



Forward Thinking

Reflecting back and looking forward



Hello, GPTC Family! As we enter the holiday season and 2022 closes out, I want to take this time to reflect on the extraordinary year that we have achieved together!

GPTC is about changing lives and over the course of the year, more than 7,000 students have walked through our doors in our Adult Education, Economic Development, and Technical Education programs.

This rise in enrollment translated to a nearly 12% growth for the college—one of the only TCSG institutions to see such gains. We know that our programs prepare students for the workforce; and I am proud to say that more than 95% of our students left GPTC with a credential and a W-2 in hand!

As we look FORWARD to 2023, only more good things are to come. We saw the excited commitment of our community partners to our college at the Grateful Gathering, where public and private donations totaled \$720,000!

With additional grants and funding directed to GPTC, our programs are expanding, our facilities are being renovated and updated, and new partnerships are being formed.

As we prepare to ring in the new year, I wish you and your family a blessed holiday season.

- Dr. Tavaraz Holston, President

GPTC donates student-built smoker valued at \$9K



HOLY SMOKES Left to right: President Tavaraz Holston with Weygang Grant, instructor, Jayden Slaughter, student, Cory Thompson, executive director of the Foundation and Dexter Axel rep, Vince Moore with the student-built smoker being donated to the GPTC Foundation. The finished smoker is featured as an overlay.

For dual enrollment student, Jayden Slaughter, 17, being tasked to build a smoker alongside his fellow students was both exciting — and daunting.

“At first I was very nervous,” Slaughter said, “because I had only done one project before [with GPTC], and since this was a big project, I felt the pressure.”

Fortunately for Slaughter, he did not have to accomplish this monumental feat

alone. Joined by two other dual enrollment students: Brian Johnson, 16, and Richard Bennett, 17 and instructor, Weygang Grant, the smoker was completed in 56 days, roughly two months of work, four hours dedicated each day.

The smoker’s completion was made possible by the generous donation of four axles from Dexter Axle, a manufacturer based in Monticello, Ga. The donation was

valued for around \$1,000.

“I think it’s great what they’re doing [at GPTC],” Vince Moore, Dexter Axle representative said, “that the students are learning and we’re glad to be a part of that.” The axle manufacturer looks forward to being involved with more community projects and supporting them.

Although the experience of building the smoker began with uncertainty and unease for the dual enrollment students, Grant’s deft guidance, and being equipped with the learned skills and knowledge made all the difference.

“Building the smoker helped build my confidence,” Slaughter said with a smile.

“The project is all about the students,” Grant said. “This is what Georgia Piedmont Technical College welding program and projects are all about.”

The smoker, valued at \$9,000 has been donated to the GPTC Foundation and will be raffled off in spring of 2023.

“I think it’s pretty powerful that the students can see local companies investing in them,” President Tavaraz Holston said. “Our students take the materials and apply it to their learning with the end result being something that they can put on display and be proud of.”

College reveals huge funds at ‘Gathering’



BIG BUCKS Left to right: Elected officials, GPTC board members, State commissioner, President Holston and Foundation executive, Cory Thompson present checks donated to the College’s foundation. Commissioner Greg Dozier shares a good laugh with our president. Admissions Director Kelly Pollard accepts the prestigious Forward award given out at the faculty and staff event.

Our 2022 Grateful Gathering on November 11th was the perfect kick-off to the holiday season. A program recognizing years of service, the President’s Forward Award nominees and winner (Kelly Pollard) were named, there was delicious food and for “dessert,” three giant checks from community partners totaling \$720,000! Commissioner Greg Dozier joined other special guests to be part of our event. Special thanks to Amazon, the DeKalb County Commission and the City of Stonecrest for their generosity and investment in our community. FORWARD to 2023.

Student, instructor nominees named



Student of the Year nominees: Adrianna Ewing, Consuala Battle, Darwin Dixon, Lorena Zoi and Robert Coney. **Instructor of the Year nominees:** Claudette Alexander-Thomason, N. Andre David, Dr. Chioma Michaelson, Samuel Mitchell and Dr. Delores Guillory

Congratulations to the GPTC nominees for the 2023 GOAL (Georgia Occupational Award of Leadership) Student of the Year and the RPA (Rick Perkins Award) Instructor of the year! Both school winners will be announced on January 20, 2023. The next step for our winners will be to compete regionally in March and if they move on from there, at the state level in April.

GPTC Foundation hosts inaugural ball raising over \$20,000

Contributed by the GPTC Foundation

The Georgia Piedmont Technical College Foundation unveiled its inaugural Masquerade Ball recently. The festive and fun event raised more than \$23,000. The funds will be used to support Technical Education at GPTC.

“Unmasking Your Potential” was the theme of the evening that brought together business and community leaders along with current students, alumni, and college staff. Master of Ceremonies Karen Graham kept the program moving while featured speaker Dr. Henry Carter delivered a motivational message.

Donations and pledges raised at the event will help provide funds for faculty programs, and scholarships and tuition relief for students who otherwise might not be able to fulfill their education dreams. Mark your calendars for next year’s ball — Saturday, October 21, 2023!



HAVING A BALL Top: Representatives from Piedmont Healthcare attended the Inaugural Masquerade Ball, dressed in their finest. Bottom: GPTC staff and Masquerade party-goers show off their colorful and festive masks. Side: Guest speaker Dr. Henry Carter gives his keynote address at the night’s main event.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Christmas Angel Tree Donations / Dec. 1-16
> Dropoffs at DeKalb & Newton
- Campuses Open / Dec. 19 - 22
- Campuses Closed / Dec. 23 - Jan. 2, 2023
> No classes, buildings closed
- New Year’s Day (observed) / Monday, Jan. 2
- Classes start / Monday, Jan. 9

Employee Spotlight: Dual Enrollment Coordinator Kimberly Sanders



Kimberly Sanders

Going Above & Beyond

We are excited to have Kimberly Sanders as part of the Georgia Piedmont Technical College Dual Enrollment family. Kimberly previously worked at Southern Crescent Technical College as the Retention Coach and Career Services Coordinator. She has also worked at Gordon State College as a Transfer Evaluator.

Kimberly is a recent graduate of Mercer University with a Masters in Human Services. She is currently attending The University of Georgia pursuing an ED. S in Workforce Education. Kimberly is elated to use her experience and education to serve and provide a way forward for all students here at GPTC.

KELLY POLLARD
Admissions Director

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB HERE AT GPTC?

I greatly appreciate my supportive co-workers and I enjoy working with GPTC students. It is very rewarding to help others reach their goals.

FAVORITE PASTIME OR HOBBY?

Spending time with my family and watching Major League Soccer.

WHAT ARE YOU CURRENTLY WATCHING/READING?

I am currently watching a new show called Fire Country. I enjoy reading research articles on mental health.

COFFEE OR TEA (OR BOTH/NEITHER)?

Coffee and tea

FAVORITE PLACE TO BE AND WHY?

I enjoy being in the mountains. I like cool weather and a peaceful environment.

WHAT WOULD BE YOUR LIFE’S THEME SONG?

Trust In You. Lauren Daigle

WHAT DOES HAPPINESS LOOK LIKE TO YOU?

For me, happiness looks like an empty schedule.

SOMETHING PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT YOU?

I recently married my high school sweetheart after over 20 years of being apart.



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