned the great value of reversing roles – the teacher learning from the students – which I continue to do.”

Cude has been named the department’s Teacher of the Year twice (2006 and 2007), was named a UGA Senior Teaching Fellow in 2008 and was named the Educator of the Year by the Direct Selling Education Foundation in 2017.

She also was named a Distinguished Fellow of the American Council on Consumer Interests in 2009 and was a FACS 100 Centennial Honoree in 2018.

“Dr. Cude is known for promoting critical thinking in students with carefully crafted assignments, welcoming different perspectives and achieving a higher level of intellectual discourse,” said FHCE department head Sheri Worthy. “She has the gift of bringing out the best in her students by helping them develop their passions.”

This gift for teaching, combined with a passion for mentoring both undergraduate and graduate students, has left an impression among dozens of FACS alumni who have benefited from Cude’s guidance and encouragement.

“She takes on every challenge with a smile and a positive attitude, which is why people love to work with her,” said Victoria Olson, a 2015 FACS grad and former Cude teaching assistant. “She is determined to make the college a better place for students and faculty to learn and grow.”
Given to an individual or organization that has contributed significantly to the support of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences either financially, programmatically or legislatively.

The love for all things FACS began early in life for both Linsey Shockley and Traci Bryant.

It’s no wonder they both end up working in organizations devoted to furthering the FACS mission.

Shockley, a 2011 FACS graduate who was a state officer for Family, Career and Community Leaders of America in high school, now serves as the FACS program specialist with the Georgia Department of Education.

“I spent a lot of time with my family and consumer sciences teachers,” Shockley said. “Their love and passion for FCS spread to me and has helped shape who I am. Without FCS, I have no idea where I would be today. Every day working with young people, I try to share my passion with them.”

Bryant, a 2010 FACS grad, also was a leader in FCCLA in high school and now serves as executive director for the Georgia Association of Family, Career and Community Leaders of America.

“I was a family and consumer sciences student all throughout middle school and high school,” she said. “I absolutely loved learning about skills that would be useful to me later in life. I was enthralled about the idea of being able to teach something honestly meaningful - not just something that I could ‘relate’ back to real life.”

Bryant and Shockley’s respective organizations have long enjoyed a fruitful partnership with the college, said Michael Rupured, Senior Public Service Associate and Extension Financial Management Specialist within the college.

Their combined knowledge of the field and passion for FACS education has helped increase visibility of the college’s programs, he said.

As representatives of their organizations and in honor of this long and rewarding partnership, the college is proud to present the FACS Appreciation Award to Shockley and Bryant.

“Linsey and Traci work closely together to promote Family and Consumer Sciences throughout the state,” Rupured said. “As graduates of the college, they are very familiar with what the college has to offer and as state leaders for FACS teachers, they are always on the lookout for ways to promote our programs.”
Established in 1999, this award is presented to graduates for continued involvement in their community, faith community, helping organization, the College or the Alumni Association.

It turns out Heather McElroy's high school classmates were on to something when they voted her “Most Involved” her senior year.

McElroy’s professional resume, stacked with records of her volunteer efforts throughout the Athens area, is a testament to her passion for service and community enhancement.

“I love this community and I like to think I have grown into a connector,” said McElroy, a Realtor with Berkshire Hathaway Home Services in Athens. “If I am aware of a program that will improve from knowing someone, I do everything to make that happen.”

Shortly after graduating from FACS in 2003, the consumer economics major immediately got involved with Habitat for Humanity.

“That deals directly with something I’m so passionate about: home ownership,” she said.

That led to involvement with other local non-profits, including serving on the board of the Athens Area Homeless Shelter, where she served a stint as both interim executive director and president.

Working with the area’s homeless population was especially rewarding, McElroy said.

“We worked to improve their lives,” she said. “We strived to partner with programs that would teach them the tools to be wise with their money, save and maintain a job. The goal was for them to be able to achieve stable and permanent housing.”

In addition to serving as a member of the Rotary Club of the Classic City, McElroy is also a regular guest speaker in FACS housing classes and considers educating her first-time home buyer clients a top priority.

“Educating the public to make wise housing decisions is important to me,” she said.

McElroy’s passion for her community is inspiring, said DeAnn Golden, senior vice president of Berkshire Hathaway Home Services Georgia Properties.

“When Heather believes in causes, people or initiatives, she goes ‘all in’ and not just to have another bullet point on her resume, but to make a difference and effect positive results,” Golden said. “She is truly the most professional, dedicated, loyal and committed person I know.”

McElroy’s motivation is simple.

“I want to be known and remembered for making a difference,” she said, “and doing good where I can.”
Established in 1999 in honor of the fourth dean of the College, this award is presented to graduates who have attained substantial achievements and are at the midpoint of their careers.

Folks who know Mitch Hardeman use the word “loyal” often in describing him. Loyal to his family, his friends, his employees and, notably, to his college.

