ASPIRE IS A PUBLICATION OF THE WELLSTAR COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AT KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY.

THIS PUBLICATION SHOWCASES THE HIGH CALIBER OF TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP, AND SERVICE WORK OCCURRING IN THE WELLSTAR COLLEGE EVERY DAY, DISPLAYS THE DIVERSITY OF APPROACHES TOWARDS WELLNESS REPRESENTED BY THE DISCIPLINES AND INITIATIVES HOUSED IN THE COLLEGE, AND ILLUMINATES THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS AND STUDENT EXPERIENCES WITHIN THE COLLEGE.

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[Logo: Kennesaw State University]

WellStar College of Health and Human Services
Dear Friends of the WellStar College

Kennesaw State University and the WellStar College of Health and Human Services continue to grow in the number and quality of students while adding innovative facilities and reaching historical milestones.

One of the newest additions to WellStar College is our Kinesthetic Classroom, recently featured on CNN and also in this issue. It is a learning environment that helps stimulate the mind by keeping the body active and thus more engaged.

With our continued focus on health and wellbeing, our Public Health Education major graduated its first class this Spring and has 165 students currently enrolled. This major helps prepare students for positions in public and private health organizations, outreach education programs, and corporate wellness settings.

I believe you will be impressed by the accomplishments of the WellStar College. We will continue to grow in scope, quality, significance, and excellence for our students, as we serve residents of Georgia and the world.

In partnership,

Mark Tillman
Dean
The WellStar College Advising Center

2017-18

BY THE NUMBERS

- Over 7,000 academic advising appointments
- Over 850 academic advising live chat sessions
- Participated in over 40 university new-student orientation sessions
GETTING TO KNOW THE ACADEMY

The Academy for Inclusive Learning and Social Growth (AILSG) launched in 2009. It started with 3 students and has grown to over 40 students today. Despite its success, many people are unaware of the AILSG, so we interviewed the faculty and staff about frequently asked questions.

WHAT IS THE AILSG?

The AILSG includes two certificate programs that provide students with different intellectual and developmental disabilities the opportunity to experience college as a typical college student by auditing courses, participating in internships, and engaging in campus life.
WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS ARE OFFERED WITHIN THE AILSG?

We have two sequential, comprehensive programs. The foundational 2-year Academic, Social, and Career Enrichment (ASCE) Program is for first-time college students. The ASCE curriculum focuses on academics, life skills, social inclusion, and career readiness. Students can also apply for our advanced program, the 2-year Advanced Leadership and Career Development (ALCD) Program. The ALCD curriculum focuses more heavily on job readiness and leadership opportunities. Both programs provide traditional degree-seeking student mentors to assist AILSG students participating in classes and internships. Academic, career, and social advisors are also provided to guide AILSG students through goal-setting and career readiness.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLYING TO THE AILSG PROGRAM?

To be considered for admission, applicants must have: successfully completed a high school program under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a preferred 3rd-grade reading level, knowledge of basic mathematics, the ability to function independently for a sustained period of time, no significant social/emotional problems, and the desire to develop skills for successful competitive employment.

WHAT IS THE JOB PLACEMENT RATE OF STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM AILSG PROGRAMS?

Although we do not currently track their sustained employment after students graduate, we are proud to say that 100% of our Spring 2017 and Spring 2018 graduates had a job immediately after graduating.

WHAT ON-CAMPUS HOUSING OPTIONS EXIST FOR AILSG STUDENTS?

In keeping with the inclusive nature of our programs, students accepted for on-campus housing have the option to live with other AILSG students in a suite-type dorm alongside traditional degree-seeking students.

ARE THERE FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES?

Yes! Financial assistance is primarily available through the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) and through AILSG donor-supported scholarships.
It was a transformative trip for a Health Promotion and Physical Education (HPE) student representing her program and college. Maria Mata, a WellStar College Public Health Education student, traveled to Geneva, Switzerland, as part of the Distinguished Global Ambassador Program, offered by KSU’s Division of Global Affairs, where she visited the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the World Health Organization (WHO). As part of the program, she had the opportunity to develop and eventually implement a mental health awareness project. It was a once-in-a-lifetime educational opportunity.

Maria, originally from Venezuela, is a triplet. She chose KSU because she felt it would be the right fit for her and would allow her to grow academically. What Maria had not anticipated were the opportunities and success that would develop in the WellStar College at KSU.

