UNCG project tells stories of unsung civil rights heroes

Bennett College students protest downtown.

We all know of the Greensboro Four, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King Jr., and John Lewis. But what about the civil rights activists who don’t end up in history books?

A UNC Greensboro project seeks to tell the stories of these lesser-known civil rights heroes of the 1960s and 1970s.

UNCG’s “Unsung Heroes of the Civil Rights Movement Project” launched today with 14 video interviews with activists whose work, while not always recognized, had profound impacts on the civil rights movement and helped set the stage for today’s #BlackLivesMatter movement.

The project is a collaboration between the Dept. of Media Studies, the Dept. of History, and
University Libraries. “Unsung Heroes” dates back to 2009, when Professor Matthew Barr (Media Studies) and Dr. Chuck Bolton (History) collaborated on an interdisciplinary visual history course. In 2010, Dr. Curtis Austin of Arizona State University joined the project team.

Most recently, the project has expanded to include UNCG Libraries and undergraduate students. Thanks to funding from the Mellon Foundation, teams of students were trained to conduct visual history interviews, with guidance from Barr, Dr. Torren Gatson (History), and Professors Jennida Chase and Hassan Pitts (Media Studies). The student teams included Muhammad Karim and Atigre Farmer of Media Studies, and October Kamara and Summer Kinney of History. The Libraries team includes Richard Cox, Erin Lawrimore, and David Gwynn.

While the project’s focus has been the U.S. South in the 1960s and ’70s, the team hopes to create an expansive, national archive, highlighting activism from the 1960s to today. The project is designed to serve not only as a resource for researchers, educators, and students, but for the general public as well.

“The goal is to have hundreds of interviews,” Barr said. “This certainly isn’t the only civil rights archive, but the more you archive, the better. The more stories, the better. We’re trying to change the way we look at history.”

The interviews are visual history interviews, which means it’s not just audio. You get to see the people being interviewed – their body language, gestures, and facial expressions.

“Oral histories are great, podcasts are great, but there’s something powerful about actually seeing these people. The visual component is so important,” Barr said.

October Kamara, a recent graduate of UNCG’s history program and a current master’s student at Middle Tennessee State University, conducted four interviews as part of the project.

Throughout the experience, Kamara developed skills that helped prepare her for graduate work in public history.

“I really learned to collaborate well with others,” she said. “I was meeting with the team every week, figuring out logistics, and then working together to figure out the best way to present these stories. It really got me thinking outside of the box about what history can do and how it can engage a larger audience.”

For Atigre Farmer, a recent media studies graduate, hearing these often untold stories and
perspectives was deeply impactful. “Learning about what came before you can inspire you to keep that going on today,” she said.

The launch of the project is especially timely, as the country continues to have conversations about systemic racism and the incidents of racist violence and police brutality from the summer.

“This project speaks to the fact that uplift is possible, no matter the trials and tribulations,” said Gatson, whose research focuses on African American history in the U.S. South. “‘Unsung Heroes’ connects us back to the civil rights movement of the ’60s and ’70s and compels us to ask the tough questions. Have we made strides in the right direction? Or are we still trapped in this vortex of systemic oppression and racism? This project offers a window into these deeper conversations.”

Learn more and watch the interviews at libresearch.uncg.edu/unsung_heroes/.

Alumni educators adjust to remote teaching

Ebonie Jones

School is back in session, but the pandemic continues. As a result, teachers across the country are conducting their classrooms online in what is likely the most challenging fall of their careers.
How do you keep elementary-aged children engaged through a screen? How can you teach the performing arts or a foreign language without being face-to-face?

Here’s how some of our alumni are adapting their instruction:

**Brian McMath ‘96, ’10 MM, Director of Bands, Northwest Guilford High School**

It was the evening before McMath and 65 high school musicians were to travel to Washington, D.C., to perform at the Kennedy Center – a once in a lifetime experience – when Guilford County Schools canceled all travel and announced that instruction was to move online. After months of hard work and preparation for the trip, he and the Northwest Guilford Wind Symphony were devastated. But McMath had another challenge to face: How could he teach four ensembles virtually?

As he has done for the last 24 years as an educator, McMath has the musicians warm up by going through their scales. Over Microsoft Teams, one student will unmute themselves, start a metronome at a certain tempo, and begin the scale. The others will play along on mute.

