



Forward Thinking Impacting lives with community support



I am amazed each day by the tremendous community support we at GPTC continue to experience. We represent a global network of outstanding partners committed to advancing educational opportunities for GPTC students, their families, and rising students.

Celebrating our 60th anniversary is the perfect time to put our service into perspective. The last academic year, GPTC saw more than 2,000 students earn their degrees, certificates, and workforce licensures. Just consider our impact over six decades! Our students come from 90+ countries and speak over 100 languages! I can't think of a better time to say thank you to our students, their families, staff, faculty, and community partners for building the legacy we celebrate today!

I'd like to also highlight a new development at the Regional Transportation Center, Lithonia, which is preparing for some major renovations. Within the upcoming year, construction will begin on a new 24,000 square foot facility with new classrooms, new simulator, and exciting new transportation and logistics programs.

Thank you again to our community champions. As we keep the positive momentum, I challenge you to follow the GPTC way forward.... To Learn, Serve, and Lead!

- Tavaraz Holston, President

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Time Management Seminar / Wednesday, Oct. 27
> Virtual presentation
> 12-1 PM / Link to be emailed
- Trunk-or-Treat Movie Night / Friday, Oct. 29
Location: DeKalb Conference Center
> 5-9 PM / Parking lot
- Thanksgiving / Nov. 25

GPTC enters the 2000s



Photo from 50th anniversary commemorative booklet

2000 – DeKalb Technical College (GPTC) begins increasing its enrollment by offering “virtual seating.”

2002 – The College begins serving residents of Morgan County in the City of Madison.

2004 – DeKalb Technical College is listed as the fifth fastest-growing community college in the nation by Community College Week.

2008 – The College adds a 78,470 square foot addition, including the Conference Center.

College gears up to help refugees learn English

By Cheryl Myers

The images from Afghanistan have been harrowing. Thousands of people desperately trying to find seats on airplanes and helicopters so they can escape the violent Taliban rule.

Many who managed to flee are on their way not only to Georgia but to what's been called the country's most diverse square mile — Clarkston. In that community sits the DeKalb campus of Georgia Piedmont Technical College, a vital partner in providing services for refugees. Georgia Piedmont is the only school that receives federal funding from the Department of Health and Human Services (via Georgia's Department of Human Services) to provide English classes for these individuals.

More than 20 classes are offered at various times at no cost to the refugee(s). The mass evacuation from Afghanistan means the number of refugees served will likely increase exponentially over the



A WHOLE NEW WORLD Refugees and immigrants from Afghanistan and other nations find solace and skills learning English through GPTC's English as a Second Language Program under Adult Education.

coming weeks and months. Leila Murphy is an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher at Georgia Piedmont.

As a native of Papua New Guinea, English is also her second language. Between her online courses and in-person classes, Murphy has about 86 students — which includes 38 refugees.

Of those enrolled, about 50 are actively attending. To help refugees and immigrants get settled in the United States, GPTC partners with agencies like the International Rescue Committee, Inspiritus, New American Pathways, and the Center for Pan Asian Community Services. [CLICK HERE TO READ THE FULL STORY.](#)

GPTC and Mercer University sign transfer agreement



BUILDING BRIDGES Georgia Piedmont Technical College's senior staff along with President Tavaraz Holston met with Mercer University officials during the articulation agreement signing ceremony held last month.

Officials with Georgia Piedmont Technical College and Mercer University inked a special transfer articulation agreement on September 7. The partnership is part of the MercerNext initiative and allows GPTC students enrolled in nearly two dozen associate degree programs to seamlessly transfer their degree in order to pursue a bachelor's at Mercer.

“Through the MercerNext initiative, Georgia Piedmont students are being provided with an accessible pathway to successfully complete bachelor level studies and flourish in so many different fields,” said GPTC President Tavaraz Holston. “It's a win-win for everyone involved.”

[READ THE FULL STORY HERE: GPTC, MERCER UNIVERSITY SIGN TRANSFER AGREEMENT – GEORGIA PIEDMONT TECHNICAL COLLEGE](#)

College to celebrate its 60th anniversary with celebration



This year marks a special anniversary in the life of what is now Georgia Piedmont Technical College. GPTC has been helping students make their way forward for 60 years and it's time to celebrate! November 15 will officially kick-off our Diamond Jubilee.

There'll be commemorative giveaways for employees and students as well as the kicking off of our special six-week long internal giving campaign, \$60 for 60 Years. Keep an eye on your email for all the details and remember, a little bit can go a long way to help our students be successful!

Alumni spotlight: Alexander informs to transform students

Contributed by Deborah White

When asked “what are your goals?” GPTC alumni Kimberley Alexander will say without hesitation, “I want to teach! I aspire to be an educator.”

