



Forward Thinking

Looking and moving forward for Fall 2022



Wow! What an incredible employee gathering we had in June! The theme of Red, White and Blue BBQ was alive and resonated loud and clear through the cheers, GPTC spirit wear, and many employee smiles. I am so proud to see our staff working together in order to build a stronger GPTC.

Each faculty, staff, and community partner makes an impact in student success. Every time GPTC commits to learning and increasing our understanding of the student experience, we contribute to increased student retention and program completion. We all make a difference.

As we prepare for the fall 2022 term, it is absolutely essential to focus on excellence in everything we do. Our students will join us in August with excitement and anticipation of learning and preparing for careers in high-demand fields or transferring on to one of our great college and university partners.

I challenge you to take time to refresh this summer. Spend time with your loved ones and remember the way forward at GPTC is to commit to Learn, Serve, and Lead.

- Dr. Tavaraz Holston, President

GPTC students sweep awards at national level



SHINING BRIGHT LEFT TO RIGHT: Michelle Tiller, Daisy Nguyen, and Latifu Brooks proudly display their accolades, won at the Phi Beta Lambda awards ceremony held in Chicago, including first place trophies.

GPTC students strutted their stuff at the national SkillsUSA and Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) competitions the week of June 20. One student, Michelle Tiller, competed in both events, having left the SkillsUSA competition in Atlanta early so she could travel to Chicago for PBL. Michelle earned 2nd place at SkillsUSA in the Extemporaneous Speaking category, first at PBL in Client Service and 2nd in Business Communication.

Fellow GPTC students Daisy Nguyen and Latifu Brooks also brought home some serious hardware from PBL. Daisy earned first place in the Desktop Publishing category, 6th in Statistical Analysis and 8th in Microeconomics. Latifu won first in Insurance Concepts and 5th in Entrepreneur Concepts.

Congratulations to all!

GPTC has spirit at red, white and blue bbq



FEELING PATRIOTIC TOP: GPTC's IT department wins grand championship belt for best spirit chant. Click the play button for a snippet. BOTTOM: GPTC shows their USA spirit with festive clothes and decorations.

The Red, White & Blue BBQ on June 24 was such a fun event with friendly competitions, fellowship and, of course, FOOD! We also recognized this year's Leader College class. The spirited GPTC

faculty and staff competed in cheer and/or chant events with the IT department coming out on top.

The coveted "belt" is now theirs...but not for long.

College open house draws in hundreds



COME ON IN TOP: Potential students alongside their family and friends attended the DeKalb open house. BOTTOM: Shunteka Curtis, assistant director of admissions assists a student with registering.

GPTC hosted open houses at the Newton and DeKalb campuses this month. An estimated 300 total attendees came to apply, learn about our programs, enroll and start on their paths FORWARD.

Alumna tells her story of hardships, homelessness and hope

Contributed by Deborah White
Story written by Sonja Felton, pictured

If I could use one word to describe myself, I would have to choose the word **revived**. I reached a point in my life where it did not seem I could do anything right and I slowly lost hope and faith in myself. But, looking at me today, you would never imagine that my life became so unmanageable and my situation so bad that I became homeless. Due to unforeseen mental health challenges, I lost everything: family, friends, work and even my marriage.

I had to regather myself. I have an advanced degree, but I needed to be **retooled** because I needed to be **revived**. I enrolled at Georgia Piedmont Technical College (GPTC). It was not hard for me to decide that a technical college was the best route for me because what I needed was to update my technical skills.

At GPTC my life was forever changed

by me having to complete Humanities 1000 with Dr. Delores Guillory and Public Speaking 1000 with Dr. Aretha Walker. With their assistance and support, as well as other GPTC faculty and staff support, I was able to earn an Associate in Applied Sciences in Database Specialist - Oracle.

While attending GPTC, I was a SGA governor, GPTC ambassador, SkillsUSA finalist (second place), a GOAL finalist (third place), a member of the Association of IT Professionals, the Humanity Society vice president, a member of the Ladies in Action Club, in the National Technical Honor Society, and a Tucker Rotary Club scholarship recipient. After graduation, I became employed at GPTC as an adjunct instructor for EMPL 1000, job acquisition skills.

Today, I am employed at DeKalb Community Service Board and work



within the Crisis Stability Unit. Also, I am the founder of OptimumLinx Enterprises Inc. — a nonprofit organization that provides resources and services for those struggling with mental health, physical and intellectual disabilities.

I am thankful and grateful for my educational journey with GPTC. The staff at Georgia Piedmont Technical College, along with family and friends have been extremely instrumental in helping me to realize that I still have so much to offer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Summer Break / July 4 - 8
> No classes
- Independence Day / Monday, July 4
> Campuses closed, no classes
- Final Exams / July 26 & 27
- Fall scholarships applications / July 1 - August 10
- Fall 2022 classes begin / Monday, Aug. 22

Employee Spotlight with: VP of Economic Development Dr. Alvie Coes



DR. ALVIE COES

Welcome to the family!

It's my great pleasure to notify you that our new Vice President for Economic Development, Dr. Alvie Coes, will begin work on July 1st. Please extend him a warm welcome when you see him around the college community.

- Dr. Tavaraz Holston
President

Most important part of your job?

Working with our internal and external stakeholders to continue and develop various initiatives which ensure that we are best preparing the citizens of DeKalb, Newton, and Rockdale Counties with the appropriate skills and training needed to meet the regional workforce demand.

How does being a past GOAL winner play into your role with economic development?*

I have witnessed through my own experience the value of technical education and workforce development. As a student/graduate, director of business/industry, director of student activities, and as a dean I have witnessed the passion displayed by our students and it is unmatched.

Immediate goal you have in mind?

First, it is understanding Dr. Holston's vision...and then working to implement goals that align with his vision. Secondly, it is working with my colleagues within the division to gain trust and build a spirit of comradery. Finally, it will be spending time with the community and meeting with our external partners in order to conduct a needs assessment and better understand our strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth.

Favorite pastime(s)?

I love being a father. I have two beautiful daughters ages nine and three that always need an Uber.

Best advice that you received?

Keep calm and carry on! If people see you panic, then they panic!

Favorite go-to movie?

Django Unchained ("As long as the horse can see" LOL) - Best Line!!!

Something people may not know about you?

I am a licensed funeral director and embalmer, and funeral services is truly a calling for me and my family. I don't get to spend as much time in the industry as I like, but when I can I do value helping family's during what can be a low point in their lives. On another note, I can ride a bicycle backwards and I love flag football!

*Alvie Coes won the state GOAL competition in 2011 as a funeral science student from Ogeechee Technical College.