Then, the students practice the pieces they are preparing for their virtual holiday concert. To do so, McMath plays a recording of the piece and conducts along with it while the ensemble members watch and play along on mute.

Students also record themselves performing sections of the piece and send them to McMath for feedback on articulation, dynamics, and musicality.
Once the students feel confident, they will each record themselves playing through the entire piece, and McMath will put the recordings together and present it as a virtual concert recording.

Although McMath prefers to be in his classroom, behind his conductor’s stand, looking out into a sea of young musicians, there is a silver lining.

“I tell my students that this is the time they can become the best musicians they’ve ever been because they are learning to be soloists. And when we all come back together, the ensemble will sound that much better for it. We are going to get better, we are going to get through this, and we are going to be OK.”

Sandra Morgan ’10 B.S. Ed., First Grade Teacher, Lindley Elementary School

To help her students through this challenging time, Morgan is making positive self-talk a priority this year.

Every morning, students write, draw, and brainstorm in their positive self-talk journals about the characteristics they like about themselves, such as the virtues of teamwork, care, kindness, and courage.

“I tell them to go back and look at their journals if they’re feeling down, so they can remember a time when they showed courage, when they problem-solved, and so on. They seem to really like it.”
By building upon the students’ socio-emotional learning, Morgan is bringing the classroom into the homes of her students.

“It’s easy to feel distant being online, and I think this helps us build a virtual classroom community and befriend one another.”

One unexpected advantage for Morgan has been rotating students between each lesson with three of her colleagues. This allows her to get to know the entire first-grade class and focus on one subject, rather than teaching all subjects to a smaller group like she does in typical years.

And the students have adapted well, too. Morgan admires them for keeping a positive attitude and becoming tech savvy. They’ve learned how to raise a digital hand, mute themselves, and stay engaged during the live lessons.

Although this has been the most challenging year of Morgan’s 10 years as an educator, she feels supported.

“There is a real sense of community here at Lindley. Our PTA is incredible, and everyone helps each other – the parents, faculty, and administrators. We all really want to help the community, and the community wants to help us. It has been so encouraging.”

Josue Farnes ‘18, ‘20 MAT, Spanish I and II Teacher, Grimsley High School

Josue Farnes

Farnes was working as a teaching assistant at the Middle College at UNCG and preparing to
graduate with his Masters of Arts in Teaching when COVID-19 hit the states.

After graduating in May, he landed a job at Grimsley High, but knew his first year teaching would be nothing like he expected.

“As a first-year teacher, you enter this new world of education expecting to be in a classroom face-to-face with students, but it’s just not like that this year. They always say that your first year and last year as an educator are always the hardest years, and that definitely is true.”

Hard is an understatement, but Farnes has learned to adapt along with educators all over the globe.

As a foreign language teacher, it has been a challenge for Farnes to know whether students who have their cameras turned off during live lessons are grasping the concepts he is teaching since he can’t see their facial expressions. To solve this and to create a classroom community, he uses breakout rooms to give students the chance to meet in a smaller virtual space and complete activities, practice concepts, and get to know one another.

Beyond teaching the fundamentals of Spanish, it’s important to Farnes that he checks in with his students and make sure they are doing OK during this challenging time.

“I want my students to know that I am here for them, and they can talk to me. I am a big advocate for communication. If something is wrong with a student, I want them to tell me and trust me, so I can find the best way to help them. That’s one of the ways we will get through this – communicating with each other.”

Ebonie Jones ’18 M. Ed., Fourth Grade Teacher, Oak Hill Elementary
Jones was named Guilford County Schools’ Teacher of the Year last month – an incredible accomplishment, especially since the academic year was turned upside down by the pandemic.

She was recognized for her resourcefulness, innovativeness, and devotion to her students. And this year is no different.

Jones began the school year like she has for her last nine years of teaching face-to face-classes – by establishing rules and expectations. But these rules were now translated to an online learning format. The first couple weeks of instruction were used to teach her new fourth grade class how to raise their virtual hand, mute themselves upon entering a meeting, and add to class discussions by using the chat feature.

One of her biggest accomplishments? Using Microsoft Teams to meet with students one-on-one and successfully complete reading assessments.

