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‘Trailblazers for the next generation’

Two seniors to become first Black women to earn undergraduate degrees in ocean science at UGA

Lexie Shadix

When Kennedy Ingram and Macie Phillips walk across the stage in May, they will make history as the first two Black women to graduate from the University of Georgia with a Bachelor of Science in Ocean Science.

A proposal to add the Bachelor of Science in ocean science was submitted in March 2019. In fall 2020, the degree was made available to students. The program provides students with an “interdisciplinary understanding of the structure and function of marine systems, from global oceans to local estuarine environments, and their interactions with the earth/atmosphere system.”

“It means a lot knowing that we’re trailblazers for the next generation,” Ingram said. “Bringing diversity into STEM and letting people know that you can do it. You can be Black at a [predominately white institution] and create traditions, create a legacy at your school.”

While looking through the marine science department and Skidaway Institute of Oceanography’s Instagram pages, Ingram noticed that all the Black students mentioned were doctoral or master’s degree candidates, except for one Black male undergraduate. She saw no Black female undergraduates. Upon confirming with Beverly Vantine, student services assistant and advisor, Ingram told Phillips that they would be the first two Black women to graduate with this degree from UGA.

“[Ingram] was the person to tell me that. And I was just thinking like, that cannot be right. When I looked on the website, it was in fact right,” Phillips said.

Diversity in marine science

Marine science is widely considered to be one of the least diverse fields within science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). An estimated 74.7% of scientists in the field are white, while only 2.3% are Black. However, diversity within the field is essential to produce quality scientific research and products that improve the lives of diverse populations, according to UGA’s Department of Marine Sciences.

People of color may face systemic barriers to entering this field and challenges to their career progression due to stereotypes, biases and institutional prejudices that can make research more difficult.

“There are untold [minorities] that we lose [because of these challenges],” Catherine Edwards, an associate professor in the Department of Marine Sciences, said. “There’s insecurity, ‘Is this for me?’ or microaggressions or, unfortunately, bigger issues that prevent [minorities] from feeling a sense of belonging.”

A 2023 paper published by The Oceanography Society examined whether U.S. institutions were recruiting and retaining diverse groups of students based on faculty and graduate student demographics between 2007 and



Macie Phillips (left) and Kennedy Ingram (right), seniors in the ocean science program at the University of Georgia, pose for a portrait in Athens, Georgia, on Friday, March 6, 2026. The two will be the first Black women to complete the undergraduate program.

PHOTO/KRINA PATEL

2021. They found that while recruitment efforts increased, retention rates did not.

“I honestly thought I was the only [Black woman] in the department until I met [Ingram]. As soon as I did, I was like, ‘Oh, we got to reach out, we got to stay together,’” Phillips said. “Every time I walk into that building, I never see someone who looks like me.”

Although Phillips and Ingram’s journey was isolating at times, they remained persistent.

“A lot of things will really deter you from not even getting to your second year fully. When you don’t have the right support system to say, ‘Hey, you need to take these classes’ and ‘You need to do this,’ it’s really hard just to power through mentally,” Phillips said. “And then when you have all these people who doubt the fact that you even know what you’re learning about, or doubt your skills ... there’s just a lot of factors that can deter someone, especially someone Black.”

Despite these challenges, Ingram encourages other students interested in the field to pursue their passion.

“Don’t confine yourself to a box that society puts you in. Step outside of it. You have a passion for something. Learn about it, be a nerd about it,” Ingram said. “Try to form relationships with people. Don’t be discouraged, because eventually you’ll find your community.”

Efforts are being made to diversify the world of STEM, including international organizations such as Black in Marine Science (BIMS) and inclusivity work at UGA.

“Finding ways to make and have a community that is inclusive — that is diverse and inclusive — is important so that we don’t lose people because ... they’re concerned that maybe it’s not for them, which is obviously not the case,” Edwards said.

Georgia grown scientists

Both Phillips and Ingram are Georgia residents and have attended UGA since their freshman year. Phillips has been passionate about the ocean since she was a child. When she was young, she spent summers at the beach and saw an increase in pollution.

“I knew that if I could help the conditions of the water in the future, I’d like to pursue it,” Phillips said.

Her passion solidified when she took her first ocean science-related class at UGA, which was taught by two professors of color.

“I never thought I would be as interested in my major until I took that class and was like, ‘Oh okay, this is something I actually want to pursue for the rest of my life,’” Phillips said. “They actually made me look forward to studying.”

Ingram began her collegiate journey with a major in astrophysics, which she eventually changed to ocean science.

“I saw a flyer for ocean science, and I met the faculty, and then I took a class, and I just fell in love with it,” Ingram said.

Ingram and Phillips became friends through the Semester at Skidaway Field Study program in fall 2025. Located southeast of downtown Savannah, the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography (SkIO) merged with UGA in 2013. The program, which allows students to participate in classroom and field work with leaders in marine science research, is designed for those in UGA’s ocean science program.

SEE **TRAILBLAZERS** PAGE A3



Anne Blevins (left) and Adam Nault (right) stand outside of the Tate Grand Hall in Athens, Georgia on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 during the Jam For Cam skin screening event. Blevins and Nault are co-directors of community awareness for Jam For Cam, a philanthropic music festival raising awareness for melanoma research in honor of Cameron Fearon. PHOTO/ADDISON SIMMONS

At street level

‘Jam In The Streets’ brings live music and philanthropy to Athens

Nicholas Garrison

Jam For Cam started its mission in 2018, squeezing in a crowd of over 5,000 people to hear live music on one front lawn. Eight years later, the second annual “Jam In The Streets” festival will flood Athens on March 28, with over 30,000 anticipated attendees on Washington Street.

Over a dozen bands, vendors and activities are on the program this year. Live music will set up shop starting at 2 p.m., closing out around midnight.

This year, the festival headlines Goose, a modern day jam band with all the elements of progressive and traditional rock, mixed with jazz, folk and funk music. Their show will close the event, starting at 9 p.m. and running until 11:30 p.m.

The festival is also a gathering of other indie-rock names across the southeast. Bands like Clay Street Unit, Jacoozy, Tomorrow’s Problem, The Band Honey, Moon Taxi and more will be playing at seven different stages set up throughout the street.

Other notable music includes live performances from four DJ’s: James Tribe, Luis and Bryde as a duo, Note and Axial, hosted at Union Fare and Woodford. The day prior, March 27, Penelope Road will play at Paloma Park, with opener Sweet Tea Pedigree.

Henry Wilgus, director of entertainment and production for Jam For Cam, has made it possible for large names such as Goose and Moon Taxi to book the festival far in advance.

“Most of the bands we booked, they’re playing for free for the cause ... So they’ve been a huge help,” Wilgus said.

