Commencement message: Never stop learning, have integrity, be kind

A sense of pride and accomplishment was palpable in the Greensboro Coliseum Friday morning.

Proud graduates. Proud friends and family. Proud faculty and staff.

UNCG awarded approximately 1,444 bachelor’s degrees, 281 master’s degrees, 78 doctoral degrees and four specialist in education degrees at the university’s December Commencement ceremonies. The more than 1,800 degrees include Spartans who met their graduation requirements in August.

A hooding ceremony for doctoral graduates was held the day before.

Commencement speaker Terry Akin, CEO of Cone Health, left the new graduates Friday with three lessons he’s learned over the course of his life: Never stop learning, have integrity and be kind.

Akin encouraged the Class of 2017 to have a growth mindset – to learn and become better each day.

“There is a reason this is called commencement. It’s a beginning,” he said. Namely, the beginning of a new learning journey.

Akin recognized one Spartan by name: 82-year-old Phil Koch, UNCG’s oldest graduate, who earned his bachelor’s degree in history.

“If you want to be inspired by the thought of lifelong learning, look no further than your own fellow graduate,” he said.

Akin encouraged the Class of 2017 to act with integrity by honoring commitments and being transparent.

And above all else, he implored them to be kind.

Degrees were conferred, tassels were turned and cheers rang out across the coliseum.

And with that, more than 1,800 new UNCG alumni began the next chapter of their lives.

Congratulations, Class of 2017!

Story by Alyssa Bedrosian, University Communications
Photography by Martin W. Kane, University Communications

###
Allegacy opens with unique health and wellness offer for Kaplan Center members

A new business has opened in Spartan Village II.

Allegacy Federal Credit Union opened a financial center as part of UNCG’s new Health and Wellness Millennial District. The credit union in UNCG’s new mixed-use project held its grand opening last Thursday.

And it has a special health and wellness themed offer for those who hold a membership in UNCG’s state-of-the-art Leonard J. Kaplan Center for Wellness.

Allegacy’s AllHealth Wellness Savings Account is available to current and new members of the Kaplan Center. Designed as an incentive to be more active, the wellness savings account offers financial rewards for visits to the wellness center. Members will earn higher returns on their savings based on the number of visits to the center each month. Participants can earn up to 1 percent APY on a savings balance of up to $10,000.

“By broadly embracing the idea of health and wellness over a lifetime – bringing together concepts of both physical fitness and financial well-being – Allegacy is bringing unique value to UNCG and our neighboring community,” said Charlie Maimone, UNCG vice chancellor of business affairs. “Allegacy has demonstrated a commitment to providing great services. Even more, they are supporting UNCG’s academic and service mission through student learning opportunities and offering their expertise to many of our service programs. This important relationship is a model for partnerships as we continue developing our Millennial Campus into the future.”

Allegacy Federal Credit Union was established in the Triad in 1967 to serve the employees of RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company. Today the Credit Union is one of the largest in the state and has over $1.2 billion dollars in assets, serving over 750 Select Employer Groups with over 138,000 members worldwide. They offer a full array of financial services for consumers and businesses including retail and commercial banking services, investment services, benefit solutions, payroll and much more.

###

Men’s Basketball hitting stride, with several home games over the holidays

The SoCon season starts late this month, and the Spartans men’s team has
been looking sharp.

The men’s team most recently defeated Elon 75-44. The win is the first for the Spartans against the Phoenix since 2010. The win improved UNCG to 6-3 on the year.

Earlier in the month, Junior guard Francis Alonso (shooting, in photo) had a career-high 36 points to lead the Spartans to a thrilling come-from-behind triple overtime victory on the road at Liberty. Alonso was clutch in the win, hitting the game-winning basket with 2.4 seconds left in the triple overtime period. He also hit game-tying 3-pointers at the end of regulation and at the end of the second overtime period to keep the Spartans alive, essentially giving him three last-second shots in one game.

The team has been fun to watch.

Men’s Basketball will have several great home games in the coming weeks.

