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Charlayne Hunter-Gault speaks during the Holmes-Hunter Lecture at the chapel in Athens, Georgia, on Thursday, Feb. 15, 2018. The chapel was full with people attending the lecture to hear Hunter-Gault speak, who was one of the first Black students to enroll at the University of Georgia. FILE/STAFF

## Buvez retrospective: How the cafe became a haven for the punk and hardcore bands of Athens

Gabbi Santeiro

Since Buvez opened its doors in 2018, its appeal was rooted in versatility. Advertised as a European-style cafe, Buvez took its name from the French verb “boire,” meaning “to drink,” reflecting its all-day approach to food and beverages.

Customers could grab coffee in the morning and come back in the evening for a glass of wine or a cocktail. Buvez wasn't intended to become a hub of the hardcore music scene in Athens. Yet its accessibility, range of options beyond alcohol and low cost barrier drew an array of musicians there.

Four years ago, Adam Lopez stepped in as Buvez's in-house sound engineer and show booker. His love of punk music, combined with the creative energy of the space, brought walls of sound and mosh pits to Buvez. While the cafe is outside of the main drag of downtown, a word-of-mouth, domino effect on the punk scene was inevitable, according to Anna Lopez, a digital marketer and concert photographer who captured photos, ran doors and helped book countless Buvez shows.

“Hardcore and punk is so community-driven that once you kind of send out that signal to people, they're going to find it,” Anna Lopez, who is married to Adam Lopez, said. “It was cool to watch that grow.”

These retrospective observations on the versatility of the space come after its closure in December 2025. Former owner Bain Mattox, who also owns Automatic Pizza and Normal Bar, often had to rely on his savings account to keep the doors open, he shared in an interview with Flagpole Magazine. Former Buvez employees attributed the closure to the economic strife induced by Donald Trump's April 2025 tariff package, which at first imposed tariffs on coffee.

Several local musicians have felt the effects of Buvez's closure. Roan O'Reilly, an Athens-based musician and audio engineer who supported Buvez in all of its stages, concurred that major economic and political decisions were the reason for its closure.

“This definitely seems like a direct consequence of choices up high that are just obviously destroying communities in way more ways than this,” O'Reilly said.

Since its closure, bands who have performed in the space such as Trepid, KNURD and No Kingdom have reflected on the authenticity that made the space conducive to the local hardcore scene.

### “Ramshackleness,” intimacy and accessibility

Athens' punk scene is long-indebted to the intimacy of small rooms. Many of the city's most renowned rock acts can trace their origins back to a set of four walls where space was a privilege and sound reverberated.

Buvez was no cramped basement venue. However, with its small size and stage barely lifted off the ground, members of local “grungegaze” band Trepid have attested to the intimacy and the gritty ambience that drove bands there.

“It definitely [had] more of a DIY feel than anything downtown is gonna have,” Trepid guitarist J. Ben Turk said. “It still [had] this level of ramshackleness... it's just two PA speakers and Adam [Lopez].”

From his experience working Buvez shows as an audio engineer, O'Reilly concluded that the “bare-bones” sound system at the cafe lent itself to this “ramshackleness” from both a technical and atmospheric standpoint. This reinforced the authenticity essential to live punk music.

“Having a minimal sound system really allows the band or whoever's playing to just be themselves,” O'Reilly said. “What the audience is hearing is very faithful to what the artist is doing, because there's literally maybe five feet between you and this person.”



PHOTO COURTESY/ANNA LOPEZ, MARY BETH BRYAN, MIKE WHITE  
GRAPHIC/KAITLYN HARVEY

## Integrating UGA The 65-year legacy of Hunter and Holmes

Julia Beauchamp

When Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes arrived at the University of Georgia 65 years ago, they sought change. Not to make history, but because they shared the same dreams and ambitions as every other student at the university.

### The road to desegregation

In 1959, five years after the Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court decision ruled segregation in education unconstitutional, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and Atlanta Committee for Cooperative Action (ACCA) decided it was time to act, starting with desegregating colleges.

They began recruiting promising young Black students to integrate Georgia's colleges, selecting the two top students at Henry McNeal Turner High School: Hunter, now Hunter-Gault, and Holmes. They were encouraged to apply to UGA in 1959.

“It's critical, really, to find a right candidate,” Robert A. Pratt, a history professor at UGA, said. “So you put forth the best people: the strongest academically, with the strongest, powerful, excellent background, strong family credentials. So that if and when they are rejected, you know that the only basis for that rejection was their race.”

“Once integration occurred over at the university, then it started to trickle into the Athens community.”

DENISE SUNTA | HISTORIC ATHENS

Holmes, Henry McNeal Turner High School's valedictorian, came from a family of civil rights activists. His father fought to desegregate public golf courses in Atlanta. Hunter-Gault was third in her class academically and was the editor-in-chief of her high school newspaper.