Origin of Jam For Cam

The organization started in memory of Cameron Fearon, a University of Georgia student who passed away from melanoma in August 2018 at the age of 19. The Jam For Cam music festival honored his memory by raising funds for melanoma research, prevention and awareness.

Over time, the event has grown in funding and in popularity. So much so, that the streets of downtown Athens closed down in 2025 to welcome headliner Milky Chance. The aptly named “Jam In The Streets” drew in over 15,000 attendees and raised over half a million dollars that year.

“The original idea for the very first Jam For Cam was to do it in the streets,” Ryan Hohenstein, president of Jam For Cam, said. “The streets of Athens, that’s the musical home of music in Athens.”

Putting Jam For Cam in the streets did not come without its difficulties. In 2024, Southern Brewing Company, the previous host, closed its doors. Rather than continue playing in smaller venues, organizers looked for a change.

“They decided to make the shift downtown,” Hohenstein said. “It was the largest downtown music festival since Panic in the Streets.”

In 1998, Athens staple Widespread Panic debuted their first ever live album, with a release show that saw an estimated 100,000 attendees. This concert was held on Washington Street, the same place “Jam In The Streets” now calls home. The street’s history, and its impact on the modern day music of Athens, is not lost on organizers.

SEE **JAM FOR CAM** PAGE A3

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From waffles to burgers

Joe Nedza builds a 'Baddie' community in Athens

Greta Gustafson

Burgers. Fries. Pudding. Three foods Baddie's Burger House owner Joe Nedza has spent years perfecting.

As a self-proclaimed "fat kid," Nedza has always loved food. After graduating from the University of Georgia in 2016, Nedza considered himself "unhirable" with bad grades and no desire to work under someone. He said becoming his own boss was a way to march to the beat of his own drum. His first business, Nedza's, opened in 2016 following his graduation, where he served waffles and ice cream.

The business did well, but as Nedza added more items to the menu, it became too laborious and not financially viable. He said he got to a point where he was constantly working, making little money and did not have time to do things that were important to him, such as spending time with family and friends and traveling.

One day, he took to the Nedza's Instagram story asking his followers, "What up baddies?" The name immediately caught on, and customers began to call Nedza a "baddie" in the restaurant and on the street. In return, he began referring to his customers as "baddies" too.

Simultaneously, he turned to his faith for guidance, hoping for a sign of what to do. He said that all the credit goes to God for what he's done with Baddie's, even for the original idea.

“ I just want people to feel known. I want people to feel seen. I want them to get ... a really good burger — hot, fresh and fast.

JOE NEDZA | BADDIE'S BURGER HOUSE OWNER

"I went to bed one night and woke up in the middle of the night like lightning hit my brain, and it was like 'you need to do this. You need to make this. This is going to be your menu. This is what you're going to do. This is how you're going to do it,'" Nedza said.

The next night, he was selling burgers at a bar — Baddie's style. The first Baddie's Burger House opened in December 2022 in Five Points.

A year and a half later, Nedza opened the Watkinsville location. The Normaltown location opened the following year, and seven months later, another location opened in Gainesville, Georgia, Nedza's hometown.

In each storefront, Nedza hopes to bring customers the feel of a vintage basement and some really good food.

"I just want people to feel known," Nedza said. "I want people to feel seen. I want them to get ... a really good burger, hot, fresh and fast."

Nedza hopes to keep that culture alive as he continues to expand and open more restaurants. Later in March, he plans to open the Hot or Not Chicken Shack, describing it as a cross between Dave's Hot Chicken and Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers.



Joe Nedza poses for a portrait outside of the former location of Weaver D's Delicious Fine Foods in Athens, Georgia, on Tuesday, March 17, 2026. Nedza, founder and owner of Baddie's Burgers, bought the building in February and plans to open a different restaurant there.

PHOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS

Hot or Not Chicken Shack will take the place of the historic Weaver D's Delicious Fine Foods, which closed earlier this year. Nedza said he does not typically feel sentimental about a lot of things, but he has a lot of respect and admiration for the community Dexter Weaver built through his restaurant.

"When I see someone put their life into something, I just have so much respect for it, so I think just seeing the work [Weaver has] done ... I think that it's worth continuing to honor," Nedza said.

Landon Moss, an employee at the Baddie's Burger House location in Five Points, said it's rare to work in an environment with so many caring people, which stems from management all the way down to new hires.

"The people here are amazing, the leadership is awesome," Moss said. "They're super nice and relational. It's rare that you work at a place where the owner, founder and operators also are your friends that want to hang out with you and invite you for dinner and stuff like that, and that's kind of like the environment that they have created here."

After more than a decade of working in the restaurant

industry creating a community of "baddies" and opening four restaurants across Athens and Georgia, Nedza is inching closer to his ultimate goal: building camps for kids in the U.S. and safe and sustainable orphanages in Europe, Asia and Africa.

Nedza and his wife are in the process of adopting a child from India. Nedza said the book "Adopted for Life" had a profound impact on them, and since then, he dove deep into research on the hardships faced by orphans worldwide. With the summer camps, he hopes to help kids develop as leaders from an early age and guide them into careers.

"My family motto is 'Fortitudine Vincimus,' that just means 'by endurance we conquer,'" Nedza said. "We want to endure hard things ... We believe that the kids out there deserve loving parents and we choose to use our resources to support them and love them."

Until then, he'll keep running his businesses, enjoy the opening of Hot or Not Chicken Shack, and maybe open a taco place next (his favorite food). All of these goals are powered by faith, family and a never-ending appetite.

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Kennedy Ingram (left) and Macie Phillips (right), seniors in the ocean science program at the University of Georgia, pose for a portrait in Athens, Georgia, on Friday, March 6, 2026. The two will be the first Black women to complete the undergraduate program. PHOTO/KRINA PATEL

TRAILBLAZERS FROM PAGE A1

"I definitely do feel more comfortable with her, and more comfortable knowing that she's around and we're in this together," Ingram said. "We send each other internships ... we apply to the same things because we want to see each other grow ... Community is a very big thing."

During her time at SKIO, Phillips researched how to combat climate change through viral abundance, the amount of viruses present in a specific environment.

In addition to research through the Skidaway program, Ingram participated in a Research Experience for Undergraduates program last summer with meteorology and atmospheric sciences professor Gregory Jenkins at Pennsylvania State University. She studied the algae sargassum, a type of invasive seaweed that plays an important, and sometimes harmful, role in marine ecosystems.

Ingram and Phillips represent an important step for diversity in the field of marine science, according to professors in

the Department of Marine Sciences.

"[Ingram and Phillips] really do represent something new and unique for our department," Daniel Ohnemus, associate professor in the Department of Marine Sciences, said. "These sort of 'firsts,' they represent a really great trend towards inclusiveness."