UNC Wilmington - Wednesday, Dec. 13, 7 p.m., Coliseum

UNC Asheville - Tuesday, Dec. 19, 7 p.m., Coliseum

Southeastern College, Thursday, Dec. 21, 5 p.m., Fleming Gym

Wofford, Dec. 30, 5 p.m., Coliseum. Youth Basketball Day: Do you coach a youth basketball team, or does your child play on a youth team? Youth ticket packages are $10 each and include a ticket to the game and a mini basketball hoop set. Parent tickets are $5 each. Minimum of 10 tickets to receive this group package. To order your group tickets online, click the link below.

The team also visits NC State this Saturday (Dec. 16).

Visit this webpage for ticket information.

The women’s team has four wins and five losses, with several home games in Fleming in the coming weeks. Tickets are free admission for faculty/staff, with UNCG ID. Tusculum (Dec. 19), High Point (Dec. 28), and Lees-McRae (Dec. 31) are scheduled for this month, and CW will have a preview of game promotions for January soon. Details on the December games are here.

HR policy forums: Understanding key changes to the SHRA Disciplinary Action Policy

The SHRA Disciplinary Action Policy is intended to provide tools for addressing employee conduct and performance issues in a reasonable, consistent, and effective manner. On Sept. 7, 2017, the State Human Resources Commission approved revisions to the SHRA Disciplinary Action Policy (formerly called the “Disciplinary Action, Suspension, and Dismissal Policy”). This policy took effect as of Nov. 1, 2017.

Although these revisions do not significantly change the current policy and practice of the state, there is a significant restructuring of the policy itself. Some aspects of the disciplinary process that were undefined in the former policy have been articulated in the new policy to foster greater consistency of practice. The key changes can be found HERE.

Forum Learning Objectives

To help with greater understanding of the new policy, UNCG Human Resources (UNCG HR) will hold forums that will address the following learning objectives:

- Key changes to the policy
- Application to the SHRA Performance Appraisal Policy
- Types of disciplinary actions (written warning, dismissal, suspension, and demotion)
- Categories of "Just Cause"
- Conducting Pre-Disciplinary Conferences (PDC)
- Employee grievance rights
- Understanding investigatory status
- Internal templates, processes, and procedures for administering disciplinary actions
- UNCG HR’s role in the process
Forum Dates and Times

Forums will be held in Room 212 at the UNCG Police Department on the following dates:

- Wednesday, December 13, 2:00-3:00pm
- Thursday, December 14, 10:00-11:00am
- Monday, December 18, 2:00-3:00pm
- Tuesday, January 16, 11:00am-noon
- Wednesday, January 17, 2:00-3:00pm
- Thursday, January 18, 10:00-11:00am

SHRA employees or their supervisors MUST REGISTER TO ATTEND.

Policy Documents and Questions

SHRA employees or supervisors who are unable to attend one of the forums may view the new SHRA Disciplinary Action Policy on the UNCG Human Resources website. A One-Page Policy Summary is also available for review and reference.

For questions related to the forums or the new policy, contact Gwen Evans, Director for HR Business Partners and Employee Relations, at gdevans2@uncg.edu or (336) 334-5212.

###

Faculty survey

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

This Fall (August 2017) Provost Dunn instituted a Faculty Accessibility Policy to provide guidelines for office hours, with this academic year to serve as a pilot. The Faculty Committee on Academic Policies and Regulations is seeking feedback on the policy's implementation to inform Faculty Senate recommendations. The survey can be found linked below, and should take no more than 5-10 minutes to complete.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact: Joi Bulls (jwbulls@uncg.edu).

Faculty Survey

###

SECC at nearly 90 percent of goal

Donations are still being received for the UNCG SECC. If you wish to donate, please do so this week.

Nearly 1 in 3 Spartan employees have contributed so far this year, said Macea Whisettse, chair of UNCG's SECC.

"Currently, we've reached $183,375 (89 percent) of our goal and 31 percent participation,” she said last Friday.

"You can help UNCG show our “Power of Giving” by making a contribution to the SECC here, if you haven’t already.”

The SECC is the official giving campaign for North Carolina state employees, supporting 900 charitable organizations in our region and state.