“Technology is not always our friend, but I think myself, the students, and the parents are getting the hang of it now.”

It was very important to Jones to form relationships with her students, as hard as that is to do through a screen. She wants them to trust her and get to know each other as they would in a typical year. She accomplishes this by having an open discussion each morning where students can share their thoughts and feelings. By doing that, she has found that students have become more comfortable turning their cameras on and using the chat feature to connect with one another.
Her words of advice to students, parents, and teachers alike?

“Everybody needs a little grace right now. If we all remember that we are navigating this challenge together and we hold onto that grace, we will get through it.”

*Story by Alexandra McQueen, University Communications*

**SECC update: Progress, and pledges, and prizes, oh my!**

We’re three weeks into the [State Employees Combined Campaign](#) and UNCG faculty and staff have pledged $37,330, 22% of the goal of $175,000.

140 employees have [pledged](#), and UNCG is currently second highest in the UNC System for amount pledged.

The SECC is the only workplace giving program for state employees. It is a direct way to help those in need; sustain local, national, and international health, educational, environmental and social service organizations; and make a contribution to our community.

UNCG faculty and staff members typically sustain a variety of meaningful connections to the 400 charities that benefit from the SECC.
Sherri MacCheyne, who is chair of the SECC at UNCG this year, and has been working with the SECC for 20 years, designates her pledge toward adoption or foster care agencies, and in supporting children in our community she also pays regard to her personal history.

“When I was born, I had two blessings,” she says. “My birth mom, who had the courage to give me up in the hope I would have a better life, and my parents who gave me that better life. The SECC provides me a way to honor their choices as I give back in a meaningful way.”

Another committee member, Sheryl Williamson, has elected to support Hospice & Palliative Care of the Piedmont.

“I have experienced first-hand the amazing work of Hospice,” she says. “My parents both received incredible care while they were in the last stage of life, but the boundary of care did not stop there. The hospice staff that was assigned to us helped us every step of the way. When a need arose, the team was just a phone call away. Our family was cared for as much as the actual patient. I think that my donation may be able to keep this going for other families in need at a crucial time in their lives.”

There are weekly prize drawings for contributors, and winners may select from gifts that include Yeti mugs, Arctic Zone freezer totes or cat/dog hiking traveler packs, Amazon or Target gift cards, or additional charity donations.

So far, the weekly UNCG winners are: Justin Harmon, Hannah Grannemann, Janice Tulloss, Kathy Baker, and Mark Anthony Cable.

At the end of the campaign, there will be additional prizes.

- Two people from a Division that has the highest participation rate will win a branded sweatshirt blanket in their choice of color.
- Two people from the combined Departments that tie for the highest participation rate will win a branded Candy Dish.
- One person who chose a participation level will receive a sign.

Want to learn more or make a donation? Visit [http://secc.wp.uncg.edu/give-now/](http://secc.wp.uncg.edu/give-now/).

**Free flu shots Oct. 24 and 27**

150 free flu shots will be available Saturday Oct. 24, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at a drive-through clinic in the Weatherspoon Art Museum parking lot, through the School of Nursing. Vaccination recipients must be 18 years old and anyone present must be wearing a face
covering. Free UNCG face coverings will be available with the flu shot. No appointment necessary, and recipients may remain in vehicles or walk up to the clinic.

Free flu shots are also available for faculty and staff on campus in the EUC Maple Room on Tuesday, October 27, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

To register and choose an appointment time, click here, but walk-in is also fine. The clinic requires the completion of a consent form. You must be over 18 years old to enter the flu shot clinic.

You can download the Blue Cross Blue Shield Consent form here. If you have other insurance please contact Benefits at askbenefits@uncg.edu for the correct form.

Flu shot appointments are available for students through Student Health Services.

Voluntary COVID-19 testing clinic Oct. 21

UNCG students, faculty and staff are invited to participate in a voluntary COVID-19 Testing Clinic on Wednesday, October 21 from 9:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. at the EUC Maple room. Testing is an important part of efforts to keep our community as healthy as possible. And, as a reminder, test results tell you only whether you have the virus at the date and time you get tested, so students and employees are encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities to get tested. To provide maximum flexibility, no appointment is necessary for Wednesday’s clinic. Pre-registering with the vendor, StarMed, will help minimize any waiting time. You can pre-register by doing either of the following:

- Text COVID to (704) 850-6996
- Visit https://unityphm.com/campaigns/starmed

The clinic is for individuals who:
1) do not have COVID-19 symptoms (are asymptomatic); and
2) have not been in close contact recently with someone who has tested positive.
If you have symptoms, please stay home and contact your health care provider to determine if you need to be tested.