“Mitch has experienced great success with his various business endeavors,” said Anne Sweaney, the Josiah Meigs Distinguished Professor Emerita. “During the process of creating wealth within his businesses, he has never forgotten his roots in Dawson Hall.”

Hardeman graduated from FACS in 1993 with a housing degree and now uses his experience as a successful business owner to assist current FACS students.

He is a frequent guest lecturer in the college and has been a key volunteer with the mentorship program established for undergraduate students of the Housing Management and Policy program.

Since 2010, Hardeman also has served on the Board of Advisors for the Housing and Demographic Research Center (HDRC) as well as on the FACS Alumni Association Board, including a term as president in 2013-14.

“Mitch is passionate about helping the next generation of professionals to find their passion like he has,” Sweaney said. “He often credits his success in the business world to the experiences he had in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences.”

During his time as an undergraduate student, Hardeman had the opportunity to join the first group of FACS students to travel to London for a study abroad trip in 1992. Hardeman went on to earn his MBA from Brenau University in 1997.

Hardeman’s professional journey has afforded him opportunities to work in various capacities.

He was employed by Jackson Electric Membership Corporation from 1995 to 2002, first as a residential marketing representative and later as a commercial marketing rep.

All the while, he also kept busy in his work with Hardeman Properties, a company he created in 1995 to manage personally-owned apartments and residential homes.

By 2002, Hardeman’s company had grown into Hardeman Enterprises, now focusing on the construction of single-family homes, while still managing personally owned commercial rental properties.

In 2003, he founded Hardeman-Hobson Waste Services, which supplies waste container transport services to private homeowners, remodelers, builders and commercial industry customers in the Athens area.

“Mitch is a visionary,” said Debbie Phillips, a fellow FACS grad and business owner. “He has a unique way of getting others to think at a higher level and identifying people’s strengths to get them to achieve extraordinary success through his leadership. He exemplifies the spirit of this award and makes us all better people just by who he is as an exceptional leader.”
Since 1980, the Distinguished Alumni Award has recognized a graduate of Family and Consumer Sciences who has made lifelong contributions that reflect the beliefs and values of the College.

When Tammy Gilland took the podium to close out the college's centennial gala in 2018, she implored the audience to help future generations learn, grow and contribute.

It’s a common refrain in Gilland’s vocabulary, born partly out of her experience as a FACS consumer journalism student in the late 1980s, where she served as a Legislative Aide and was a member of the Blue Key Honor Society.

She also was the first female student inducted into the Sphinx Honorary Society.

came to UGA as a young woman searching for a place to learn, grow and contribute, and I found the College of Family and Consumer Sciences,” Gilland said. “The support and encouragement of the faculty and staff bolstered my confidence as a student and has remained with me as an adult.”

Gilland, the executive director of philanthropy for Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation, took a self-described “non-traditional” career path to success.

She began her career as the director of consumer relations for the Georgia Cattlemen’s Association, then took a position as coordinator of alumni and development for the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

That began a 23-year career with UGA, where she served in roles ranging from director of annual giving to chief of staff and senior director of development for the UGA Office of Development.

During her time at UGA, Gilland created and managed the UGA Parents and Families Association and the UGA Board of Visitors.

“She is one of the hardest-working, most effective, creative and determined professionals I have ever worked with, and my personal and professional respect for her is enormous,” said Tom Landrum, UGA Vice President Emeritus for Development and Alumni Relations. “I am convinced that the compass that was set within her during her years of instruction in the College of Family and Consumer Sciences has continued to guide her adult life.”

In her current role, Gilland is responsible for all fundraising programs and events of the Piedmont Athens Regional Foundation as well as managing the Loran Smith Center for Cancer Support.

Widely recognized for her leadership skills and volunteer efforts in the Athens and Oconee County communities, Gilland previously received the college’s Outstanding Service Award and the Pacesetter Award for early career achievement. In 2018, she was named a FACS 100 Centennial Honoree.

“Tammy is the epitome of someone with a true servant’s heart,” said Courtney Bernardi, president of the Oconee Chamber of Commerce, an organization Gilland has served for more than a decade. “She leads with kindness, professionalism and a desire to ensure those around her succeed.”
There were only 12 kids in the little country school in rural New Jersey.

Most figured to grow up to work the dairy and potato and cattle farms that dotted the local landscape in this post-World War II America. Higher education was deemed out of reach, if anybody thought of it at all.

It was against this stark backdrop that eighth grader Carolyn Berdanier proudly informed her teacher she was going to be a professor.

“She laughed at me,” Berdanier recalled. “I don't think anybody had ever aspired to be a college professor.”

More than six decades later, Berdanier tells that story with a sense of fulfillment, having enjoyed a career in science that saw her achieve international recognition for her discoveries and contributions to the field.

Berdanier has authored over 125 scientific publications, written 19 books and achieved worldwide acclaim for her development of an animal model for the study of Type 2 diabetes.