Starting as a Communications major with aspirations of becoming a news anchor, Maria knew she wanted to use her personal skills to help people. After taking an “Intro to Public Health” class, she decided to pursue a degree in Public Health Education. In her junior year as a HPE student, Maria interned at Columbia University in their Summer Public Health Schools Program. After acceptance to three different summer internships, she chose Columbia’s program because she thought it aligned best with her classes at KSU. Her field experience was at the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene as well as the Neurological Institute of New York,
She’s Going Global

Located on the campus of Columbia University, she researched organizations and discovered what they do to provide mental health care to others. She also worked with a community health worker-training program (InTOuCH) involved in stroke and heart attack prevention activities, dedicated to lowering stroke and heart attack rates in the Harlem community. She believes these experiments enhanced her communication skills, and provided partnerships through networking.

Maria’s internship at Columbia University, as well as the UNITAR and WHO, had a major impact on her goals. In fact, upon visiting the WHO she discovered that part of their mission was to “Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Wellbeing at all ages.” This happened to be identical to one of her own personal goals. As a result, she plans to pursue a career with the WHO and obtain a Master’s in Public Health after her graduation in spring 2019. Ultimately, she aspires to work with other Public Health specialists to help the world become a healthier and better place.
April 2018 marked the 6th year that KSU has distributed the Presidential Diversity Awards. SaVannah Bronson, a Human Services major at the time, was the only student to receive the award. SaVannah was recognized because of her service and contributions toward creating a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment. This recognition was due in part to her involvement with the KSU student organization called “Mountain Movers.”

Early in her life, SaVannah became enthralled with community outreach thanks to her aunt, Dr. Judy Allen Brown. Dr. Brown works at KSU and created the aforementioned Mountain Movers to help meet the needs of the KSU homeless and the less fortunate. SaVannah instantly became involved in the program and helped facilitate the many drives the program conducts. SaVannah, a Human Services major, knew that she could use her education at WellStar College and experience with Mountain Movers to make more of a difference in the community.

After receiving her Undergraduate degree from KSU, SaVannah enrolled as a graduate student pursuing her Masters of Social Work degree. Her goal is to be a part of the medical-social work field, and provide people with healthcare information and be a support connection for families. SaVannah feels that her Social Work and Human Services education has helped her become more open minded and will help her be successful in this field of work.
Emelyn Ramirez, a recent Masters in Social Work graduate, received a minority fellowship with The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The CSWE is the National Association representing social work education in the United States. They have a highly competitive Minority Fellowship Program (MFP) for masters students that provide a monetary stipend, mentorship, and other specialized training. Since MFP applicants must identify mental health and/or substance use disorder service delivery to racial/ethnic minority populations as their focus, and commit to seek employment in this field, Emelyn became a prime candidate for this opportunity.

Working in an emergency room and as an after-school teacher, Emelyn had the desire to combine the two in a field where she would not just teach people but also be able to help them. This lead to pursuing her Master’s in Social Work with a concentration in Mental Health. After much prodding from her Field Education Director, Nayette Kennett, Emelyn applied and received a national appointment as a Minority Fellow for the CSWE. This is a highly sought after appointment for Social Work Masters students all over the country and Ms. Kennett is extremely proud of Emelyn, stating:

The CSWE Minority Fellowship was a great opportunity for Emelyn due to her interest in working with the severe and persistent mentally ill population, especially at-risk youth from diverse populations. She entered the MSW program with a drive and passion to become a clinical social worker focused on providing mental health services to children and youth. This fellowship afforded her that opportunity and provided additional training to foster her long-term career goals to becoming a clinical social worker.

Emelyn graduated in May 2018 and works at a local behavioral hospital. She is currently evaluating patient intakes and referring them to the appropriate level of care. In the future, she would like to obtain her license as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and continue to advance her career.
WellStar College of Health and Human Services nursing student Alison Mutton had an idea two years ago, that has now blossomed into an awesome outlet for her colleagues. She developed a program to help keep Nursing students active, thus decreasing their stress and increasing their health. Since research has indicated that healthy students are better learners, the program also helps to increase students’ academic achievement.

An average of 187 students a year participate in the program known as SHINS (Staying Healthy in Nursing School), and the program offers students different coping strategies for stress and ways to stay physically fit. Some of these include yoga, exercise, time management, and relaxation techniques. The program includes health educators, dietitians, licensed professional counselors, and nursing faculty, all working together to help aid in the success of the students within the SHINS program.