Some important details:

- Participation is completely voluntary.
- The testing is conducted by an outside vendor, StarMed.
- A sample will be collected from the nose (nasal swab, not the deeper nasopharyngeal
swab) and tested to see if the virus is present (i.e. if you have COVID-19).

- You will receive your results directly from StarMed.

- You will be given the opportunity to sign a waiver that allows StarMed to report their results directly to the UNCG Case Management Team.

- By law, StarMed must report all results to the public health department. Public Health, in turn, will inform us if an employee tests positive.

- Information about what to do if you test positive will be provided onsite. Additional information is also available on our UNCG COVID-19 website. General information about COVID-19 testing is also available here.

- For employees: There is no cost for testing. StarMed will file with your insurance for reimbursement. Regardless of whether insurance pays or not, you will not have to pay anything.

Alumni play concerts on Tate Street at ‘Rooftober’ Fridays

Tate Street Coffee typically hosts music nights, but for COVID-19 safety reasons, has kept operations to a minimum. Oct 23 and 30, however, at 3 p.m., TSC will host alumni bands on the roof for two free concerts that can be enjoyed distantly. Photo taken in 2019.

Two Friday afternoons this month, UNC Greensboro alumni will give free, socially-distant concerts from an unusual location: the roof of Tate Street Coffee.
The concerts will be called “Rooftober Festival,” presented 3-5 p.m. on Oct. 23 and Oct. 30.

Tate Street Coffee has begun serving drinks again, but with limited seating space, and regular and special events that ordinarily take place there are on pause.

To make up for the absence of the typical lively scene at TSC, owner Matt Russ ’87 had the idea to invite several bands to play on the roof. Viva La Muerte, led by PhD student Matt Armstrong; The Grand Ole Uproar, led by Josh Watson ’08 MFA; and the Tate Street Jazz Band will perform.

“Like everybody, I haven’t been to a musical event in a long time, and I love live music,” said Russ. “So, I thought, now that we’re in this new phase, what can we do that’s fun? I’ve always had an over-romanticized vision of the Beatles’ last concert from the top of Apple Records...John Lennon wearing the big fur coat... And someone reached out about playing in the store, but we didn’t want to go with live music in the store at this point... So, I thought, how can we do this? Finally, I connected those dots and said: let’s do something on the roof. So, I saw an email from Viva La Muerte and I thought about those guys, and then I saw Josh, and I like the sound of his Grand Ole Uproar, and a couple of the guys who work in the store are music students, Evan and Greg, and they play jazz, so I asked them to play also. I thought we could all have a little fun on Friday afternoon, in a way that’s socially distanced.”

Both shows will be at 3 p.m. on Friday, with Viva La Muerte and Corby Brook on Oct. 23, and The Grand Ole Uproar and the Tate Street Jazz Band on Oct. 30.

UNCG PhD student John Crocker and alumnus Taylor Coldiron will join Armstrong and alumna songwriter Laura Jane Vincent will join Watson.

Russ says listeners might take a seat somewhere around the Brown Building for the concerts.

“I hope everyone will get a little kick, he adds. “I think we all have our nose to the grindstone, and maybe this will be a little novelty to your Friday afternoon – bring smile to your face, joy to your spirit. Live music is a salve for our collective souls, and I think we can use it. I hope we can all take a break and remember what live music does for us.”

Story by Susan Kirby-Smith, University Communications
Photography by Martin W. Kane, University Communications
The Chronicle of Higher Education now free for all UNCG faculty, students, and staff

The Chronicle of Higher Education is now available at no cost to the UNCG community, on- and off-campus. The centralized subscription was initiated in cooperation with the University Libraries and UNCG Finance and Administration, who together identified nearly four dozen individual and departmental Chronicle subscriptions campus-wide. Those subscriptions can now be canceled. To access the centralized Libraries account, visit https://library.uncg.edu/dbs/auth/go.aspx?vdbID=1752

Magnolia House exhibition looks at civil rights history in Greensboro

The UNC Greensboro Museum Studies Class of 2021 will host an upcoming exhibition entitled, “More than Just a Home: Greensboro’s Historic Magnolia House,” at the Magnolia House from 1 – 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 24, via Zoom.