Details are here.
2018 University Holiday Schedule and 2017 Winter Holiday Schedule

2018 University Holiday Schedule

The 2018 University Holiday Schedule has been finalized and is now located on the UNCG HR website for your operational planning. The schedule adopted by the State Human Resources Commission for SHRA and EHRA Non-Faculty employees has been revised to meet the needs of our campus. For your convenience, both the 2018 and 2017 University Holiday Schedules will remain accessible on the UNCG Human Resources website.

2017 Winter Holiday Schedule

Please review the 2017 Winter Holiday Schedule to ensure you plan and record time appropriately. While the university will be closed the week of December 25-29, eight (8) hours should be charged to vacation leave, bonus leave or compensatory time for Friday, December 29, 2017.

Answers to questions regarding holiday eligibility requirements and premium holiday pay can be found on the website. General questions regarding the holiday schedule should be directed to Victoria Benson, Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer atv_benson@uncg.edu or (336) 334-5210.

###

Free Trip to the JSNN Campus

Following the demand from UNCG staff and the success of the Staff Senate's free tour of the Union Square Campus last summer, the Staff Senate Personal & Professional Development Committee will host/organize the second trip for this year: to state-of-the-art JSNN Campus.

The tour will be this Friday, Dec. 15, 1-3 p.m.

Free bus transportation will be available, sponsored once again by the Department of Educational Leadership & Cultural Foundations. Enrollment and seats are available for 30 people.

Come explore and learn more about our UNCG campuses, especially the advanced technology and services available at the JSNN facility.

Please register at https://workshops.uncg.edu/workshops-by-category.jsp?cat_id=77001540 to secure your seats or contact Bruce Pomeroy, Staff Senate Personal & Professional Development Committee, at bepomero@uncg.edu or 334-5913.

###

Five receive Information Literacy Course Development Awards for next semester

University Libraries has announced the recipients of the Information Literacy Course Development Awards for Spring 2018:

English 102-10 (Carl Schlachte)
History 511A (Lisa Tolbert)
Honors 222 (Jill Bender)
Nursing 375 (Nakia Best)
Residential College 252 (Meg Horton)

The purpose of the Information Literacy Course Development Awards is to support instructors in revitalizing courses to foster information literacy skills. These re-envisioned courses incorporate information literacy throughout the semester, teaching students to locate, evaluate, synthesize and cite sources in the manner most appropriate for the subject area.
Dr. Brett Carter

Dr. Brett Carter (Student Affairs) received new funding from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services for the project "Collegiate Recovery Community." Recovery is "a process of change through which individuals improve their health and wellness, live a self-directed life, and strive to reach their full potential" (SAMHSA 2012). UNCG's Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) believes that there are multiple pathways to recovery and encourages students to develop and maintain an active recovery and wellness plan. The vision of the SRP is to be a model recovery-minded community that engages and encourages students in their pursuit of an enriched college experience and sustained recovery. The SRP creates a recovery-minded community of empowerment, purpose and inclusion in which UNCG students in all phases of recovery can pursue their personal goals for the purpose of enhancing personal wellness and contributions to the global community.

###

Dr. Sonja Frison

Dr. Sonja Frison (The Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships) received new funding from Sandhills Center, Local Management Entity, for the project “Juvenile Justice Substance Abuse Mental Health Partnerships.” This project is supported by funds from the NC Department of Health and Human Services Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services.

The Juvenile Justice Substance Abuse and Mental Health Partnerships (JJSAMHP) is a statewide initiative designed to provide a continuum of care for juvenile justice involved youth with behavioral health issues. The North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services works collaboratively with the North Carolina Department of Public Safety, Juvenile Justice Section to provide resources and support for 18 local teams within the JJSAMHP network to increase service utilization, enhance services, and infuse evidence-based and best practices.

The UNCG Center for Youth, Family and Community Partnerships provides technical assistance and training for this initiative. UNCG’s role in the initiative is to: 1) provide technical assistance activities to the sites and communication about site visits to state level partners; 2) increase avenues and methods of training and information sharing re: state and local partners; and 3) increase awareness and usage of evidence based practices/treatments and best practices for juvenile justice involved youth.