Ingram plans to pursue her master's and doctoral degrees with the goal of educating young students and increasing diversity within STEM fields.

"[Ingram] is thoughtful and driven," Edwards said. "Her passion about moving into the outreach world of science, and marine science in particular, is going to set her up for success. The passion of why what we're doing is important can't be replicated."

Phillips is an ocean science Double Dawg and has applied to UGA's graduate school to earn her master's degree in a non-thesis track for marine science. This summer, she plans to intern at Piedmont Water Company, where she will focus on microbiology and algae in Athens.

Ohnemus said that Phillips' commitment to the betterment of humanity will set her up for success in her future career.

"One of the things that stood out about [Phillips] is that she's so tuned into the things that matter to humanity and the big picture," Ohnemus said. "Whereas a lot of students get distracted by the details, like about the carbon cycle or nitrogen and this and that, [Phillips] always asked really good questions about why things matter, why we study those things."

Ingram, Phillips and their professors hope that their achievement will encourage marginalized people to enter STEM fields.

"Seeing [Ingram] and [Phillips] reach this milestone is incredibly meaningful for our department," Vantine said. "They worked hard to get here, and their achievements are not only a proud moment for them, but an important step towards showing that ocean science is a field where everyone belongs."

“ [Ingram and Phillips] really do represent something new and unique for our department. These sort of ‘firsts,’ they represent a really great trend towards inclusiveness.”

DANIEL OHNEMUS | ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Ohnemus agreed, highlighting the value of diversity and representation in academia.

"[Our field is] traditionally stodgy and older and whiter, [so] it's always better for having this diversity," Ohnemus said. "Having different voices and backgrounds in the room ... makes us all better, it makes our field stronger and more able to deal with the challenges in the future. Not to mention, if folks like [Phillips] and [Ingram] become professors or stay in the field even as graduate students, they represent so much to other people who look and feel like them."

While neither of them expected to make history when they entered college, Ingram and Phillips said they hope this moment will help normalize the presence of Black women and other underrepresented groups in marine science careers and in STEM careers more broadly.

"It should be a moment in history, but I also kind of want it to be something that just starts off the idea that this is normal," Phillips said. "I want, in the future, for there to be Black women on the graduate website, and all you do is scroll and think, 'Oh, okay, do I recognize her?' instead of thinking, 'Oh my gosh, there's barely anyone Black on here.' I want to have an impact, but I want the impact to be that anyone can do it."

JAM FOR CAM FROM PAGE A1

"I think one of the coolest things about this city is just how much we respect and honor the legacy of all the incredible music that has come through this town," Will Varga, drummer and singer for Workin' Past Midnight, a band set to play in the festival, said.

As a festival that started by headlining live music in Athens, Jam In The Streets purposefully keeps a spot in their lineup for a local band right before the headliner. On Feb. 20, Paloma Park hosted Battle Of The Bands: a competition focused on highlighting music in Athens. The winner of the event, Workin' Past Midnight, was awarded the opening spot at Jam For Cam.

Workin' Past Midnight is a band composed of UGA students. Starting as a cover band and moving to create its own original songs, they are influenced by traditional rock styles. The Battle Of The Bands helped connect Workin' Past Midnight to their peers through the live show, while also developing a stronger presence as a band online through social media participation.

“ We'll be creating space for them to tell their story and really tying the whole thing together.”

MATT STEVENS | CREATURE COMFORTS BREWING COMPANY

"I know we're playing a couple of shows with Barnhouse and Sweet Tea Pedigree in the future, so it's great we got to share the same stage with them at Paloma," Varga said. "At the end of the day, it's just a great way to raise money for Jam For Cam and melanoma."

Collaboration is central to the Athens music scene, present especially in the friendly competition brought out during Battle Of The Bands. It's a rewarding aspect for bands like Workin' Past Midnight, bringing out healthy, creative conversations amongst peers. Jam For Cam, through showcasing local talent, connects fellow artists in Athens, inspiring further collaboration.

"The fact that these bands are going to be playing in Athens, walking around, hanging out with people, hanging out with fellow artists, I think that's really fun. That builds a great dialog for people in this Southeast music bubble to interact," Varga said.

The connections don't just extend to the music of the event, but the history behind it. Both Hohenstein and Sumner Kirsch, the current executive director, share ties to Fearon. The pair attended school with him at South Atlanta High School. In college, they both joined Sigma Nu, the same fraternity Fearon was a part of.

"I felt like he could have been any one of my friends that went through that same path," Hohenstein said.

Fearon's story resonates not only with its organizers, but with the thousands of audience members willing to donate to his cause. This year, Jam For Cam has raised over \$900,000, a week before their festival. To go above and beyond, the event uses donations from corporate sponsors, student organizations and Athens residents.

"Our biggest profit drivers this year that we've been focusing on are corporate sponsorships," Kirsch said.

Jam For Cam partnered with over two dozen local or relevant businesses like Akins Ford Arena, Georgia Skin Cancer, Hospitality South, Sun Bum, Onward Reserve and more. These connections help boost ticket sales, which are looking to exceed 12,000 this year.

Most of these donations are sent to two organizations: the Melanoma Research Foundation and Georgia Skin Cancer & Aesthetic Dermatology, a dermatology business with multiple locations across the state, including one in Athens. In addition, Jam For Cam also selects a new local charity every year and awards scholarships to Camp Carolina, a boys summer

camp Fearon once worked at.

Volunteers line the festival too, creating opportunities for UGA students to get involved beyond donations and attendance.

"We have organizations like Bag the Bag coming to help us in our cleanup efforts after, along with 40 sustainability certificate volunteers working throughout the event to make sure that the event stays green," Kirsch said. "The music business program, they're going to be the ones working the entire ticket check-in process."

"Jam In The Streets" has used opportunities like these to expand their scope this year. Beyond music, Jam For Cam intends to reach further into the heart of the local community to spread their message.

One new opportunity has been spearheaded by Matt Stevens, the director for community impact at Creature Comforts Brewing Company. He worked closely alongside Hohenstein and others at Jam For Cam to host a "Creature Creator Series" on March 27. The event will be presented by Creature Comforts at the UGA Student Center for Entrepreneurship.

"We now have essentially five different voices who will be speaking," Stevens said. "We'll be creating space for them to tell their story and really tying the whole thing together and putting it under the umbrella that is Jam In The Streets."

Of the five, two are doctors with close ties to skin cancer research; Dr. James Griffin is a doctor for the University Cancer & Blood Center, while Dr. Ross Campbell works for Georgia Skin Cancer. Other speakers include Creature Comforts CEO Adam Beauchamp, HigherUp Wellness content creator Michael Smoak and BIOLYTE CEO Jesslyn Rollins.