The Magnolia House is one of only four Green Book sites in North Carolina still in operation, and housed some of our nation’s most well-known African Americans during segregation.

Learn about the home’s historic significance to the Civil Rights Movement, its role in Greensboro, and the importance of preserving African American houses from the home’s resident curator and Preservation Greensboro’s Benjamin Briggs, with a Q&A session to follow. Included will be a 6-minute video guide through the exhibition.

The Zoom link for the event can be found here.

Timely launch for new online Instructional Technology & Design master’s degree


As society continues to struggle with a pandemic, many people have found themselves thrust into teaching, learning, working, and creating through virtual tools and platforms - many for the first time. Within this cultural shift, a new online master’s program at UNC Greensboro is positioned to be a leader in designing and implementing tools and experiences for an increasingly online world.

The new online MEd in Instructional Technology program launched this fall with its inaugural cohort of 13 graduate students. Led by Dr. Anthony Chow from the Department of Library and Information Science, the program will prepare teachers, instructors, and trainers to design, deliver, and assess top-quality learning and development across industries including academia, government, military, nonprofits, and the private sector.

And the new program has hit the virtual ground running. Under the mentorship of Chow, 5 of the graduate students volunteered to lead usability testing with UNCG faculty, staff, and students for the new UNC Greensboro website design that is underway this year. And that project happened in the first week of class. The students documented user interaction with web page architecture and noted how long it took users to perform certain tasks, and noted issues users had with navigation. These data and results will be used by the design team to help create the best user experience possible for the next generation University website.

“Real application with real consequences represents an ideal learning environment,” says Chow. “As a member of a focus group assisting in helping to re-imagine the UNCG website,
I saw an opportunity to integrate usability testing with the web production and UX course that I was teaching.”

That project is a great example of putting theory into practice, and giving the students an early start on real-world, hands-on experience and the production of content that will help them build a portfolio.

**NOT-SO-NEW BEGINNINGS**

Although the program’s launch occurred precisely when demand for innovative online instruction has skyrocketed, the need for and thinking behind the program has been in the works for some time. The new MEd program is actually a reboot of an older Master’s in Teacher Education degree that included an option for a concentration in instructional technology.

Quinn Dalton is one of two graduate assistants in the new program and was coordinator for the usability testing project. As she notes, “The [School of Education] aggressively worked to harness the accessibility and instructional benefits of distance learning long before it became a health and safety necessity.”

“We saw this coming,” Chow says. “We wanted to broaden the ways to teach and learn to fields outside of traditional educational environments and model best practices in design, development, and assessment, and use the best technologies to ensure teaching and learning is accessible to all.”

**IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME**

So what kind of student does the new MEd in Instructional Technology & Design attract? Chow and Dalton note that the program’s strength is in the diversity of backgrounds, skill sets, motivations, and career trajectories that are characteristic of students who apply to the program.

Many students are already working professionals who are looking to change careers, or gain legitimate academic credentials for the work they are already doing. They come from many different disciplines, fields, and areas of expertise.

But there’s also a certain kind of person that is drawn to the program and this line of work.

“When I read statements by program applicants, I often hear things like ‘I’ve always loved to help other people,’ or ‘I like providing instruction to help people.’ And they see this as a calling. The reason we look for people like that is because we know those are the people
that will be resilient enough to actually make it through the program,” Chow says.

“The MEd program and the new website usability project brings together everything I’ve been interested in,” Dalton says. “And it’s design, to solve a problem. It’s psychology, understanding your users, it’s marketing, and how you reach them. So it’s all these things that I’ve done and enjoyed. And I really want to be able to do this work and have the credentials for it.”

A CREATIVITY AND PROFESSIONALIZATION INCUBATOR

One of the key features of the new program is an online laboratory called iLab. The virtual lab is a hands-on learning laboratory where UNCG graduate students in Instructional Technology and those in Library and Information Science can support external organizations through the implementation of website design, social media coordination and curation, and various applications of instructional technology.

iLab allows each of the graduate students to design a personalized virtual space in which they can experiment with projects, brainstorm ideas, and collect digital assets.