The hope is that the program will continue
for future nursing students. It has been so popular with the students that the website, www.shins.rocks, and the Facebook page, continue to gain activity. Associate Professor of Nursing Dr. Doreen Wagner, one of the main faculty supporters of the program, has stated “Alison and the group of students that have worked to sustain and grow the program have the strong belief that you cannot fill an empty cup. Nursing (any clinical work) is an emotional drain as well as physically demanding, so if nurses do not have self-care habits they will find themselves in a burned out situation, unhealthy, and unhappy. These students have taken this belief/knowledge and with a ton of passion and perseverance have made SHINS what it is today. I hope to see it continue to involve each new class of nursing students in the development and maintenance of self-care so we can have healthy and happy future nurses.”
She has Grit

Grit has been defined as the combination of passion and perseverance. One of our own students at WellStar College has personified this by balancing the demands of a college career and a full-time job. Some students will use these challenges as a reason to prohibit themselves from succeeding, but Cassie Williamson used these complications as a means to stay focused and persevere.

Originally born and raised in Maryland, Cassie was a successful student and gymnast. After graduating high school, she started at the College of Southern Maryland becoming the first person to pursue higher education in her family. After taking some business classes, she soon discovered that the business field was not for her and decided to change her major to follow something she enjoyed.

After years of personal training, her love for exercise was abundantly clear. Cassie heard about the opportunities that the WellStar College’s Exercise Science degree offers. This led to her decision to relocate to Georgia, so that Cassie could further her education in a field that she loved, in a school that would prepare her for the future.

After seven years of overcoming many of life’s obstacles, and with the support of her family, Cassie received her undergraduate degree at KSU. After her undergraduate degree, she pursued her Masters degree and won first place at the Southeast Chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine for her Masters Student research poster presentation. She received the outstanding thesis award at the Department of Exercise Science and Sport Management’s May 2018 Hooding Ceremony, and won first place for a graduate oral presentation at the KSU Symposium of Student Scholars.

Cassie has authored or co-authored six journal articles with five more that are currently under review. This level of research productivity is rarely heard of in students and would be worthy of a more advanced scholar. Cassie is a vivid testament that if you believe in yourself you can achieve anything. She plans to attend the University of Montana to complete her PhD and pursue one of her life goals: to teach in higher education. One of her closest mentors, Dr. Brian Kliszczewicz, stated:

Cassie was an unconventional student who had an incredibly high level of persistence that led her to the success that she has today. I could not be more proud of her accomplishments. She will be starting her doctoral degree with a great mentor and working at a very high level; and she was a highly sought after doctoral candidate. I cannot wait to see where she ends up in her career.
“This level of research productivity is rarely heard of in students and would be worthy of a more advanced scholar.”
The WellStar College of Health and Human Services has created KSU history with its new Kinesthetic Classroom. The classroom is outfitted with desks that have pedals for stepping, stationary biking, and striding. The goal is to keep students in motion, which further stimulates the mind. In fact, many students have already stated that they feel much more focused in the classroom. Not only does the classroom provide a fantastic new learning environment for students, but it also opens the door for research.

Kinesthetic classrooms have been utilized previously with k-12 students, but this is the first such classroom to be used at a university. The faculty in WellStar College's department of Health Promotion and Physical Education are studying the benefits students receive from using the classroom. We are optimistic that the classroom will prove to enhance academic success.

Active Bodies, Active Minds
Does virtual reality influence sport consumer’s behavior? To answer this question, WellStar College in conjunction with its Department of Exercise Science and Sport Management created a virtual reality lab. The Sport Management faculty members oversee the lab and use some of the latest technology to open research opportunities for students and faculty. Dr. Kyu-Soo Chung, who provided the momentum to create the lab, aims to utilize the space to study sport consumer experience and how technology affects their experience. Eye-tracking devices, 360° cameras, and a hopeful addition of artificial intelligence devices are just some of the latest technology the lab will encompass. Dr. Chung hopes that this technology will provide industry relevant research opportunities for KSU undergraduate and graduate students.
Taylor Henkle (Sport Management, 2018) was the first football player from Cobb County to sign with the Owls. Currently, he is the marketing manager for the High Adventure Company.

Tonya Sebring (Health and Physical Education, 1994) led the Woodstock Lady Wolverines to the Softball state championship in 2006 as their head coach. After years of coaching, she is now the Cherokee County Administrator for School Operations, Athletics and Activities.

Kristi Piedimonte (Nursing, 2017) graduated a semester early with a 4.0 GPA and named First Team Academic All-America by the College Sports Information Directors of America. Currently, she is working at Kennestone Hospital.
Dear Friends,

You can make a meaningful impact on the lives of our students. Be a part of advancing KSU’s WellStar College of Health & Human Services goals by making a gift to provide scholarships or help fund specific programs. Together we can deliver academic excellence along with community-based, real-world learning for our students. Our giving methods include

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We thank you for your support of the College. Please join us as we educate and empower the next generation.

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PRILLAMAN HALL NURSING LABS CAN BE UTILIZED AS A FUNCTIONING HOSPITAL IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS