A safer Georgia State

New emergency communication systems to be tested

By Liz Babiarz • lbabiarz@gsu.edu

Don’t be alarmed if you hear sirens blaring across campus next week. Georgia State’s Office of Emergency Management will be testing its three new communication systems at noon Sept. 8 – 11.

“If we have an emergency event, we need to let people know as soon as possible the threats they might face, and these systems will allow us to do that,” said Mike Radensdorf, director of the Office of Emergency Management.

The first system to get a test run will be the Panther Alert System. The campus phone numbers and e-mail addresses of faculty and staff have been loaded into the Panther Alert system, which notifies students, faculty and staff of an emergency via land lines, e-mails and, in the future, text messages. On Sept. 8, look for phone calls from the Panther Alert System with a caller ID of 404-413-3261 and e-mails from PantherAlert@gsu.edu. If you do not receive both a call and e-mail, visit www.gsu.edu/pantheralert to update your information.

On Sept. 9, check out the Georgia State homepage where the Web-based emergency notification system will be tested. In the event of severe weather, a chemical spill, suspicious activity or other types of emergencies, Radensdorf will post an alert message on www.gsu.edu. An icon and description of the situation will immediately appear in a box in the right-hand corner of the homepage, providing Georgia State employees and students as well as their family and friends with updated information on what is happening on campus.

A test of the outdoor emergency broadcast system will be conducted Sept. 10. Expect short durations of horn, siren and voice announcements from four roof-mounted speaker arrays on Aderhold Learning Center, Sparks Hall, the Natural Science Center and the Student Recreation Center.

The communication systems are just one piece of the university’s emergency management plan. This year, Radensdorf’s office will begin training 150 emergency coordinators across campus. Students will also receive training in the future through the Freshmen Learning Communities program and peer workshops.

For more information, contact Radensdorf at 404-413-0776.

Welcomeing the new class

Regents’ Professor Robert Sattelmeyer (with staff) leads President Carl Patton (left), Provost Ron Henry and head football coach Bill Curry (behind Patton) from the stage during the Aug. 17 Freshman Convocation at the Sports Arena. During the event, President Patton officially inducted the new freshmen class into the Georgia State community.

Board of Regents honors faculty members

Seven Georgia State faculty members were named Regents’ Professors this summer by the University System of Georgia — an honor reserved for the most outstanding senior faculty at Georgia’s research universities.

“The seven faculty chosen as Regents’ Professors this year have all been at least 10 years in the rank of professor at Georgia State,” said Georgia State Provost Ron Henry. “They have continued to perform at the highest level in their disciplines and are nationally recognized scholar-teachers.”

From the College of Arts and Sciences, the designation was given to Dean Lauren Adamson, Associate Dean for Natural and Computational Sciences Charles Derby, Associate Dean for Social and Behavioral Sciences Maryann Romski and Associate Chair of the Biology Department Teryl Frey.

The honor also went to Jorge Martinez-Vazquez, a professor of economics and director of the International Studies Program in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, as well as to two faculty members in the College of Education: Joel Meyers, a professor of counseling and psychological services and director of the Center for School Safety, School Climate and Classroom Management; and Walter Thompson, a professor of exercise science and head of the After-School All-Stars Atlanta program.

“It is always a pleasure for us to see deserving faculty recognized for their consistently high levels of achievement in instruction, research and service,” said College of Education Dean Randy Kamphaus. “In my experience, this recognition only serves to motivate faculty ... to achieve at ever higher levels. We look forward to their future contributions to our college and university.”

You’ve had a long professional career. What made you decide to go into coaching?

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Parents are always on the lookout for healthy snacks for kids, and with school in session, snacks that are easy to pack are a must.

A new line of fruit snacks, called FruitaBü, are labeled as organic “smooshed” fruit and carry the USDA Organic symbol. These fruit snacks are made with organic fruit puree concentrates (apple, pear, strawberry, lemon) along with white grape juice concentrate and pectin. No artificial colors are used.

Are these healthy snacks for kids? What about taste — will kids like an organic version of fruit roll-ups?

The products come in three varieties: fruit twirls, fruit “smooshers” (a tube of a gooey substance that can be eaten as is or frozen), and fruit flats (like fruit roll-ups). We tried the “smooshers” and fruit flats. One serving of the snacks contains 40 calories from sugar; a fruit roll up has about 50 calories of sugar.

My problem is that even though these snacks are made from organic ingredients, they are still concentrated sources of sugar that provide no vitamins, minerals other than potassium (each serving provides about 2 percent of daily needs), fiber or phytonutrients as real fruit does.

What about taste? I conducted an unscientific taste test with six of my nieces and nephews (ages 3 to 16) and they gave the products an average rating of 2.5 on a scale of 1 to 5 — with the scale as: 1 = “nasty” and 5 = “let me have more.” Only two of the kids really liked the products.

A 13-year-old said they were “unique and tasty and fun to eat.” But a 6-year-old said the fruit flat was like “chewing on tree bark.” The texture of the products seemed to get the most negative reviews — disturbing and a turn-off — were typical comments. The best thing said about the “smooshers” was that it “wasn’t horrible.” The price is another consideration. The fruit flats sell for about 45 cents each and a box of six smoochers sells for $3.80.

I think one of my nephews summed it up best when he said: ‘I’d rather eat a piece of fruit.’

Georgia State on iTunes U
is now in session.

Undergrads present McNair research projects
By Michael Davis • mdox6@gsu.edu

S ome children’s vocabularies may not be as limited as their performance on standardized tests would indicate, according to research conducted this summer by a Georgia State University McNair Scholar. Another McNair Scholar’s research tested one possible cause for the delay in diagnosing autism in some children.

The two projects — the first by senior Isha Metzger and the second by Amber Wimsatt — received top honors this summer in the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program’s research competition. Metzger placed first in the poster contest, and Wimsatt was first in the oral presentation.

More than 20 McNair students worked full time on research for eight weeks this summer under the supervision of a Georgia State faculty member. Metzger’s study tested the vocabulary skills of 39 African-American youngsters at 12 schools in the Atlanta area and indicated that standard vocabulary tests greatly underestimated the children’s vocabularies.

Wimsatt’s research examined whether African-American parents are less likely to report behavioral symptoms that may signal autism in their children; however, she found that they are just as likely to report the behavior as Caucasian parents.

The McNair Program, at Georgia State for nearly 20 years, is one of more than 170 similar programs across the country that help low-income and minority undergraduates transition into post-baccalaureate programs.

“We’re looking for students who want to pursue a Ph.D., and if they have an interest in what they’d like to study in graduate school, we can help them hone their skill set,” said McNair Program Director Curtis Byrd.
Sign up for “Georgia State on the Move” wellness challenge on Sept. 8

As the new academic year kicks off, Georgia State’s Office of Employee Development and Wellness challenges faculty and staff to make two small changes that can lead to a healthier lifestyle — walk 2,000 more steps each day and eat 100 fewer calories daily over a six-week period.

Learn more about the “Georgia State University on the Move” challenge and sign up individually or in teams during a wellness event from noon to 2 p.m. on Sept. 8 on the second floor of the Urban Life building in the west exhibit area.

The first 50 people to register will receive a free pedometer and water bottle. Participants who complete the six-week challenge will be recognized and prizes will be awarded at the Employee Benefits Fair on Oct. 21.

For more information, contact Leon M. Staples in the Office of Employee Development and Wellness, part of the Department of Human Resources, at istaples1@gsu.edu or 404-413-3342.

Run or walk a 5K with fellow Georgia State employees

Georgia State students, employees and friends of the university are invited to sign up for the Kaiser-Permanente Corporate 5K Run/Walk scheduled for 7 p.m. on Sept. 25.

The run/walk attracts approximately 15,000 participants of all levels of fitness — walkers, joggers and competitive runners — from more than 400 Atlanta companies as well as hundreds of individual participants. Last year, 260 Georgia State employees participated in the run/walk and 30 people volunteered. The university’s Department of Recreational Services hopes 300 Georgia State supporters will take part in this year’s race.

For more information and to register, visit www.kpcorporate5krunwalk.com. There is a discounted entry fee of $20 for registering with the Georgia State team. The discount code is kp0607 and is case sensitive. Details will be provided to all who register.

For more information on volunteering or registration, e-mail Debbie Rupp at drupp@gsu.edu.

Georgia State students receive a record three Fulbrights

Georgia State University has set a new record this year, with three current and former students receiving prestigious Fulbright fellowships for travel abroad. A fourth Georgia State student was named as an alternate for the program.

Recent graduates Nakisha McNaul (B.A. Sociology ’15) and Andrew Flippo (B.A. German ’17) have been accepted as English teaching assistants. McNaul will work in South Korea for the year; and Flippo in Germany. Vanja Petricevic, a doctoral student in political science, will use her Fulbright to work as an invited Visiting Researcher at the Center for European Policy Studies in Brussels, Belgium. Emma Lacey-Bordeaux (B.A., Interdisciplinary Affairs, ’08) was named as an alternate for the English Teaching Assistant program in Turkey.

The Fulbright Program, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, is America’s flagship international exchange program. The award is granted to students who have demonstrated academic excellence and who have demonstrated leadership potential in their fields.

Nominations open for best study abroad program director

The Office of International Affairs Study Abroad Programs is seeking nominations for the 2008 Study Abroad Program Director of the Year.

The office would like to recognize and show appreciation for the outstanding efforts of directors who plan, recruit and implement study abroad programs that internationalize the Georgia State curriculum and open the world to students.

Nominations must have directed a Georgia State-sponsored study abroad program or exchange between fall 2007 and summer 2008. Nominations may come from any member of the university community.

Nominations should include a one-page description of why this person should be selected as well as nominee affiliation and contact information. Supplemental materials in support of the nomination are strongly encouraged. The winner will be selected by a committee composed of staff members who have an interest in study abroad programs. Selection will be based on student, staff and faculty nominations, quality of program management, adherence to university guidance on study abroad and overall dedication to international education.