“iLab itself is a work in progress,” says Dalton. “Dr. Chow established it not only for students to experiment with the full array of WordPress features, but also to allow students to continuously develop and improve the iLab site overall following principles of user-centered design.”

IT’S NOT ABOUT THE DAZZLE

Although technology is an important aspect of the design process, the program goes beyond the technical elements to focus on the human factors of teaching, learning, and design.

“Regardless of the environment, it’s still all about human learning,” Chow says. “Instructional design technology is about understanding what humans learn, how human learning occurs, and then designing instruction to be as interesting and impactful and usable as possible.”

Chow cautions against expecting technology to be a magic bullet. “Technology isn’t the ‘whiz-bang’ as we say. The point of the tech is to improve the efficiency of delivery, and to support and enhance the way people communicate.”

Chow and Dalton emphasize how the instructional and design process involves paying special attention to how humans interact with one another, their environments, and the tools they use to accomplish tasks.
They note that research suggests successful learning is based more on the way in which instructors behave and interact with students than on the technology. “What this suggests is that the design of any course – regardless if it is face-to-face, hybrid, or online – must be a very personal interaction between the instructor, content, and design of the course itself,” Chow says.

A key goal of the new program is to prepare graduates for a wide range of possible careers, but to also ground their approach to learning and instruction in ways that go well beyond just knowing the tools and tricks of the trade. As Chow notes, “Graduates will have a lot of choices in the marketplace and the satisfaction of helping people to be more successful, to improve their quality of life, and to support teams and organizations in doing better work. It’s enormously rewarding.”

**Instructional Technology & Design Program:**
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/uncqmedit/
iLab: https://www.facebook.com/uncgmedit

*Story by Matthew Bryant, University Communications*
*Photography by Grant Evan Gilliard, University Communications*

**10th annual Entrepreneur Day virtual, open to all**

The NC Entrepreneurship Center’s keystone event, UNCG Entrepreneur Day, would normally see the campus visited by over 75 entrepreneurial visitors.

This year, on Tuesday, Oct. 27, Entrepreneur Day will connect UNCG students, faculty, and staff with successful local entrepreneurs, leaders, and executives through a virtual platform. An exciting group of 2020 Speakers, many UNCG alumni among them, will share their stories and provide exceptional advice to the UNCG community.

The sessions are open to the entire UNCG community and beyond. Eight speakers are scheduled throughout the day, via Zoom, coordinating with class times on Tuesday, Oct. 27, starting at 8 a.m. Sessions will be hosted in Zoom, allowing for live viewing with interactive Q&A.

Joining is easy, to register to attend the Zoom, visit the NCEC website at https://startup.uncg.edu/virtual-uncg-entrepreneur-day and select the sessions you’d like to attend. Follow the links under Time/Topic to get the Eventbrite registration information for each speaker. An email will be sent with the Zoom link after confirmation.
UNCG Entrepreneur Day is free and open to ALL UNCG students, faculty, and staff!

Dr. Diya Abdo

Dr. Diya Abdo (Center for New North Carolinians) received new funding from the Department of Homeland Security for the project “Triad Naturalization Application and Education Services Collaborative.” Betsy Jenson is co-principal investigator on the project.

In partnership, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro Center for New North Carolinians (CNNC) and New Arrivals Institute (NAI) (sub-awardee) propose to provide comprehensive and streamlined citizenship instruction and naturalization legal services to immigrants and refugees in the Triad area of North Carolina. NAI has provided ESL and citizenship instruction to immigrants since 2010. NAI provides educational and supportive services to over 700 refugees and immigrants each year. The CNNC, among its many services to the immigrant and refugee community, has provided immigration services, including assistance with naturalization since 2014. The CNNC provides immigration services to approximately 150 clients per year, with an average of 20 naturalization clients per year. However, the CNNC is in the process of expanding immigration services, particularly naturalization services.

Through this grant, the researchers propose to serve refugee and immigrant populations primarily from: Burma, Bhutan, Vietnam, DRC, Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Syria, Iraq, Colombia, Venezuela, Mexico and Central America. Researchers will provide a minimum of 14 English Language and Citizenship classes per year for 240 non-duplicated students over two years. Eighty percent of students will demonstrate measurable educational gains. We will provide naturalization legal services to at least 200 clients with at least 90% naturalizing.