On March 17, Jam For Cam hosted free skin checks in the Tate Student Center. In partnership with UGA's Institute for Leadership Advancement, attendees received a free screening from dermatology professionals with a free ticket to "Jam In The Streets" as a bonus. This was paired with a "Day of Giving" the same day, encouraging viewers to donate to Jam For Cam.

The success of these new events, in tandem with the returning staples of "Jam In The Streets," enhance Jam For Cam's pulse on the music, community, health and safety of Athens. With the festival seeing its biggest numbers yet, there's no place to go but up.



People wait for a free skin screening in the Tate Grand Hall in Athens, Georgia on Tuesday, March 17, 2026 during the Jam For Cam skin screening event. Jam For Cam is a philanthropic music festival raising awareness for melanoma research in honor of Cameron Fearon.

PHOTO/ADDISON SIMMONS



Sumner Kirsch (left), executive director of Jam For Cam, Ryan Hohenstein (middle), president of Jam For Cam and Henry Wilgus (right), director of entertainment of Jam For Cam stand in front of 40 Watt in Athens, Georgia on Thursday, March 19, 2026. Jam For Cam is a philanthropic music festival raising money for melanoma research in honor of Cameron Fearon. PHOTO/ADDISON SIMMONS

Double trouble

How the transfer portal sparked life into Georgia men's and women's basketball

Ben Kule

Georgia saw both its men's and women's basketball teams earn a berth in the 2026 NCAA tournament for the first time since 2011. Women's head coach Katie Abrahamson-Henderson led her squad to its best season of her four-year tenure and ended a two-year tournament absence, while men's head coach Mike White took his team to a second consecutive appearance, something the program has not done since 2001 and 2002.

Ironically, the two team's journeys mirrored one another: a strong start in nonconference play followed by an up-and-down trek through SEC play with a few signature wins. The women went a perfect 14-0 out-of-conference while the men went 12-1, and each picked up at least two top-20 wins to bolster its resume against SEC foes.

Although neither team advanced past the first round of the tournament, White and Abrahamson-Henderson couldn't rely on homegrown talent familiar with their systems to each get to an impressive win total of 22.

For the men, the losses of Asa Newell and Silas Demary Jr. posed a threat towards the Bulldogs returning to the Big Dance.

"It's been a few springs in a row where you dive into that [NCAA transfer] portal and try to play catch-up," White said in preparation for the 2025-26 season. "You evaluate as many kids as you can and try to fast-track relationships and see who the best fits are. But we really like the five we got."

Those five — Kanon Catchings, Jeremiah Wilkinson, Marcus "Smurf" Millender, Justin Bailey and Jordan Ross — all

made significant contributions to Georgia's winningest regular season in program history. Wilkinson led the team in points and steals, Millender led in assists and Catchings' late-season surge saw him average nearly 25 points in Georgia's last three games before March Madness, leading the Bulldogs each time.

"It's rewarding, it's exciting, we addressed it with our guys [and] it's something no one can take away from them," White said of his record-setting reconstructed squad. "It's a big deal and they worked hard for it ... It's a big step for this program."

Meanwhile, Abrahamson-Henderson was tasked with refurbishing a roster that had sat towards the bottom of the conference standings for two seasons. Despite 26 tournament appearances in the last 32 years compared to the men's team's nine, the program was at risk of taking a sour turn.

Abrahamson-Henderson responded by bringing in four four-star transfers and the fifth-best portal class in the nation.

"We have a lot of significant alumni, and so I think a lot of these players that did sign at Georgia want to be a part of something special," Abrahamson-Henderson said at SEC Media Days. "I think that really helped us getting Dani Carnegie."

An alumna of Grayson High School in Loganville, Georgia, one of the premier girls basketball programs in the state, Carnegie joined the Bulldogs after her freshman year at Georgia Tech. She immediately became Georgia's offensive anchor as her 17.8 points per game ranked eighth in the SEC and her 2.6 3-pointers ranked fifth. Rylie Theuerkauf, a Wake Forest transfer, added 2.2 makes per game from behind the arc, ranking eighth in the conference.

The addition of the two scorers panned out. With its revitalized offense, Georgia averaged 73.6 points per game, nearly 10 points more than the previous year. That helped propel the Bulldogs from a 13-win season to a 22-win campaign and a No. 7 seed in the tournament.

"Moving forward ... if we can keep the majority of [our current core], they're going to have so much experience," Abrahamson-Henderson said. "The culture is family first, academic second, basketball third, and just loving playing for our coaches and playing at the University of Georgia."

As the men's and women's teams rose together, their seasons also came to a similar premature end as both teams struggled to shoot from deep and defend the paint in their respective first-round defeats.

However, even in defeat, the progress on both sides of the program is undeniable. Despite significant roster turnover each year, White and Abrahamson-Henderson have cultivated resilient, competitive squads that lay the foundation for a future with not one, but two dominant Georgia basketball teams.



Georgia forward Kanon Catchings (6) listens to his coach and teammates during a timeout in an NCAA men's basketball game against South Carolina at Stegeman Coliseum in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, Feb. 28, 2026. Georgia won 87-68. PHOTO/RENEE LIPSKI



Georgia guard Rylie Theuerkauf (14) attempts a layup during a women's basketball game against Vanderbilt at Stegeman Coliseum in Athens, Georgia, on Sunday, Feb. 15, 2026. Georgia won 76-74. PHOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS

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— Natalia Daniel, Class of 2028

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Highlights from the Georgia women's basketball 2025-26 season



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GRAPHIC/OLIVE LEE

OPINION The Athens music scene will continue to thrive in the face of change

Matthew Carr

Athens is famous for its historic music scene. From amazing bands like R.E.M. and The B-52s to legendary venues like 40 Watt Club and the Georgia Theatre, the city is rich with musical lore. However, it sometimes feels like the modern music scene is overlooked. With the Athens and University of Georgia communities undergoing many changes over the years, many wonder whether the local music scene remains a thriving community or has become a relic of a bygone era.

The musical roots of Athens go back decades. The opening of the Morton Theatre in 1910 created a unique space for African American performers to share their art and grow the musical culture of the city. In addition to pioneering venues, the university's presence also empowered the growth of the music scene. UGA served as a hub where musicians could meet like-minded individuals and create art together. This environment of collaboration helped the city emerge as a center for alternative and indie rock in the 1970s and 1980s.

In the present day, young musicians are still playing shows nightly, sharpening their skills and keeping the scene alive, but their work can go unnoticed as the legacies of independent music legends looms large. I sat down with Ethan Caspary, of the local band Little Mae, to discuss the state of Athens' modern music scene. As an Athens native who has seen the city's music scene from the perspective of both fan and performer, he was able to offer unique insights into the current scene.

"I feel like I can go out any night of the week in Athens and find great music that is happening for not very much money," Caspary said when asked about what makes the scene feel special to him. "I think that really does speak to the underratedness of the scene."

Caspary's point about the low cost of shows is an aspect that draws many to live music in Athens. The ability to see young musicians perform exciting and experimental art at an

affordable price is one of the biggest benefits of seeing music in a college town.

However, Caspary admitted that affordability doesn't come without its own costs.

"Once you start doing math on that show, you're almost never making money," Caspary said when discussing how expensive shows are for both artists and venues. "Now, when I sit in the audience of a show that's just like world class music, and it's me and five other people, I both feel very privileged to get to see such amazing music on such a small scale, but I'm also thinking the whole time, 'These musicians are just pouring their hearts out and they're not getting paid for this night at all.'"

Tight margins and costly expenses make it difficult to keep live performances profitable and are at the core of many issues artists and venues face. As foundational venues for up-and-coming musicians continue to close down due to intense economic strain on owners, artists and fans alike are left to wonder what comes next.

Even in the midst of uncertainty and change, there is still great optimism within the scene about what the future may hold. Music is intimately woven into the cultural identity of Athens. The two are bound to one another and have shaped each other in profound ways. It is this essential nature of music in Athens that inspires hope in the community, among burgeoning artists and among enthusiasts like myself.

"Athens has this scene that's going to live on no matter what," Caspary affirmed. "So many people in Athens love music, and it's sort of a necessity. I think [out of that necessity] new places to play shows will pop up, and I'm excited to see that evolve in the future."

Matthew Carr, freshman history and intended economics major



GRAPHIC/RYLEE TOOLE

OPINION Why UGA students should pay attention to the Georgia's senate race

Annabelle Foley

The 2026 Georgia senate election will take place on Nov. 3, 2026. Incumbent Democrat Sen. Jon Ossoff is vying for reelection against Republican candidates Derek Dooley, Rep. Mike Collins or Rep. Buddy Carter. The Republican primary will be held on May 19, 2026. From controversial campaign ads to millions of dollars in donations, the Georgia senate race is shaping up to be among the most competitive in the country.

Ossoff is the only Democrat incumbent running in a state President Donald Trump won in 2024. Thus, whoever can win the senate seat will score a major victory for either the Democrat or Republican party. Young voters, especially college-aged students, are crucial to the success of any candidate in this race.

All three GOP candidates have ties to Athens or the University of Georgia, and all will likely leverage these connections to encourage UGA students to vote for them. Dooley was born in Athens, and is the son of legendary UGA football coach Vince Dooley. Collins currently represents Georgia's 10th congressional district, which includes Athens-Clarke County. Finally, Carter, though he is arguably the least Athens-connected, is a UGA alumnus and represents Georgia's 1st congressional district.

Dooley's candidacy is particularly controversial and relevant to UGA students. His campaign launch video explicitly draws on his ties to UGA and his father, and his website emphasizes his football career in an attempt to humanize his campaign. However, Dooley lived out of state for 25 years, moving back to Georgia only three years before launching his bid for the U.S. Senate.

Dooley also faced backlash regarding his voting record. He voted only once in the last 20 years. Many Republicans, including opponents Collins and Carter, are concerned by the possible election of a Republican who never endorsed Trump during an election cycle. Yet Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp

endorsed Dooley.

"I'm a firm believer that we need a political outsider to [critique Ossoff], someone that can stay focused on his record, but also someone who has a vision for our state in the future," Kemp said.

The endorsement was made outside Dooley Field an hour before kickoff of a UGA game, a prime example of calculated marketing towards UGA students and fans.

Regardless of the candidate's efforts to target students, students' votes in the election should come not from geographic or educational similarities, but from policies.

Ossoff, the democratic incumbent, has served in the senate since 2021, and has passed more standalone bills than any other freshman senator — key legislation focused on capping insulin costs, increasing children's online safety and opioid legislation. He is generally regarded as a centrist Democrat, holding more moderate political views than many progressives. A recent Emerson College poll shows Ossoff leading by only 3-4 points against Collins and Carter. In 2021, targeting young voters was key to Ossoff's success. To secure another win in 2026, the support of young voters is essential, reinforcing the importance of student involvement in U.S. elections.

All three Republican candidates push platforms that align with Trump's legislative goals, emphasizing border security among other agendas. Collins and Carter both stress alignment with Trump in their senate campaigns, whereas Dooley frames his as "Georgia First," though he still plans to work alongside Trump.

Dooley's campaign site states, "My priorities are simple: put Georgians first, demand accountability in Washington and deliver results for the people we serve."

Dooley emphasizes border security and backing law enforcement as a component of his "safe communities" priority. He also aims to increase healthcare transparency and protect rural hospitals. Dooley acknowledges plans to maintain a strong alliance with Israel and invest further in the U.S. military. However, despite his vast and varied priorities, Dooley is stating general priorities rather than specific legislative goals.

Collins is probably best known for sponsoring the Laken Riley Act, which mandates detention for undocumented immigrants charged with local theft, burglary or shoplifting offenses. He frames himself as a working-class outsider, and his campaign site focuses on his personal background and key legislation.

Carter focuses his campaign on border security, economic growth and cutting government spending. He is a self-proclaimed "MAGA-warrior" and emphasizes his support of the One Big, Beautiful Bill.

Overall, young voters are a key demographic for any Georgia candidate looking to win this senate race, but it is just as important for us — as students and voters — to make an informed, well-educated decision. The next senate term lasts six years, and will persist as we graduate college, search for work and start our future. The legislation enacted by whoever our senator will be is going to impact our cost of living, our student loan debt and our ability to not just get by but get ahead. Voting on familiarity or recognition — because one candidate's name is on a football field — could carry real consequences.

It can be easy to treat state politics as background noise, focusing only on national news or presidential elections, but our voices are essential when electing the senators who will shape our future.

Annabelle Foley, freshman journalism major

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STUDENT VOICES UGA students share opinions on organizations tabling at Tate

Josephine Thomas

In a practice frequently referred to as “tabling,” student organizations, campaigns and other groups set up temporary tables around the edges of the University of Georgia’s Tate Student Center. People can reserve space in and around Tate using Mazévo, a reservation software system.

The practice of tabling brings mixed reactions from students going to and from class or just walking around campus. At its best, it has the potential to keep the student body informed and introduce them to new organizations, ideas and discussions. Conversely, tabling interactions can cause upset and create extra foot traffic.

The Red & Black asked UGA students to share their opinion on the practice of tabling at Tate.