###

Dr. Gay Ivey

Dr. Gay Ivey (Teacher Education and Higher Education), the William E. Moran Distinguished Professor in Literacy, became President of the Literacy Research Association at its annual conference held recently in Tampa, Florida. Her term runs through December 2018. The Literacy Research Association is an organization aimed at advancing literacy research, theory, and practice. LRA supports the development of emerging and established scholars and the dissemination of high-quality research intended to improve literacy and literacy education. UNCG was well represented at the LRA annual conference, with faculty and graduate students presenting a range of original research to peer colleagues from around the world.

###
Dr. Robert Owens

Dr. Robert Owens (Bryan School of Business and Economics) has been appointed the chair of the Diversity Committee for the Association for Applied Sport Psychology. As the chair, he will lead efforts to ensure the association honors its commitments to diversity and creates an inclusive community for all of its members.

###

Dr. Kelly Poole

Dr. Kelly Poole (Social Work) received renewal funding from the Cone Health Foundation for the project “Congregational Social Work Education Initiative (CSWEI 2017-18).”

Consistent access to primary medical and behavioral health care reduces cost, increases capacity within the tertiary health care system and enhances the wellbeing of communities overall. Studies demonstrate that individuals without permanent housing, and other health disparate population groups, such as immigrants and refugees, access primary health care and other health wellness services at far less frequency than that of the general population. Affordability, accessibility (transportation) and availability (long wait list, inconvenient hours) are commonly cited causes for vulnerable individuals’ inability to secure necessary, ongoing coordinated health and behavioral care. In addition to the foregoing, obstacles to care may include difficulty navigating a fragmented human service delivery system, untreated mental illness or substance abuse, fear of stigmatization, language or other cultural barriers.

An integrated care approach, within an interdisciplinary model of care, and augmented by other ancillary community-based, co-located service agencies, especially those offering supported housing, have proven to be highly effective program models. With its creative, collaborative, community-based model, CSWEI has successfully developed and implemented programming that addresses the needs of each of these vulnerable population groups and has been effective in linking health desperate individuals to care.

###

Dr. Christopher Rhea

Dr. Christopher Rhea (Kinesiology) received new funding from the University of North Carolina General Administration for the project "UNC System Collaboration to use Virtual Reality to address Human Health Challenges."

This project focuses on connecting researchers across the UNC system who are using (or interested in using) virtual reality (VR) to address human health challenges. VR is a tool that can be adapted for practically any setting, allowing researchers and clinicians the flexibility to develop tailored interventions for their populations of interest. Recent advancements have made VR more portable and user-friendly, as well as significantly more affordable. Connecting VR researchers across the UNC system will help synergize collaborations across institutions and disciplines, positioning the UNC system as a leader in the use of VR to address human health challenges.

###

Archivist Erin Lawrimore reflects on the university’s 125 years
If there’s one person who knows UNCG’s history, it’s University Archivist Erin Lawrimore.

From the days of McIver to the Woman’s College era to the arrival of men in the 1960s and beyond, she’s uncovered some fascinating stories that don’t often get told – student Lucille Pugh’s dedication to getting an education, no matter the cost; faculty member Mary Channing Coleman’s beloved terrier “Bonnie”; and the gutsy mentality that drove so many students to make a difference across the nation.

In celebration of UNCG’s 125th anniversary, Lawrimore shared some of her favorite stories from UNCG’s 125 years – interesting people, places and moments – and how she sees the university moving forward. Check out the highlights in the Q&A below.

**What stands out about UNCG’s archival collections?**

When the school first opened its doors in 1892, folks knew they were doing something special. And because they knew that, they kept everything. We have about 140 boxes of materials from founding president Charles Duncan McIver, including really specific items like letters of recommendation for students. They were purposely saving stuff because they knew that a public university for women was groundbreaking, and they wanted to document it.