Dr. Nicholas Oberlies
Dr. Nicholas Oberlies (Chemistry & Biochemistry) received new funding from Washington State University for the project “Natural Product-Drug Interaction Research: The Roadmap to Best Practices.” Dr. Nadja Cech is co-principal investigator on the project.

As natural products (NP) sales increase, the risk of adverse NP-drug interactions (NPDIs) increases, yet the pharmacokinetic (PK) elucidation and clinical relevance of putative NPDIs remain elusive. Assessing the risk of NPDIs is more challenging than that of drug-drug interactions (DDIs), often due to relatively scant PK knowledge of individual NP constituents that perpetrate these interactions.

The proposed U54 Center will develop a roadmap for NPDIs research through a series of well-designed human in vitro and in vivo studies (termed Interaction Projects) on 4-6 priority NPs that pose a potential risk for clinically relevant NPDIs. A repository will be developed for the data generated from the Interaction Projects, and results will be communicated to various target audiences through a public portal. This U54 Center is composed of an accomplished team of investigators, including pharmacokineticists with expertise in NPDIs, complemented by expertise in NP chemistry, DDIs, and health information communication.

In collaboration with the Steering Committee, an innovative strategy that combines a mechanistic approach with practical considerations (e.g., popularity of the NPs) will be used to select and prioritize 4-6 NPs for further investigation in the Interaction Projects. Mechanistic aspects include curated clinical NDPI data from the widely used Drug Interaction Database (DIDB) of the Informatics Core, structural alerts, and compelling preliminary clinical and in silico NPDIs data. Once selected, the NPs will be entered into a Decision Tree for assessment of NPDIs liability and probable significance of interactions with victim drugs.

In parallel, the Pharmacology Core will develop detailed Statements of Work for the human in vitro and in vivo studies – while the Analytical Core will source, acquire, and characterize the selected NPs – for the Interaction Projects. Upon completion of each project, the Analytical Core will analyze the PK samples, and the Pharmacology Core will develop
physiologically-based PK models for further assessment of the clinical relevance of the Interaction Project results.

Throughout these projects, the Informatics Core will create a data repository embedded within a public portal web-based application named, NaPDI app, for Natural Product-Drug Interaction application. The repository, built using the DIDB framework, will allow researchers to access both raw data and summarized results. The U54 Center will also develop and share Best Practices recommended for the conduct of NPDI studies, based on the experience with and results from the Interaction Projects, with the research communities via the public portal. Effective dissemination of the Interaction Project results will be ensured through user experience and brand content studies with target audiences - researchers/practitioners and lay public - to refine the public portal content. The Informatics Core will ensure that the U54 Center's results are archived, organized, analyzed, and well-publicized, allowing for improved design of future NPDI research and ultimately, improved decisions on the optimal management of clinically relevant NP.

Dr. Cerise L. Glenn

Dr. Cerise L. Glenn (Communication Studies) is the new incoming president of the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG). This position entails the terms of vice-president, president, and past-president. More information at https://osclg.org/about-us/current-board-members.

Michael Parker
Retired UNC Greensboro faculty member Michael Parker has been awarded 2020 Thomas Wolfe Prize, an award honoring distinguished authors in memory of fiction writer Thomas Wolfe. More info at https://www.dailycarheel.com/article/2020/10/university-thomas-wolfe-award-feature-1008.

Newsmakers: Holland, Heath, Spring semester, ‘Green Book’ panel

Whether researchers with timely insights or students with outstanding stories, members of the UNCG community appear in print, web and broadcast media every day. Here is a sampling of UNCG-related stories in the news and media over the week:

- Dr. Stephen Holland was featured in an article in The Economist about climate change measures. The piece.
- Donna Heath was a panelist in the last Chronicle of Higher Education Roundtable Report. See here.
- MyFox8 highlighted UNCG’s new plans for the Spring semester. The article.
- Dr. Vasyl Taras was quoted in a Quartz article about global teamwork during COVID-19. The feature.
- The News & Record featured UNCG Museum Studies’ “Green Book” panel. The piece.