Kimberley has been employed at GPTC for almost six years and is currently the Student Success Center Specialist, a job she loves because of the ability to assist students academically. She graduated from GPTC in 2020 with an AASIS degree, and simultaneously graduated from Grand Canyon University with a BA in Communications. She's not stopping there - she's currently working on her Master's Degree in Communications at Troy University.

Kimberley's first taste of academia came at GSU, first as a student, then an employee. “I worked there several years until the desire to earn more led

elsewhere, eventually landing on an 18-year career estimating and selling commercial HVAC systems for Trane,” she says, “I took early retirement from that career when my father's health and mine became a concern. I was led by prayer and contemplation to make a change. God's continued guidance led me to GPTC.”

Kimberley acknowledges the leadership and her colleagues at GPTC for their encouragement, support, and for motivating her to continue her education. “I decided to pursue an associate's degree at GPTC initially to complete my Bachelor of Arts degree (I needed college algebra and elective credits), but since I was in the process and I love photography, I decided I might as well take some digital media classes and apply them to an Associate degree as well.”



Kimberley Alexander

“I feel that communication skills are essential, no matter what career path you choose. I want to teach speech and I would love to teach here at GPTC one day. My mission is to educate - to inform to transform the lives of students.”

Director featured by local newsletter distributor



Kristin Corkhill

GPTC Dual Enrollment Director Dr. Kristin Corkhill was featured recently on the daily metro Atlanta CEO e-newsletter. She discussed dual enrollment and the Rockdale campus. Watch the complete video here: Kristin Corkhill on GPTC's Rockdale County Campus - [Metro Atlanta CEO](#)

Open enrollment rolls out for full-time staff

Open enrollment season is almost here! Open enrollment will begin on October 18, 2021 at midnight and end Nov. 5, 2021 at 11:59 p.m.

Be on the lookout for our Virtual Benefit Open Enrollment presentation. Employees will also receive email reminders and updates periodically during the open enrollment period. The Office of Human Resources encourages full-time faculty and staff to update their passwords before open enrollment begins. Below are links to access SHBP and Ga. Breeze:

SHBP: www.mySHBPga.adp.com
Ga. Breeze: www.gabreeze.ga.gov

GPTC campus renovations are underway at DeKalb



After much anticipation, the time has finally come for GPTC campus beautification projects to get underway. Parking lot paving and resurfacing is in progress – no more “natural speedbumps” from tree roots! The next phase will be some external façade updates and then, work will commence on significant improvements to classrooms and labs.

Employee Spotlight with: the Institutional Effectiveness Team at GPTC



L-R: Kaitlin Dudley, Britnee Shandor and Caroline Frick (As Powerpuff Girls)

Going Above & Beyond

Georgia Piedmont's Institutional Effectiveness vision is a culture of engagement, growth, and proactivity. Personally and professionally, people recognize their needs, seek to improve, and

draw on their strengths to better serve their community.

To move closer to this vision, we hope to make data more accessible, educate the college about how reflection can make positive change in a person and department, and support the college's goals to serve and lead students.

I am grateful beyond words to have Caroline and Kaitlin to round out the IE team. They are diligent, responsive, and qualified who bring perfect skill sets to their positions. It can't be overstated – the department is better because they are here.

– Britnee Shandor, Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness

BRITNEE SHANDOR

Favorite part of your job?

The best part of my job is learning. The more we talk to the diversity of staff members and faculty from every department and program in the college, the more I learn. It helps me to both develop an appreciation for the skills and strengths of others and build my own areas of need.

Favorite memory of yours?

My favorite memories are small ones that I don't work to make. Peaceful reading on the beach, holding my daughter when she was a few months old in an early morning... small things that are brought to me rather than my seeking them out.

KAITLIN DUDLEY

Favorite place to visit?

Walt Disney World. My parents went for the first time for their honeymoon, and ever since then, we always vacationed there when possible.

It quickly became a place with which I associate some of my greatest memories – my own honeymoon, anniversary, and the announcement of my pregnancy.

Do you have any pets?

Currently, we have an almost 8-year-old dog named Nani. She's a great big mutt, but is majority Pit Bull and Australian Shepherd.

Favorite time of year?

I love the Fall season due to football, candy time (a.k.a. Halloween), and the cool weather. However, I'd say the month of December is a close second as I love Christmas time.

CAROLINE FRICK

Something people don't know about you?

If push comes to shove, I can successfully milk a goat and I play a mean game of Spades. (Not at the same time, mind you.)

Advice you always give?

Listen to the Lazy Genius podcast, or read the book The Lazy Genius Way for the best advice and affirmation! (Tagline: Be a genius about the things that matter, and lazy about the things that don't.)

Favorite food?

Toast with butter and jam or cinnamon sugar or avocado or cheese or, huh, toast is my favorite food. Whoa. Embarrassing. But I stand by it! Dave's White Bread Done Right is the best store-bought bread for it. If anyone wants an off-thread discussion of toast, I am here for it.



Have a question? Comment? Got a great story idea? Email us at marketingandcommunications@gptc.edu