The original plan was for Hunter and Holmes to apply to Georgia State University, but the two had a different idea: UGA. They applied to UGA in the summer of 1959, but were told that there were no available dorms. After continually reapplying only to get the same response, they sued UGA in federal court.

Hunter-Gault and Holmes were represented in court by a legal team composed of Atlanta civil rights attorney Donald Hollowell, Constance Baker Motley of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Howard University Law School graduate Vernon Jordan and Horace

Ward, UGA's first Black applicant. Ward applied to the UGA School of Law in 1950 but was denied admission. He eventually obtained a law degree from Northwestern University.

Finally, on Jan. 6, 1961, the ruling that made history arrived: the two plaintiffs were qualified for admission and it was determined that they would have already been admitted if not for their race.

“I think the community itself, because we had such a large Black population at the time, was just kind of waiting to see how UGA was going to handle it, so that then they could determine how to handle it,” Denise Sunta, senior director of operations at Historic Athens, said. “Once integration occurred over at the university, then it started to trickle into the Athens community.”

### Change meets resistance

However, getting admitted to UGA was only the beginning. As soon as Hunter-Gault and Holmes set foot on campus, they faced backlash from much of UGA's student body. Upon their arrival at the university on Jan. 9, 1961, they were met with crowds of reporters, as well as students chanting segregationist phrases.

“[Hunter-Gault and Holmes], throughout their time, being the trailblazers that they were, faced a lot of blowback from the student community, from our community, from various other communities in Georgia coming to Athens,” Sunta said. “So you can imagine that that was a terrible strain on their lives and psyches and families.”

The third evening after their arrival on campus, a mob gathered outside of Hunter-Gault's dorm, throwing bricks and bottles, shouting obscenities and starting fires. Later that evening, state troopers escorted Holmes and Hunter-Gault home and J.A. Williams, the dean of students, told them that they would be withdrawn from the university. It took another court decision for the two to return to campus.

However, the racist encounters continued. “They both had their share of racism on campus, but Holmes was spared a lot of it because he lived off campus, whereas [Hunter-Gault] had to deal with it on a regular basis,” Pratt said.

According to Pratt, Hunter-Gault's sleep was constantly interrupted by girls banging on her ceiling. One night, the girls in her dorm pre-arranged a certain time to turn off all of the lights in the dorm except for Hunter-Gault's. As a result, anyone passing by could clearly see which room was hers. On one occasion, police stopped Klansmen, who had guns in their car, outside her dorm.

Holmes lived off campus with the Killian family, a Black family local to Athens, yet he still faced harassment.

“He often counted times when he would leave Athens on the weekends to go home to Atlanta, and he would be followed out of the city,” Pratt said. “Nobody ever stopped him. There was no violence, but he would be followed continuously as a form of harassment.”

SEE INTEGRATION LEGACY PAGE A3

SEE BUVEZ PAGE A3

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## New cuisine hits the scene Namak Restaurant brings halal Pakistani fine dining to Athens

Alyssa Aghabeg

New restaurants are constantly emerging in the Athens food scene. The latest being a traditional Pakistani restaurant: Namak Restaurant.

“Namak,” which means “salt” in English, was originally planned to be named Salt and Pepper. After owner Shakeel Haque discovered the name was unavailable, he chose a name in his native language.

“People like it, it’s a unique name,” Haque said.

Namak Restaurant is a new halal Pakistani restaurant in Athens, following the success of its Alpharetta, Georgia location. Located at 1155 Mitchell Bridge Road, the new Athens location of Namak held its soft opening on Dec. 26, 2025, and began regular service earlier this year. Currently, Namak is open for dinner from 4 to 10 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. The restaurant plans to stay open until midnight once the bar is fully set up in the coming weeks.

“I want to see the people when they come say ‘Wow’ and have a smile on their face. That’s an adventure for me — work hard and it pays off.”

MOHSIN KHAN | NAMAK RESTAURANT CO-OWNER

The idea for Namak Restaurant was born during a conversation between longtime friends Haque and co-owner Mohsin Khan. Khan has longstanding ties to Athens: his son graduated from the University of Georgia in 2024 and now attends Cornell Law School, and his daughter is currently a sophomore in the Terry College of Business.

“One day we sat down just joking, and said ‘Man, we don’t have a good fine dining Pakistani restaurant [in Georgia,]’” Khan said. “We have a Namak in Alpharetta, we feel like it has been a success, so that’s why we [opened] a second location in Athens.”

Originally from Pakistan, Haque moved to Marietta, Georgia in 1994 at the age of 21. He began working in the food industry and dreamed of opening a restaurant of his own. Even in the much larger and more diverse city of Atlanta, Haque noticed a gap in the dining scene.

Namak’s menu offers an extensive selection of chicken, beef and vegetarian dishes, as well as staple curries and its signature Namak BBQ. With two stories and patio seating on both levels, the Athens location offers space to accommodate Namak’s expansion. The restaurant offers generous portions at a reasonable price in an upscale environment.

The move to Athens came after the success of Namak’s Alpharetta location, but that success revealed space to be a major challenge.

“The Alpharetta location, it’s a little small ... we don’t have a space for a lot of people, it’s a good problem to have, but it’s not good,” Haque said. “We made sure in Athens that we had enough space and it is big enough to accommodate more than 200 people.”

In addition to the bar, the owners are developing a lounge plus coffee and tea menu – an idea aimed especially at college students. The space is intended to function as more than just a restaurant.

“Kids can come and study, sit down, [chill], drink coffee,” Khan said. “It’s kind of a one-stop shop.”

Namak has found success through family support and a strong emphasis on building a close-knit team. Ayush Rana, the restaurant’s manager, is a key figure at the Athens location and has been with Namak since he was 15 years old.

“I was hired to make the drinks, but slowly, they started giving me opportunities to handle more things, and now I’m doing this,” Rana said. “My bosses are really chill with me and they treat me like family.”

Namak’s Athens expansion marks the beginning of what Haque and Khan hope will become a national franchise, and at the heart of their expansion is a simple goal: pleasing customers.

“I want to see the people when they come say ‘Wow’ and have a smile on their face,” Khan said. “That’s an adventure for me — work hard and it pays off. Simple.”

For a town hungry for more diverse dining options, Namak’s arrival feels long overdue — and very welcome.

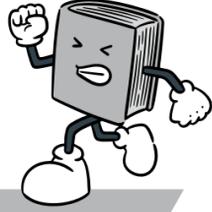


Shakeel Haque poses for a portrait in Namak Restaurant, on Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. Haque is the owner of Namak, a Pakistani restaurant that opened its Athens location in December 2025. PHOTO/LILY KATE AKINS



The dining room in Namak Restaurant on Tuesday, Jan. 20, 2026, in Athens, Georgia. Namak is a Pakistani restaurant that opened its Athens location in December 2025. PHOTO/LILY KATE AKINS

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Avice Smith (left) and Bria Smith (right), pose for a portrait on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026, in front of the Holmes-Hunter Academic Building at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia. PHOTO/LILY KATE AKINS

**INTEGRATION LEGACY FROM PAGE A1**

Despite the constant racism they faced, Hunter-Gault and Holmes stayed at UGA and eventually graduated in 1963.

“With this history in my head and heart, my path forward includes working to ensure that the doors of my alma mater are open even wider to Black students who, along with their classmates of all colors, will embrace this stated UGA goal: ‘to foster the understanding of and respect for cultural differences necessary for an enlightened and educated citizenry,’” Hunter-Gault wrote in a 2021 column for *The New York Times*.

**Progress and the path ahead**

Hunter-Gault’s words stand true on UGA’s campus today. Her and Holmes’ legacy continues on campus through the Holmes-Hunter Academic Building, one of the first buildings students see when entering North Campus. In addition, the Holmes-Hunter Lecture Series, established in 1985, is given annually by a “distinguished scholar or public figure and focuses on race relations, aspects of higher education with implications for race relations or Black history.”

Hunter-Gault and Holmes’ impact is also demonstrated by the diversity of UGA’s student body. In May 1969, the Zeta Pi chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. became the first African American fraternity on campus. Since then, all nine of the “Divine Nine” fraternities and sororities have been represented at UGA. Additionally, a variety of student organizations that support Black and other minority students exist on UGA’s campus, which Sunta believes is vital for students to feel a sense of belonging, comfort and familiarity.

“[Hunter-Gault and Holmes] really only had each other,” Sunta said. “You can imagine how isolating that must be and I think that kind of isolation and struggle to find belonging can happen when students of color go to prominently white universities.”

Bria Smith, a junior biochemistry and molecular biology student at UGA, became a member of the Eta Xi chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. in the fall semester of 2024.

“I definitely appreciate the value of sisterhood and what it means to be part of the community and to find that mentorship and growth,” Bria Smith said. “But also, I wanted to establish a community that was grounded and rooted within the African American community.”

**7.5%**

Black enrollment at UGA as of spring 2025

Avice Smith, a junior journalism major who is not related to Bria Smith, finds community in spaces like the National Association for Black Journalists in the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication.

“I definitely will say [UGA] has made progress in terms of giving us different spaces to be able to connect with one another,” Avice Smith said.