Berdanier's emergence as a scientist came at a time when women were not widely accepted – or even present – in academic roles, especially in Berdanier's chosen field of biochemistry.

The women who studied under Berdanier during her highly decorated tenure as faculty member and head of the FACS department of foods and nutrition took special note of her accomplishments.

To them, she was an inspiration.

“I think what made Dr. Berdanier unique was she was a very strong woman,” said Judy Harrison, a graduate student during Berdanier’s tenure who later joined the faculty. “I always thought of her as being a tower of strength. I think we were all a little afraid of her in a way, but that helped make us better students and better faculty members.”

After earning her bachelor’s degree in 1958 from Penn State, Berdanier soon found herself as the only female in her graduate program at Rutgers. By the time she finished, she had earned a dual Ph.D. in biochemistry and physiology.

In retrospect, she said she did face discrimination and unfair treatment, but it never discouraged her.

“I was so involved in the science and so dedicated to what I was doing, it never occurred to me that I was doing something unusual,” she said. “And I never thought of it as perseverance or being stubborn – I just was doing what I loved doing. The fact that I was female didn’t enter it whatsoever.”

Berdanier thrived in her early career, first as a research nutritionist with the USDA, then in faculty positions at the University of Maryland and the University of Nebraska.
While at Nebraska, despite out-performing her male colleagues in terms of grants and publications, Berdanier grew to feel unappreciated and began seeking a new opportunity.

Enter the University of Georgia.

“It was warm,” she said, laughing. “And it was a challenge.”

The department of foods and nutrition at the time had no Ph.D. program and no extramural funding.

In her interview with UGA President Fred Davison, Berdanier was characteristically blunt in her assessment of what it would take to bring the program to prominence.

“I said, ‘I’d like to see this program grow and develop, and that’s going to cost money,’ ” Berdanier said. “And I said ‘Are you willing to put your money where your mouth is?’ He leaned back in his chair and he roared. After he stopped laughing, he said ‘How much money is it going to take?’ I gave him a sum and he said, ‘All right, we can do that.’ ”

Berdanier was named head of the department in August 1977, beginning a 22-year run as a faculty member and researcher that sparked unprecedented growth.

She recruited renowned researchers to the department and established a doctoral program that continues to thrive. In 1984, she became the college’s first recipient of the university’s Lamar Dodd Award, the highest award given for creative research in science.

“She demanded so much, but she led by example,” said Rick Lewis, also a graduate student during Berdanier’s tenure who later joined the faculty. “Students and faculty who knew her knew the formula for being successful – you need to have that passion. She really demonstrated that.”

And, of course, she made the discovery that ultimately brought her worldwide recognition, the development of an animal model for the study of diabetes that put the university at the forefront of the field.

“It was quite a mystery and a lot of fun to unravel,” Berdanier said of the process of discovery that occurred over a nearly 20-year period. “It really was quite a breakthrough.”

At 82, Berdanier is still asked to speak at international conferences – “they still ask me and I still turn them down,” she said, laughing – and still writes magazine articles on nutrition and does some consulting.

Her legacy, though, extends beyond the pages of scholarly journals and plaques and commendations. It’s heard in the voices and seen in the work of the students who dared to follow in her footsteps.

“She was the toughest professor I ever had – as students we were just in awe of her,” said Emma Laing, former graduate student and current faculty member. “Her toughness helped us to succeed later in life. She gave us confidence, and she really inspired us to become half the scientist she was.”
Upcoming Events

Nominations now open for FACS Alumni Board

Nominations open March 2 – April 1, 2019

Lead, shape and impact signature programming and initiatives. As a valued member of the FACS Alumni Board, you will build strategic relationships with students, faculty and other alumni. Nominations are due Monday, April 1. Nominate yourself or a friend!

Interested? Learn more by visiting: www.fcs.uga.edu/nominate or contact Alexis Morgan, Director of Alumni Relations at FCSAlumni@uga.edu

Charles Schwab Financial Planning Center Dedication

Thursday, April 11, 2019

Please join us on April 11 for a dedication ceremony in recognition of Charles Schwab Foundation’s generous gift.

Thanks to support from Schwab Advisor Services and funding from Charles Schwab Foundation, the University of Georgia completed an interior renovation of a historic, three-story building on the UGA campus near Stegeman Coliseum to be named the Charles Schwab Financial Planning Center.

Due to the generosity of three local RIA firms, SignatureFD, TrueWealth and Homrich Berg, the Charles Schwab Financial Planning Center features three client interview rooms and a state-of-the-art observation lab that will give students first-hand experience in the financial industry.

UGA Trivia Night Hosted by FACS Young Alumni Council

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

Time to test your knowledge! Grab your friends and join the FACS Alumni Association and fellow UGA alumni for a night of trivia at Whitehall Tavern in Atlanta. Registration coming soon!