**Who is your favorite student from UNCG’s 125-year history?**

Lucille Pugh. She never graduated from the North Carolina State Normal and Industrial College, but she studied here for several years. Pugh arrived in 1899 with no money – she actually wrote a letter to McIver and told him she was willing to do anything to get an education. Pugh got a job on campus and worked her way through school. Finally, one semester she just couldn’t come up with the money. She had to withdraw, and she ended up moving to New York City to live with an aunt and enrolling in night classes at New York University’s law school for women. She graduated with a law degree and became the first woman in the United States to defend an accused murderer in court.

**Who is your favorite faculty member?**

Mary Channing Coleman, in large part because of her dog. She was the founding head of the Department of Physical Education, and the Coleman Building is named in her honor. Coleman took her dog Bonnie with her to every single class. And she was tough. She handpicked each of her majors – she would interview all prospective students to make sure they didn’t just like sports, but were actually interested in physical education.

**What is the most interesting relic in University Archives?**

The thing that everyone loves is the death mask of Charles Duncan McIver. It creeps me out – I wouldn’t want to look at it every day. But people love it, so it’s on exhibit all year long.

**What is your favorite historical spot on campus?**

One thing that people don’t tend to notice is the cornerstone for the old Students’ Building – located in the bushes between the Minerva statue and College Avenue. The cornerstone was laid in 1902, construction finished in 1906 and the building was torn down in 1950. It housed the post office, meeting halls for literary societies, the auditorium and other spaces. It was a beautiful building, but eventually it started to fall apart.

**Who was the most famous campus visitor?**

It depends on who you ask, but personally I like Eleanor Roosevelt because she came to campus multiple times and engaged with students, faculty and staff. She was the face of progressive women at the time, so it made sense to bring her to campus.

**What have you been most surprised to learn during your six years as university archivist?**

I think a lot of people don’t realize how forward-thinking this school has been since the beginning. Students here were advocating for change statewide before they had the right to vote. They came in with a purpose. I’ve always admired their ability to make something happen, even when the cards were stacked against them.
Why is UNCG’s history important and relevant to students on campus today?

You can’t know where you’re going if you don’t know where you’ve been. A lot of what we do, if you look closely, still traces back to McIver’s vision. For example, health and wellness and visual and performing arts – we’ve always been a leader in those areas. Looking back helps guide us forward. With students in particular, it helps them see where they fit in. The stories of former students show current students how they can make a difference.

Knowing where we’ve been, where do you see the university heading in the next 15-20 years?

I think our students, faculty, staff and alumni are really excited about how we’re moving forward. Right now, people feel a lot of pride being associated with UNCG. With Chancellor Gilliam’s mission of “Giant Steps,” we have an opportunity to think bigger. We have an opportunity to make a major impact across the state, and I think we’re doing it already.

Interview by Alyssa Bedrosian, University Communications
Photography by Martin W. Kane, University Communications

###

Sustainability-focused art show submittals due

With its move to the center of campus under the Fountain View Dining Hall, the UNCG Sustainability Office is creating opportunities to help make the issues of sustainability visible in some less expected ways as well.

In a pilot effort titled “Make a Show of It” the UNCG Sustainability Office has equipped the front half of its new office space to function as an art gallery and hired two student art curators who will each mount shows in Spring 2018.

The two shows are:

- The American Dream – submittals due Jan. 7, 2018; and
- Consume – three submittal opportunities
  - Production – due Dec. 15, 2017
  - Waste – due Jan. 12, 2018

Submittals are open to students, faculty, staff, and the broader community with priority given to artists with UNCG connections. Funding for the pilot has been provided by the UNCG Green Fund.

Full details on submittal requirements for each show can be found on the UNCG Sustainability webpages at https://sustainability.uncg.edu/sustainability-art-shows/

###

See/hear: Dec. 13, 2017

At age 82, Phil Koch is the oldest Spartan to graduate from the university. He said getting his bachelor's degree was on his "bucket list." About his experience, he said: "I know I'm going to miss this tremendously... Anybody my age or younger can always go back and finish up. I think it helps keep you young."

Enjoy this video interview - and read his profile in the News & Record.

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