Although these spaces for Black students exist, Black enrollment at UGA is still low: 7.5% as of spring 2025.

“I also feel like we definitely have a ways to go in terms of increasing the numbers and engagement,” Avice Smith said.

According to Pratt, Black student enrollment is not the only factor that is decreasing at UGA.

“[The] university today is not as aggressive in terms of Black student recruitment or African American minority faculty members,” Pratt said. “There is no longer any real incentive, or there is no great interest in trying to diversify. DEI is under assault at this university, although it’s worse at other places.”

**“I wanted to be a part of it because I saw the potential. I saw that there could be a number of people who look like me who want to give back.”**

**BRIA SMITH | MEMBER OF ALPHA KAPPA ALPHA**

The lack of Black students was made apparent to Bria Smith when she first came to campus. After hearing so much about UGA Miracle, she decided to join the club due to her love of service and giving back. When she attended UGA Miracle’s Back to School Bash, she was the only Black student on the field.

“I just knew that where I [started] was not going to be the last place designated for someone who looks like me,” Bria Smith said. “I wanted to be a part of it because I saw the potential. I saw that there could be a number of people who look like me who want to give back.”

Bria Smith has been part of UGA Miracle’s leadership team for two years, which ultimately gave her the confidence to switch her desired pathway to business.

“I think that a lot of times when I see a lot of minority students come here, I think the objective is always to find your people, work towards your degree, have fun and then go off into the world, but there is so much more that’s here,” Bria Smith said. “If we don’t continue to manage and grow within the same spaces as a lot of the people who are different than us, we can miss out on opportunities and so many blessings that are to come.”

Through UGA Miracle, along with AKA and Campus Girl Scouts, Bria Smith aims for inclusion and visibility.

“I try to expand myself in those situations,” Bria Smith said. “Even if it’s the one minority out of the many rows of people, to see someone who looks like you in a leadership position but definitely in a space where they think they don’t belong ... that means more than anybody could put into words.”

Although Hunter-Gault and Holmes paved the way for Black students at UGA, and current students continue to create space for diversity, there is still progress to be made.

“I think it’s important to understand that as student leaders, we have a responsibility to change what we see,” Bria Smith said. “I think that starts with communication, understanding that we can continue to celebrate each other’s differences, and with that movement, starting with a spark, it can definitely turn into a trail of blazing fire.”

**BUVEZ FROM PAGE A1**

What made Buvez distinctive was its accessibility. It functioned as more than a bar, welcoming minors and sober patrons alike. According to Anna Lopez, this was ideal for teenagers who could not get into 21 and older venues, and were not allowed to go to house shows. There was less stigma around a young person being dropped off by their parents to catch a show at Buvez. This also meant that underage and sober musicians had an easier time playing shows there.

“I’ve heard it referred to as a third space,” Landon Montgomery, guitarist and vocalist of local hardcore band KNURD said. “I’m not of drinking age. To me, it feels more like that than it is a bar.”

KNURD and Trepid were among the six acts who performed at the cafe’s final show on Dec. 28. For one last go, the bill drew a wall-to-wall crowd that moshed in a way reminiscent of crowds at basement shows.

**“A Caledonia-sized hole”**

The space that Buvez once occupied on Barber Street will be remodeled and reopened in February as the Deadbeat Club, fulfilling the venue side of the equation. When there are no events booked, it will remain open as a bar and include a menu of drinks named after songs by Athens artists.

The Deadbeat Club will focus its operations on booking both local and nationally touring acts alike with the intention of recreating the appeal of Caledonia Lounge, a renowned venue that closed in 2020.

**“Go see your friends play ... Go to shows, even if you don’t know the band. You might find something you like.”**

**ADAM LOPEZ | SOUND ENGINEER AND SHOW BOOKER**

According to MayMay Bryant, vocalist and lyricist of Trepid, like Buvez, it was the camaraderie that made Caledonia unique. She added that many people throughout the music scene transitioned to Buvez after Caledonia closed. Bob Jesus Alvarez, guitarist and vocalist of No Kingdom and Deaf Condors, said that the closure of Buvez has left a “Caledonia-sized hole,” and that to capture the allure of Caledonia, the true priority in replication should be to curate a solid community.

“I think it’s an equation that involves a lot of people putting their best effort, actually wanting to create a community rather than a dollar. But I do understand it’s commerce as well,” Alvarez said.

Buvez’s musical legacy is something Anna and Adam Lopez worked to preserve even prior to threats of closure. According to Bryant, they did not shy away from existential conversations about the relationship between the cafe and the local punk scene.

“We would talk about the safeness of the community and how to expand that, how to make it better and just [leave] it better than we found it,” Bryant said. “They talked about it non-stop.”



A musician performs during the final round of Buvez’s ‘Song-O-Rama’ singer/songwriter competition in Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2024, in Athens, Georgia. (FILE/STAFF)

Adam Lopez, however, believes that the gap Buvez’s closure has created will be temporary. Not only do musicians have a preexisting set of venues to rely on in Athens, but there is also a versatility to punk and hardcore music. He said, it can be played anywhere — with or without a formal venue — with just some equipment and collaborative spirits. The latter is the most important to him. Athenians can do their part in the meantime by showing up to support live music, he added.

“Obviously punk, hardcore and any form of aggressive

music is not for everybody,” Adam Lopez said. “I understand that, but I feel like people should just continue to support live music. Go see your friends play ... Go to shows, even if you don’t know the band. You might find something you like.”

Whether future venues directly replicate Buvez and Caledonia is besides the point to figures of the Athens punk and hardcore scene; preserving the community and authenticity that traveled from Caledonia to Buvez takes precedence.



The new track and field facility is pictured on South Milledge Avenue in Athens, Georgia, on Wednesday, Jan. 21, 2026. The complex will feature a 400-meter, nine-lane track with an infield long jump, a triple jump and a pole vault facility, and the venue will feature a grandstand, a press box, an observation deck, restrooms and concession stands. PHOTO/KALEB TATUM

## Off and running

### UGA's new track and field facility to make local impact

Ben Kule

A brand-new track and field facility is slated to open in Athens on Feb. 18. It aims to serve both the University of Georgia campus and the local community, the UGA Athletic Association announced.

The new location on South Milledge Avenue replaces the old venue on South Lumpkin Street, which has not hosted an event for the Georgia men's or women's track and field team since April 2023. The new 2,500-seat complex, which includes a nine-lane track, an infield long jump, a triple jump and a pole vault facility, will host the Spec Towns Invitational this April, the Torrin Lawrence Memorial in May and the SEC championships in 2027.

"We are excited about the opportunities this facility will create for our athletes, our campus and our community," the university's director of athletics, Josh Brooks, said in a press release. "While it will support our student-athletes at the highest level, it will also create opportunities that will bring athletes of all ages to our campus throughout the year."

High school competitions will also be held at the new facility with the Classic City Track and Field Invitational hosted by Clarke Central High School scheduled for March, making it the first competition on the venue's calendar, and the GHSA state track meet in May.

"It gives us an opportunity to say Clarke Central has these resources," Zack Howard, Clarke Central's boys track and field coach, said. "It helps build our brand ... Athens is the greatest city in the state of Georgia, just my opinion. To get people to come run here from across the state, to

come to something that Clarke Central is getting to host, is amazing."

The project, which will cost \$59.8 million, was funded exclusively by donations and gifts, and will become one of the "premier track and field destinations in the country," according to Brooks. The inaugural event at the venue will be especially meaningful to the Brooks family, as his son, Jackson Brooks, will be competing for Clarke Central.

The new complex will have a strong emphasis on strengthening ties between the university and Athens, as public usage hours will give residents a new place to run and exercise, while big events can boost the local economy through hotel stays and visits to local business and restaurants.

"The Classic City Track and Field Invitational in March will mark the first competition in the new facility, bringing a regional high school meet to campus and expanding access to elite facilities for local student-athletes," Alison McCullick, UGA's director of community relations, said in a press release. "In addition to competitions, the space will remain open for walking, running and everyday recreation, making it a year-round asset for the university and Athens."

Howard sees the new complex as something that benefits the city more broadly and on numerous levels, from the university to the surrounding high schools to the community. He believes that UGA having a state-of-the-art track and field facility not only draws student athletes to the school, but can also allow the university to develop talent from a young age to boost its track and field program, too.

"This has given schools from around the state a chance

to not only come run and compete at the University of Georgia, but to bring their kids to Athens and say, 'look at this campus,' Howard said. "Not only is this an athletic standard, but this is an academic standard."

**“To get people to come run here from across the state, to come to something that Clarke Central is getting to host, is amazing.”**

ZACK HOWARD | CLARKE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL COACH

Howard added that this season is one of the most promising in recent years, and that his Gladiators are looking to take home a state championship. Once this complex is completed, student-athletes from high schools not only located in the Athens area but also throughout the state of Georgia will likely receive greater attention from UGA and other prestigious collegiate programs.

"You're helping change lives through sports," Howard said. "That's the powerful thing — being able to provide opportunities through athletics."



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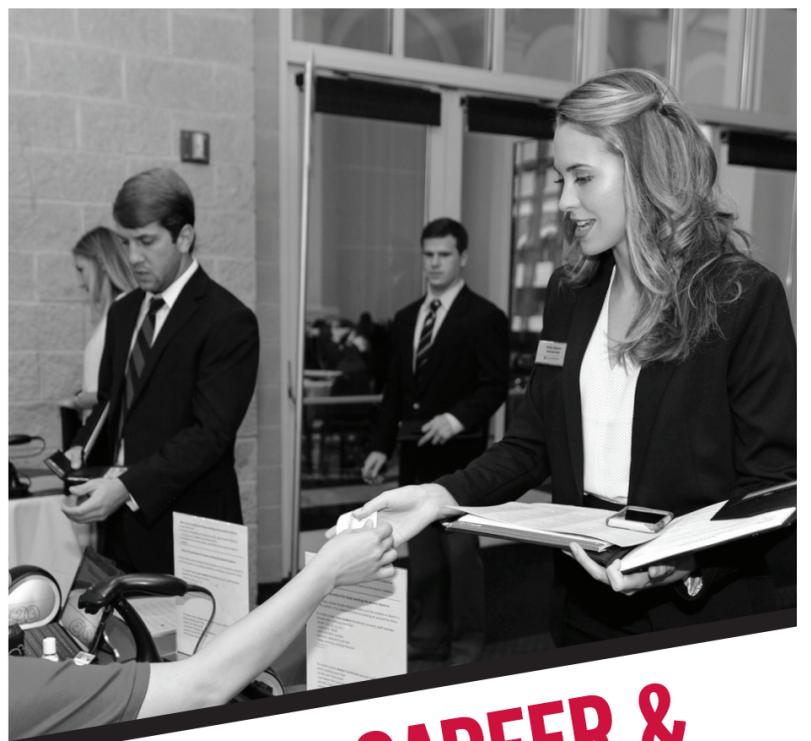


## Highlights from the 2026 Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade



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## OPINION: One year since my endometriosis diagnosis

What I've learned and why we must keep speaking up about the disease

Alexia Rule

I spent five years of my life feeling hopelessly in the dark, with no explanation for my body's debilitating pain. I searched for answers in and out of emergency rooms and specialists' offices, telling every doctor that I felt like I was dying.

I was met over and over again with dismissal and apathy because the cause of my multi-system issue was invisible on my numerous MRIs, CT scans, X-rays and ultrasounds.

The only way to receive an official endometriosis diagnosis is through laparoscopic surgery, a "keyhole" surgery where lesions, implants or fibrosis caused by endometriosis are cut out. This endometrial tissue grows and spreads like a cancer, bringing painful inflammatory destruction wherever it spreads.

After years of fighting for it, a miraculous trail of doctors finally got me into contact with a specialist and I had laparoscopic surgery for my suspected endometriosis in January 2025. I remember coming out of my anesthesia and turning over to ask my mom if endometriosis tissue was found in the operating room.

It was bittersweet relief when she told me my post-op results confirmed endometrial tissue growth covering and choking my intestines, kidneys, ovaries and bladder, painfully attaching them to each other like superglue. However, this tissue and lesion growth that had caused pain, heavy bleeding, scarring and immobility was now gone. After its removal, I woke up with my body and soul immediately feeling infinitely lighter, in less pain and more free. I finally found respite following years of silent suffering.

### An underdiagnosed disease

On average, it takes four to 11 years to receive an endometriosis diagnosis due to negligence and indifference from doctors, socioeconomic barriers and the disease's lack of research. Thus, my story is far from unique. Where my path diverges is that, now, I am able to find my own strength; to keep fighting by advocating for other women, spreading awareness about the disease so that diagnosis, treatment and freedom can become more accessible to the one in 10

women this disease afflicts.

More than a gynecological condition, endometriosis symptoms extend beyond heavy or painful periods. Driven by abnormal tissue growth outside the uterus, the inflammation impacts the immune and nervous systems, digestion, hormones, brain function and more. While endometriosis most commonly affects pelvic organs, lesions have been found in other areas such as the spine, lungs, brain and even the eyes.

My main symptom was an intense flare-up whenever I engaged my core muscles due to endometrial tissue attached to my abdominal wall. This left me unable to move freely and took a serious toll on my physical and mental health. I also experience lower-back and sacroiliac joint pain, full-body inflammation, pelvic pulling and heaviness, digestive issues and heavy overly frequent periods. These symptoms are constant — not just during menstruation — making my endometriosis extremely difficult to diagnose.

Despite how common endometriosis is, it remains under-researched and widely misunderstood. Symptoms are frequently dismissed as heavy periods or misdiagnosed as other conditions.

I learned firsthand that the ablation surgery method is outdated and ineffective in the long term. After ablation, my endometriosis tissue grew back within six months. My second surgery in July 2025 used the excision method instead, under the skilled work of an endometriosis specialist, which is widely considered the gold standard for treatment.

### A life-changing relief

Living with endometriosis has taught me to fiercely protect my body and my boundaries. Making lifestyle changes that reduce inflammation, stepping back from sources of unnecessary stress, speaking openly about my condition and learning how to say no have been essential to my healing.

Endometriosis is chronic and will always be a part of my life. However, I no longer allow it to control my life and I grow in hope daily that my time here can still be joyful and full despite my pain.

Women are incredibly resilient in a world that is unjustly apathetic to our pain and does not take endometriosis seriously, but I look forward to spending the rest of my lifetime speaking up. I take on the challenge of advocating for scientific, legislative and socioeconomic justice and I hope to aid the change that makes endometriosis care and treatment available to any women currently suffering in silence.

*Alexia Rule is a master's journalism student at the University of Georgia*

## WOWSER, IT'S WOWSER!: THE DIFFERENCE



## STUDENT VOICES

UGA students share thoughts on the new class schedule

Josephine Thomas

A new daily class schedule went into effect this semester at the University of Georgia. Classes are now five minutes longer, at 55 and 80 minutes. Additionally, there are now more scheduling options available with different combinations of meeting days for courses that meet twice a week. Winter and summer breaks have also been extended, although the summer term daily class schedule itself is not affected. According to the Office of the Registrar at UGA, the new schedule intends to provide benefits such as "greater scheduling flexibility, increased classroom utilization, diversified class meeting times, and slightly longer classes."

The Red & Black asked UGA students about their thoughts on the new class schedule.



### Maren Snapp

ENGLISH AND BIOLOGY MAJOR

"I like my daily schedule but scheduling everything in Athena was a lot worse than it usually is," Snapp said.



### Dylan Nojadeya

ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING MAJOR

"I think the new class schedule is also inconvenient because it's extending a lot of classes that I don't feel need to be extended, and it's making it harder to actually focus in class when it's longer," Nojadeya said.



### Enaz Tewfik

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS MAJOR

"I like the schedule, more so because you got a little more time to get in between classes," Tewfik said.



### Sophia Lee

BIOMEDICAL PHYSIOLOGY MAJOR

"I think that the extra five minutes doesn't make a difference at all. I don't think you notice it. It was definitely helpful when picking classes that there are extra sections available," Lee said.

PHOTO/JOSEPHINE THOMAS

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## Leer es una libertad:

La Unidad Latina y GRACIAS organizan una colecta de libros durante todo el año

Lexie Shadix, Traducción: Nathan Valles

En octubre de 2025, el capítulo Beta Tau de la Universidad de Georgia de La Unidad Latina, Lambda Upsilon Lambda Fraternity, Inc. (LUL) inició una colecta de libros que se extenderá durante todo un año. La fraternidad se asoció con el capítulo de la UGA de Growing Ramos Association Cultivating Inclusion and Academic Support (GRACIAS), una organización sin fines de lucro enfocada en brindar recursos y mentoría a estudiantes y familias latinas con el objetivo de ampliar el acceso a la educación superior.

Ivan Mendoza, presidente, encargado de relaciones públicas y responsable de servicio comunitario de LUL, inició la colecta de libros para compartir la misma inspiración y empoderamiento que él encontró a través de la lectura.

“La razón por la que comencé esta colecta de libros de un año es porque hubo autores, escritores y poetas específicos que leí durante la secundaria y la preparatoria, y esos autores me impulsaron a buscar la educación superior por las palabras que utilizan en sus libros”, dijo Mendoza. “Me inspiraron los niños y personajes que se parecían a mí, que tenían una experiencia cultural similar a la mía. Los vi ir a la universidad en los libros y los vi aspirar a algo más grande que simplemente graduarse de la preparatoria”.

Uno de los programas filantrópicos nacionales de LUL es la Iniciativa PATHE (Providing Access to Higher Education), que busca apoyar a los estudiantes “en su camino para graduarse de una universidad de cuatro años” a través de esfuerzos que incluyen mentoría, talleres y defensa educativa. Mendoza espera contribuir a esta iniciativa proporcionando libros a estudiantes de primaria, secundaria y preparatoria, citando el papel fundamental que los libros desempeñaron en su propio camino hacia la educación superior.

“No estaría en la Universidad de Georgia si nunca hubiera leído un solo libro de James Baldwin, Toni Morrison o Elizabeth Acevedo”, dijo Mendoza. “Incluso mi ensayo de admisión a la UGA trataba sobre cómo un libro impactó

mi vida ... No habría sabido cómo encontrar mi voz sin los libros”.

Además de la Iniciativa PATHE y su experiencia personal, Mendoza se inspiró en Sigma Lambda Upsilon, o Señoritas Latinas Unidas (SLU), una hermandad que colabora con LUL y enfoca sus esfuerzos filantrópicos en la alfabetización.