Mohan Nellutla
FINANCE MAJOR

“Most of the time I’m pretty inconvenienced by it,” Nellutla said. “But I’ve also benefited a lot. [I’m involved in] an athletic program, and I found it through Tate tabling. It’s just, if people aren’t interested in those organizations, to them, it’s going to be a nuisance.”



Srihitha Chakilam
HEALTH PROMOTION MAJOR

“I think people could make it an inconvenience if they were to call people when they’re clearly not interested or they’re walking past,” Chakilam said. “I’m a part of an organization. I’m the captain of my acapella team, so I find it to be really useful. I think that it’s a great way to get your name out there for your org.”



Katie Guerriero
INTENDED ACCOUNTING MAJOR

“I think it’s annoying when they just come up to you and they keep trying to talk to you while you’re trying to walk to class and just trying to do something else,” Guerriero said. “I think that it’s really nice to have a lot of opportunities to get free stuff and sign up for different types of things around campus.”



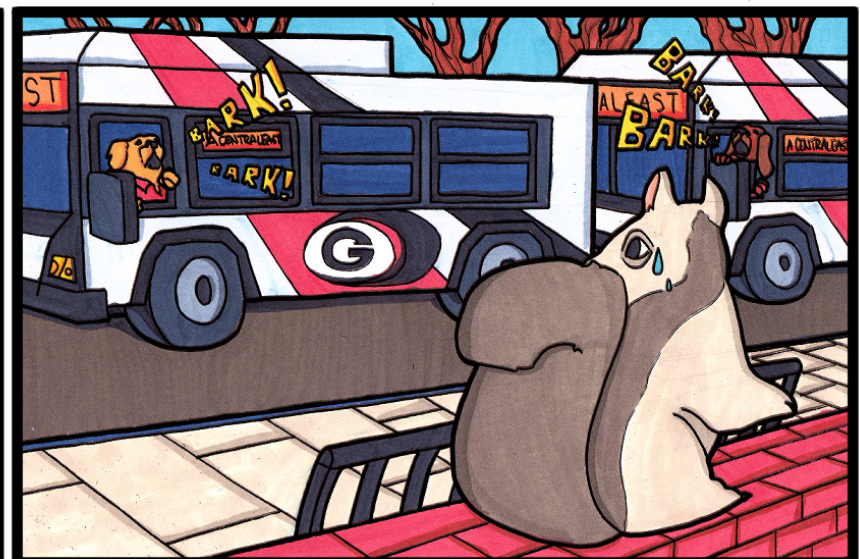
Dylan Lester
ENGLISH MAJOR

“I wouldn’t say they’re necessary, but I think they’re usually pretty nice, depending on what they’re talking about,” Lester said. “I guess it can sometimes be annoying if they’re reaching out to you ... I like them to be there, to be able to go over. Sometimes I walk by them and I kind of have to walk fast to not interact.”

PHOTOS/JOSEPHINE THOMAS

Yowser in DAWGS AS DOGS

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Catherine Blanchard

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At Grady College, we are proud of our students who learn the core values, ethics and skills of journalism in our classrooms, then apply them to writing and visualizing features in The Red & Black. This is one in a series of profiles about our student leaders who serve The Red & Black.



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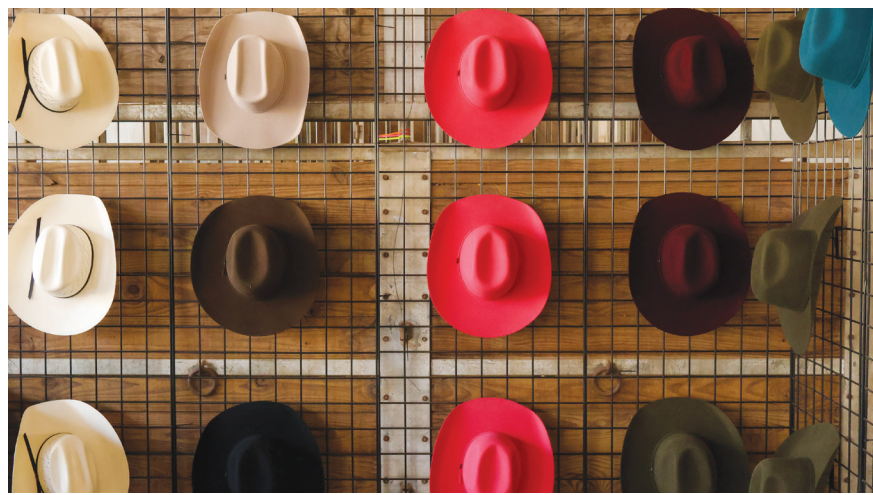


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Participants ride their horses during the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo outside of the University of Georgia Livestock Instructional Arena in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. The Great Southland Stampede Rodeo is an annual event in Athens, Georgia, and showcases various rodeo events. PHOTO/KALEB TATUM



Cowboy hats on display during the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo at the University of Georgia Livestock Instructional Arena in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. PHOTO/HOSANNA WORKU



A rider competes in barrel racing during the 51st UGA Great Southland Stampede Rodeo on Friday, March 20, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. The rodeo is organized and operated by UGA Block & Bridle members and is the largest student-run rodeo in the country. PHOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS



Nine-year-old trick rider, Sadie Canup, performs for the crowd during the 51st UGA Great Southland Stampede Rodeo on Friday, March 20, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. PHOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS



Colt Whitehead, age 10, poses for a portrait ahead of the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo outside of the University of Georgia Livestock Instructional Arena in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. Whitehead describes riding a horse at a very young age, jokingly saying he's been riding since he was in his mother's womb. PHOTO/HOSANNA WORKU



A boy plays in the dirt during the second night of the 51st UGA Great Southland Stampede Rodeo on Friday, March 20, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. PHOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS



A participant in the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo performs during an event on Thursday, March 19, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. PHOTO/AMELIA DURDEN



Nine-year-old Sadie Canup performs tricks with her horse during the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo in Athens, Georgia, on Thursday, March 19, 2026. PHOTO/AMELIA DURDEN



Buck Whitehead jumps over a branch before the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. This year marks the 51st anniversary of the rodeo. PHOTO/KALEB TATUM



Landen Carnes prepares himself to ride before the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. PHOTO/HOSANNA WORKU



From left to right, Matt Smith, Jack Smithson, Caden Lowe and Gus Costello wait during the Great Southland Stampede Rodeo outside of the University of Georgia Livestock Instructional Arena in Athens, Georgia, on Saturday, March 21, 2026. Smith, Smithson and Lowe were participants in the rodeo. PHOTO/KALEB TATUM

The long swim to 8 A Cedar Shoals swimmer's record-breaking journey

Drew Renner

Lauren Neace needed one more race. No swimmer in Cedar Shoals' history had ever qualified for all eight state events. The sophomore had already secured seven qualifying times, but the eighth backstroke stood between her and school history.

