



Forward Thinking Refocusing on our core values



As COVID-19 weakens its grip on our way of life, it is time to rediscover and experience the release of *community* among us. It's time to reconnect with one another. It's time to see smiles again. It's time to close the distance between us.

To that end, you will notice a renewed emphasis on activities, events and initiatives intentionally designed to bring us together as we rally around our mission of training today's workforce. We will *LEARN* and grow together through team building and customer service training. We will *SERVE* our communities through our outreach efforts. We will *LEAD* with passion and a commitment to making things better than we found them.

We are breaking new ground. Look to our Regional Transportation Training Center and new Rockdale County Campus. We are strengthening partnerships. Ask our business and industry partners. And, most importantly...We are changing lives. Listen to our students.

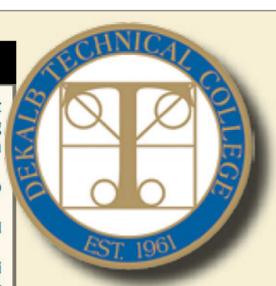
We are moving forward towards a glorious future. Join the movement!

- Tavarez Holston, President

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **July 5, State Holiday**
Campuses closed in observance of July 4th holiday.
- **Regional Job Fair / July 22**
10 AM - 2 PM. Location: Newton D Conference Center. Visit gptc.edu/regional-job-fair.
- **Open House / July 31**
10 AM - 2 PM. Location: DeKalb Campus, A Building.

1961-2021: THE NAME GAME



DeKalb Tech's logo, the College's brand for 11 years.

Georgia Piedmont Tech was first established in 1961 as DeKalb Area Vocational School. Over the course of the past 60 years, the College has evolved and has been called by six different names. The names with the longest use to date were DeKalb Community College - Technical Division and DeKalb Technical Institute, both utilized for 14 years each. Here's our history!

- (1961-1963) DeKalb Area Vocational School
- (1963-1972) DeKalb Area Technical School
- (1972-1986) DeKalb Community College - Technical Division
- (1986-2000) DeKalb Technical Institute
- (2000-2011) DeKalb Technical College
- (2011-present) Georgia Piedmont Technical College

Hotseat with Martita Kendrich: GPTC Bookstore Manager



Martita Kendrich

Going Above & Beyond

Martita is dedicated to giving the best customer service to our students, faculty and staff as the bookstore manager. She is always cheerful and cordial when interacting with others. She has served GPTC for approximately 27 years in different capacities, bringing her own brand of enthusiasm to every position she has held.

- Teresa A. Brown, Vice President of Administrative Services

Favorite part of your job?

My favorite part of my job is when I get to meet the students and help them obtain the necessary course materials they need to successfully complete their courses.

Favorite book?

The Bible.

Your go-to movie?

Any Marvel movie.

Favorite place to visit?

Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

Favorite memory?

I have several favorite memories, but one of them is when my granddad walked me down the aisle.

Favorite pastime/hobby?

My favorite pastime is spending time with my family.

Favorite quote?

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. - Proverbs 3:5-6

GPTC HOSTS FIRST DRIVE-THROUGH COMMENCEMENT



#ADaytoCelebrate

On Saturday, May 22, Georgia Piedmont Technical College (GPTC) held its first-ever drive-through commencement for Fall and Spring 2021 graduates. The air was electric with excitement as graduates waited in their vehicles to eventually walk the blue carpet and meet with President Tavarez Holston, who presented them with their earned credential. To watch the event's video, please visit gptc.edu/graduation. Follow us on Instagram @gogptc.

Inaugural Forward Leader College Class Graduates



TRAILBLAZERS GPTC's inaugural Leader College class gathered as they were honored with awards at a campus-wide event held on Friday, June 18, 2021.

By Jana Wiggins

Thirteen current faculty and staff members can now call themselves graduates of the first-ever class of the GPTC Forward Leader College — a program established to inspire and empower employees to leverage leadership skills for the service of the College.

The Forward Leader College is an 11-month leadership experience committed to strengthening new and emerging leaders from across the college community. Leaders engage in college leadership and improvement strategies as well as lead impact projects within their individual areas of passion.

The members of the GPTC Forward Leader College Class of 2020-2021 are Adrienne Caldwell, Kristin Corkhill, Tyreece Echols, Christopher Hughes, Vita Jordan, Kevin Lane, Antwan Massey, Dr. Meghan McBride, Chasidy Parks, Kelly Pollard, Dr. Ramona Pollard, Cory Thompson and Sadie Washington.

Healthcare programs reaccredited

By Jana Wiggins

Spring 2021 was a busy and challenging one for three of GPTC's healthcare-related programs that earned reaccreditation during the past four months. Accredited programs are held to strict standards and must maintain those standards with each renewal or reaccreditation and are thought of highly within their industries and among students, employers and other institutions.