Nominations are due Oct. 3 and may be e-mailed to stdjrg@langate.gsu.edu or sent to Jameel Girtman, Study Abroad Programs, 10 Park Place South, Suite 500. For more information and a complete list of all program directors, call 404-413-2529.

Project Healthy Grandparents

A COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM FOR GRANDPARENTS RAISING GRANDCHILDREN

In recognition of Grandparents Day on September 7

The staff and families of Project Healthy Grandparents extend their deep appreciation to the Georgia State University community for all of its support over the last 13 years.
For most, going to the Olympics as a spectator is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. For three Georgia State graduate students — Phoebe Brown, Shanna Gildersleeve and Micah Stansell — and their faculty adviser, assistant professor of communication Nikil Vollmer, attending this summer’s games in Beijing offered another unique experience: the world premiere of their documentary film.

The Coca-Cola Co. commissioned Vollmer and his students to film a segment on Doug Stoup, an environmentalist and endurance athlete who has led teams to the North and South poles and was selected as a torchbearer for this year’s Olympics. Teams of students from Australia, China, Pakistan, Russia, Tanzania and Turkey also filmed their own segments. After seeing the work from Georgia State, Coca-Cola asked Vollmer, Brown, Gildersleeve and Stansell to edit five-minute segments into one film.

The film illustrates the need for global awareness of environmental issues ranging from water pollution to melting glaciers to wildlife conservation. Each segment follows an environmentalist who was selected as an Olympic torchbearer and highlights his or her cause.

Vollmer said it’s been rewarding to guide his students through the process of putting together the film, calling it a bridge between Georgia State and other universities.

“These three have been great at adapting to something that all of us, when we first agreed to it, had no idea what it really would turn out to be,” he said. “I wanted a sharp crew, and they’re sharp.”

Creative writing professor David Bottoms has been selected for membership in the Georgia Writers Hall of Fame.

Ernest G. Welch School of Art and Design Gallery Director Cathy Rydell received the “Re/constructing Atlanta: A Contemporary Continuum,” a book featuring essays as well as real and imagined views of Atlanta’s contemporary redevelopment.

Robert Friedmann, professor of criminal justice and Distinguished Chair of Public Safety Partnership, received the university’s Exceptional Service Award during May’s commencement ceremonies.

Mark Geil, associate professor of kinesiology and health, will serve as principal investigator for a grant award from the Department of Education titled, “Advancing Orthotic and Prosthetic Care through Research, Standards of Practice, and Outreach.” The one-year, $982,530 grant was awarded to the American Academy of Orthotists and Prosthetists and begins in October.

Ernest G. Welch School of Art and Design Dean Randy Kamphaus was highlighted in the May 2008 issue of Monitor on Psychology, a publication of the American Psychological Association. The article, titled “Shorter articles, more research,” discussed how a new School Psychology Quarterly editor will focus on building an empirical research base, discussed his role as the new SPO editor and his efforts to publish more research articles in the journal.


Public administration and urban studies professor Harvey K. Newman has been appointed chair of the department, succeeding professor Greg Streib, who served a three-year term. Newman’s research is focused on Atlanta-area issues such as tourism, economic development and local nonprofit organizations. He began his career at Georgia State University in 1971.

Colleen O’Rourke, associate professor and coordinator of the Communication Disorders Program, is the newly-elected vice president for academic affairs in audiology for the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) Board of Directors. The term for this position is from Jan. 1, 2009, through Dec. 31, 2010.

Debra Schober-Peterson, director of Georgia State’s Speech-Language-Hearing-Clinic, was recently honored as a board recognized specialist in child language from the Specialty Board on Child Language, Council of Clinical Specialty Recognition of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. This award is a renewal through Dec. 31, 2013.

Law professor Natsu Taylor Saito was named the recipient of the College of Law’s fourth annual Patricia T. Morgan Award for Outstanding Faculty Scholarship, earning a $12,500 summer research grant and a course release during the academic year.

From the College of Education Department of Middle, Secondary Education, Christine Thomas, associate professor, and Neal Christian, clinical instructor, attended the European Teacher Education Network conference in Liverpool, England, in April to present their research on “Criticuing Performance-Based Mathematics Tasks in the Mathematics Education Thematic Interest Group.” Thomas and her former doctoral student, Desha Williams, presented their research on “Secondary Mathematics Teachers’ Understanding and Design of Performance-based Tasks within an Urban Context” at the 10th International Conference on Education in Athens, Greece, in May.

Robert Thompson, professor of music composition, performed a solo concert at the Sonic Arts Research Centre at Queen’s University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and presented his music at the International Computer Music Conference, held at Queen’s University.

Regents’ Professor Walter Thompson in the College of Education’s Department of Kinesiology and Health, was a keynote speaker at the 2008 International Convention on Science, Education and Medicine in Sport, held August 1-4 in Guangzhou, China.

From left: Assistant professor of communication Nikil Vollmer and students Phoebe Brown, Micah Stansell and Shanna Gildersleeve visit China for the premiere of their documentary film, which debuted at the 2008 Olympic Games.