The stroke carried a certain irony. Backstroke led Neace to her first state meet at age 7, but years later, she was five seconds off the qualifying time.

"Lauren swims best with spite," her mother, Catherine Neace, said.

Just two weeks after discovering the gap she needed to close, a drive to succeed translated into the 10-second drop that clinched the final qualifying time.

Her coach, Bee Nordgren, watched the process unfold with a mix of admiration and familiarity. Nordgren, who swam at the college level at Western Illinois and has coached at Cedar Shoals since 2018, remembers the moment the swimmer set her mind to it.

"She said to herself, 'I'm going to do it next week,'" Nordgren said. "And she did, so that is the magic of Lauren."

Though she qualified for all eight events, meet rules limited Neace to only two. At the GHSA AAAA state championships,

she finished sixth in the 100-yard butterfly and 11th in the 200-yard freestyle, adding to a growing résumé that includes five Cedar Shoals records in just two seasons.

Neace said her focus is less about beating competitors and more about testing her own limits. The "fear of mediocrity," she said, partly grew from a childhood surrounded by older brothers; she often found herself trying to keep up.

"I was always the runt of the litter," Neace said. "I'm not the tallest, and I'm not the most athletically gifted ... I can't climb the tree as fast as my brothers can, or I can't run up that hill as fast as them and then they're already across the street."

That fear of falling behind transformed into a relentless drive to improve. In a given week, Neace completes nine training sessions split between swimming and weightlifting. Between practices and Advanced Placement classes, Neace rarely has a quiet moment. She often spends lunch studying in classrooms alongside upperclassmen.

"There are times where Lauren is so focused on, 'I gotta go to practice, and I gotta take care of my school stuff,' that [my husband and I] are like, 'You're still a kid,'" Catherine Neace said.

The swimmer's ambition can sometimes outpace her own patience.

"She'll get mad if she can't cut time at every meet, and

we're like 'Lauren, if you cut time at every meet, you'll be the fastest swimmer in the world,'" Catherine Neace said. "[Lauren has] earned that right to be disappointed, but [she] can't live in it."

“With art, I’m not doing it to get a grade, and I’m not doing it to get anyone’s applause. I’m just drawing because I want to draw.”

LAUREN NEACE | CEDAR SHOALS SWIMMER

When frustration builds, Neace has learned to lean into the sport itself by "swimming it off." But she also turns to creative outlets that give her mind room to wander after hours with her head under the water. Neace writes for BluePrints Magazine, Cedar Shoals' student publication, and often finds story ideas forming during long practices.

Art provides another escape. When she was younger, Neace began drawing on her hands and arms with Sharpies before meets to calm her nerves. The tradition cemented, and over the years, she has sketched everything from Bulldog logos to anatomical drawings and koi fish. These hobbies give her freedom from the expectations surrounding swimming.

"With art, I'm not doing it to get a grade, and I'm not doing it to get anyone's applause," Neace said. "I'm just drawing because I want to draw."

Music plays a similar role. Neace started playing piano in kindergarten and later joined her school orchestra as a violinist, playing since the sixth grade. When the quiet of swim practice becomes overwhelming, she turns to music.

Neace explained that she sometimes hums melodies in her head while racing to maintain stroke rhythm — a small detail that highlights her focus on the process over results.

She seeks out environments that challenge her, rather than simply celebrate what she has accomplished. That perspective carried through even in the most defining moment of her season.

Her mother recalls the text she received after Neace qualified for that final backstroke event: the race that completed the historic sweep. Unable to attend, Catherine Neace asked how it felt.

Lauren Neace's response was short: "LOL. I'm just happy to be here."

To Nordgren, that race was never the finish line, but part of a much larger trajectory.

"Tenth graders are ... just starting to blossom and find their tribe, find their niche, find their strength and find their desire," Nordgren said. "I'm excited to watch her grow and succeed."

If Neace's own expectations are any indication, even these milestones are unlikely to satisfy her for long.



Lauren Neace at a swim practice at Summer Hill Recreation Club, in Athens, Georgia on Feb. 13, 2026. PHOTO COURTESY/ELISE WILLIAMS

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Una nueva comunidad cultural

La Asociación de Estudiantes Brasileños crea un espacio por estudiantes en UGA

Nathan Valles

Después de dos años de inactividad, la Asociación de Estudiantes Brasileños en la Universidad de Georgia está reconstruyendo un centro cultural para estudiantes brasileños, al mismo tiempo que presenta las tradiciones, el idioma y la comunidad de Brasil al resto del campus.

La organización, que ha existido en UGA por más de 20 años, fue creada en el otoño de 2025 por estudiantes brasileños que querían restaurar la representación en el campus. Aunque los estudiantes brasileños representan uno de los grupos internacionales más grandes de la universidad, anteriormente no contaban con una organización activa que los conectara.

En el otoño de 2024, 104 estudiantes brasileños estaban matriculados en UGA, lo que colocó a Brasil entre las cinco poblaciones internacionales más grandes de la universidad.

Majorie Arantes Baio, estudiante de maestría en asuntos estudiantiles universitarios y vicepresidenta de la organización, dijo que reconstruir el grupo ha ayudado a crear visibilidad para los estudiantes brasileños.

“Al principio, significaba buscar un lugar donde pudiéramos compartir nuestra cultura y tener representación en el campus”, dijo Baio. “Ahora solo estamos tratando de ampliar nuestro alcance en lo que podemos hacer por la comunidad”.

El mes pasado, el capítulo se unió a BRASA, una red internacional de asociaciones de estudiantes brasileños con 125 capítulos en todo el mundo. La red incluye 100 capítulos en América del Norte y 25 en Europa y Asia. De los capítulos en América del Norte, 22 están ubicados en el sur de Estados Unidos.

Los líderes dicen que unirse a la red ayudará a fortalecer la presencia de la organización y a conectar a los estudiantes brasileños en UGA con una comunidad global más amplia.

Para Aila Sant’Anna, estudiante de doctorado de segundo año en el Departamento de Educación de Lenguaje y Alfabetización y tesorera de la organización, el papel más importante de la asociación es construir comunidad.

“Lo primero es construir un sentido de comunidad y pertenencia”, dijo Sant’Anna. “Lo que importa es reunir a la comunidad, compartir en el campus, no solo con brasileños, sino con otras personas ... mostrarles que la comunidad brasileña es enorme”.

Sant’Anna dijo que la organización también trabaja para ampliar la forma en que las personas perciben a Brasil.

“Brasil no es solo samba, no es solo Río de Janeiro, sino que es un país muy grande con una gran diversidad”, dijo Sant’Anna.