Congratulations to the College's Clinical Laboratory Technology, Health Information Management Technology and Medical Assisting programs for distinguishing themselves and earning continued recognition through the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS), the Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education (CAHIIM) and the Commission on Accreditation for Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), respectively.



A CLOSER LOOK Stephany Tovar, GPTC student, gets hands-on experience utilizing her microscope while observing parasites during the parasitology segment of Microbiology.

Students garner national awards



STRIPES EARNED Student April Wright displays her 2021 PBL Competition certificates and medals.

GPTC Business Management student April Wright climbed an impressive seven spots from 2020 to 2021 in the National Phi Beta Lambda (PBL) competition. With a ninth place finish in Business Decision Making in 2020, she is bringing home silver in 2021 as one of the top two students in the country in the Human Resource Management competition. The announcement was made June 27 after the virtual competition judging concluded.

April also made a name for herself and GPTC at the 2021 Georgia State PBL Human Resource Management and Project Management competitions as Georgia's gold medal winner in both contests.

Keyon Boston and Toni Willis, GPTC's 3D Visualization and Animation competition team, also garnered the top spot and gold medals in Georgia's 2021 SkillsUSA State Championships this spring. The team competed in the virtual SkillsUSA National competition earlier in June and placed a respectable ninth in the U.S. GPTC's 3D Animation and Design teams are now three-for-three, winning gold each year at the state SkillsUSA competitions since 2019.

Virtual academy returns for 2021

In response to the COVID-19 health and economic crisis, the DeKalb Summer Youth Employment Program will, for the second year, be transformed into the DeKalb Virtual Career Academy, and GPTC is proud to partner for the effort again this year. The program, which runs through early July, will provide career development, education enrichment and summer income for 200 out-of-school youth, ages 16 to 24, who will be paid \$9 per hour while learning online.

The DeKalb Virtual Career Academy (DVCA) is a cooperative effort by DeKalb County Government, DeKalb County School District, multiple departments within Georgia Piedmont Tech, WorkSource DeKalb and various public and private partners. The virtual



curriculum will offer academic enrichment courses and life skills and job readiness training in Entrepreneurship, Project Management and Digital Literacy, while motivational speakers will engage, educate and inspire participating youth.

Alumni spotlight: From GED to Jurisprudence Degree

Contributed by Deborah White

The educational journey for Karmell Zimmerman began as a Georgia Piedmont Tech Adult Education program graduate, earning her high school equivalency (GED) credential. Zimmermann's pathway continued to her current status — a law school graduate.

She says she always knew she wanted a career in law and had a goal set to become a juvenile probation officer. But when she didn't graduate from high school because she fell short of the required credit hours, she thought her dream would not become reality.

"It was my fault, I was hanging out, skipping school, not doing my work. I didn't take my education seriously. When I saw my friends walk across that stage and graduate, I felt defeated and crushed. I dropped out of high school in the 12th grade. With the support and encouragement of my family, I didn't give up! I came right across the street to Georgia Piedmont Technical College (DeKalb Tech at that time) and signed up to take the GED test," Zimmerman says.

"I took the test and passed the first time! I was awarded my GED! I am so thankful for the second chance that I received through Georgia Piedmont Tech."

From there, Zimmerman transitioned

easily into the credit side of the college and enrolled in the Criminal Justice program. "My instructors were fantastic, and the staff worked with me every step of the way. I even received several scholarships from the GPTC Foundation, which made it easier for me to focus on my academics," she says.

She especially credits Valerie Brown, who was the Criminal Justice program director at that time. "...I would really like to thank her again, and all of my instructors, for the motivation and for encouraging me to continue on. If I had not attended GPTC, I may not have found the passion that I now have for law."

Zimmerman graduated from GPTC with an associate degree in Criminal Justice in 2009. She continued her education at DeVry University and graduated Magna Cum Laude with a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and a certification in Technical Management. While at DeVry, she received an internship with a non-profit organization, the DeKalb County CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate for children) and later was hired full time.

"There are so many children out there that are abused and neglected, and that just can't continue, not on my watch...that's now my passion, to advocate for those children in the court system," Zimmerman says.

She is still employed at CASA as the senior



KARMELL ZIMMERMAN

advocacy coordinator today, which prompted her to further her education. She graduated with a Master of Jurisprudence in Child Law and Policy from Loyola University Chicago School of Law in 2016 and again recently from Loyola with another Master's degree, this time in Business Law and Corporate Compliance, in 2021.

Zimmerman says her ultimate goal is to write policy and procedure for state agencies, such as the Department of Family and Children Services. She thanks Georgia Piedmont Tech for helping her to discover her passion. "It all began at GPTC, and I'm grateful."



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