A lo largo del año, la asociación organiza eventos que destacan las tradiciones brasileñas.

Uno de los eventos favoritos de Sant’Anna fue la celebración de Carnaval del grupo, realizada en un restaurante local de Athens. La reunión atrajo a más de 40 personas y apoyó a un pequeño negocio propiedad de un miembro de la comunidad latinoamericana.

Otros eventos han incluido noches de karaoke con música brasileña, proyecciones de películas y una celebración



De izquierda a derecha, Nyah Rivera, Josenildo Paulino, Marjorie Arantes Baio, Rosângela Araujo, de la Organización de Estudiantes Brasileños de la Universidad de Georgia posan para un retrato frente a Memorial Hall en Athens, Georgia, el miércoles 18 de marzo de 2026.

FOTO/KALEB TATUM

de “Friendsgiving” que combinó platos brasileños con la tradición estadounidense del Día de Acción de Gracias.

Baio dijo que la organización también planea organizar la Festa Junina, una celebración tradicional brasileña que destaca la cultura regional a través de la música, la comida y los juegos. Aunque la organización apoya principalmente a estudiantes brasileños, muchos de sus miembros provienen de diferentes contextos culturales.

Nyah Rivera, estudiante de primer año de ciencias políticas y asuntos internacionales, dijo que se unió al grupo porque quería aprender más sobre la cultura y el idioma brasileños.

“Siempre me ha interesado expandirme hacia diferentes culturas”, dijo Rivera. “Con la carrera que quiero seguir, como ser abogada o diplomática, aprender un nuevo idioma sería muy útil”.

Rivera dijo que el ambiente acogedor hizo que fuera fácil involucrarse, incluso sin tener un origen brasileño.

“La organización es realmente acogedora”, dijo Rivera. “A pesar de no tener ningún origen brasileño, son muy abiertos en cuanto a conocerme, recordar quién soy”.

Amanda Grande, estudiante de cuarto año de psicología que estudia en UGA a través del programa de becas Rotary,

dijo que la organización le ayudó a adaptarse a la vida como estudiante internacional.

“Lo que realmente me gusta es lo acogedores que han sido todos”, dijo Grande. “Ha sido como un hogar para mí”.

Grande dijo que vivir en otro país a veces trae sentimientos de choque cultural e incertidumbre, lo que hace que las organizaciones culturales sean especialmente importantes.

“Estar lejos de la familia trae muchos desafíos relacionados con eso”, dijo Grande. “Tener algún tipo de familia aquí ayuda mucho”.

Para Baio, la reactivación de la Asociación de Estudiantes Brasileños es más que organizar eventos. Se trata de asegurar que la cultura brasileña tenga una presencia visible en la universidad.

“La Asociación de Estudiantes Brasileños es para todos”, dijo Baio. “No todos son brasileños y no todos hablan portugués. La Asociación de Estudiantes Brasileños se trata de ser inclusiva”.

Visit redandblack.com for the English version of this article and for more Spanish translated journalism.

From studio to classroom

David Barbe and David Lowery on resilience and practicality in the music industry

Gabbi Santeiro

As prospective music professionals stare down the barrel of an ever-changing industry, David Barbe and David Lowery impart to the next generation that success is predicated on practical solutions and adaptability.

As a longtime musician, producer and the director of the University of Georgia’s Music Business Certificate program, Barbe has put this adaptability in practice since the beginning of his career. Before finding success in 1985 as the founding member of post-punk trio Mercyland, he worked an abundance of jobs. Whether he was filling cracks in parking lots or washing windows, his passion for music was never without a backup plan.

While it took some time after his graduation from UGA for his career to take off, he found great success as a singer, songwriter and bassist for bands such as Mercyland and alternative-rock band Sugar. Eventually, he discovered his penchant for audio engineering and produced and worked on close to 400 albums for bands such as Drive-By Truckers and R.E.M.

What helped Barbe persist and become proficient in all sides of the creative process was the same value that he now imparts on his students: resilience.

“If you make music, if it’s important to you, you find new ways to adjust,” Barbe said.

Barbe and Lowery share more than just a first name: their influence on and involvement with the Athens music scene. Lowery, a fellow musician and a senior lecturer for the Music Business Certificate program, attributes his practicality to

the business savvy he developed working within the music industry. His music experience includes his time fronting rock bands Cracker and Camper Van Beethoven, along with owning an indie record company, a studio complex and a publishing company.

“If you make music, if it’s important to you, you find new ways to adjust.”

DAVID BARBE | PRODUCER

“I keep threatening to write a sort of airport business book ... called ‘How Your Band Taught You Everything You Need to Know about Economics and Finance,’” Lowery said. “It’s kind of a joke, but not really, there’s actually a lot of truth to that.”

In addition to his experience as a musician and professor, he is also an artists’ rights activist. In December 2015, Lowery filed a class action lawsuit for copyright infringement against Spotify, accusing them of putting forth smaller artists’ music for streaming without the appropriate mechanical licenses. This prompted the streaming giant to shell out a \$43.3 million settlement in 2017.

Lowery’s passion for activism and fluency in policy safe-

guards for music professionals are ever present in his teaching style. Once a semester, he brings in Athens Mayor Kelly Girtz to speak to his students about public policy in the Athens music scene. For Lowery, working with the government inspires hope in the wake of rising costs that affect the barrier of entry for young people to turn a profit in the music industry.

“As far as the tourist attraction [in Athens], it’s college football, it’s music and you need those two things, that’s what makes us unique,” Lowery said. “With our mayor, we’re very aware of that, and are thinking proactively about things that we can do to nurture the music scene here in a sensible way.”

While Athens’ music scene is one of its main attractions, it has been subjected to changes induced by economic shifts and venue closures. For example, local café and staple venue Buvez shut down in December 2025, gleaning a similar public upset to that of the closure of renowned Caledonia Lounge in 2020, although a new venue recently took Buvez’s place.

According to Barbe, however, the best way to thrive in the music industry is to anticipate uncertainty and adapt to it. He stated that while people’s fears related to economic struggle in the modern music industry are valid, those trapped by nostalgia for the music scene of Athens’ past and rendered cynical by change will fall behind.

“What happened here in the early 80s, when I was a student, was as magical as people think that it was ... [but] there’s no benefit in being locked in the past,” Barbe said. “Savor the moment when you’re in it, but be ready to embrace the next thing that comes along because there’s new people, new ideas, new creativity and new opportunities all the time.”



David Lowery poses for a portrait in 2024. PHOTO COURTESY/JASON THRASHER



David Barbe poses for a portrait at Chase Park Transduction in Athens, Georgia, in 2025. PHOTO COURTESY/LAMON CARSON

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