Aunque se aceptan donaciones de todo tipo de libros, se solicitan específicamente libros de preparación para los exámenes SAT y ACT.

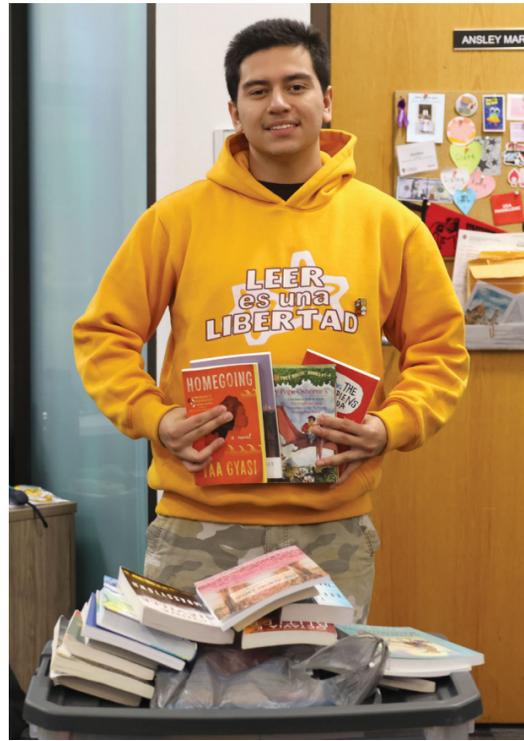
“GRACIAS realmente quiere cerrar la brecha para que los jóvenes latinos puedan aspirar a la educación superior”, dijo Annette Compean, presidenta y fundadora de GRACIAS en la UGA. “Sé que los libros del ACT y SAT son muy caros, así que poder donarlos a estudiantes de preparatoria realmente puede ayudar a cerrar esa brecha y apoyarles en su camino hacia la educación superior”.

Después de que finalice la colecta, la mitad de los libros donados se entregará a organizaciones sin fines de lucro, como Books for Keeps, en nombre de LUL, mientras que la otra mitad será donada a Clarke Central High School y Cedar Shoals High School en nombre de GRACIAS.

El Distrito Escolar del Condado de Clarke registró en 2023 la tasa de graduación más baja del estado en cuatro años y la segunda más baja en cinco años, aunque ha mostrado una mejora constante desde entonces. La colecta de libros, que busca fortalecer el aumento de las tasas de graduación, ha recibido hasta ahora más de 300 libros.

También se han realizado esfuerzos para ampliar la colecta a otras universidades dentro y fuera de Georgia. Mendoza proporciona a otros capítulos esquemas con posibles destinatarios para colectas similares, así como reembolsos por los costos incurridos al organizar estas iniciativas. La primera universidad que Mendoza contactó fue Georgia State University, trabajando con Josue Portillo, miembro de LUL como de GRACIAS, para iniciar oficialmente la colecta en noviembre de 2025.

“LUL tiene una filantropía enfocada en brindar acceso a la educación superior, lo que acorta el camino



Ivan Mendoza, estudiante de segundo año en la Universidad de Georgia, posa para un retrato en la Oficina de Vida Griega del Tate Student Center en Athens, Georgia, el martes 20 de enero de 2026. Mendoza es el fundador del Club de Lectura Latino La Unidad y organizó la colecta de libros que duró todo el año.

FOTO/KATHERINE DAVIS

[para los estudiantes]”, dijo Portillo. “Realmente creemos que la alfabetización es una parte fundamental de eso, porque no se puede tener una población de estudiantes ingresando a la educación superior sin poder leer y escribir adecuadamente”.

La colecta de libros en la UGA acepta donaciones hasta mayo de 2026. Las donaciones pueden entregarse en la oficina de Sean Lockhart, coordinador del programa del Multicultural Greek Council en la UGA.

“Ha sido realmente gratificante ver a los estudiantes y a las personas que trabajan detrás de escena tan apasionadas por este tema”, dijo Lockhart. “Eso es lo que se siente tan refrescante para mí como asesor: ver que hay personas que realmente quieren hacer el trabajo crítico en nuestra comunidad porque han sido impactadas personalmente”.

En el futuro, Mendoza planea continuar organizando iniciativas similares enfocadas en proporcionar útiles escolares, apoyar a educadores y brindar a estudiantes en países de América Latina acceso a recursos educativos.

“Cambiar a todo Estados Unidos es una petición muy grande, pero mientras pueda beneficiar al menos a un estudiante, al menos motivar a un estudiante a través de la literatura, o a un estudiante a través de las diferentes iniciativas que LUL estará organizando, eso será suficiente para mí”, dijo Mendoza.

Visit [redandblack.com](http://redandblack.com) for the English version of this article and for more Spanish translated journalism.

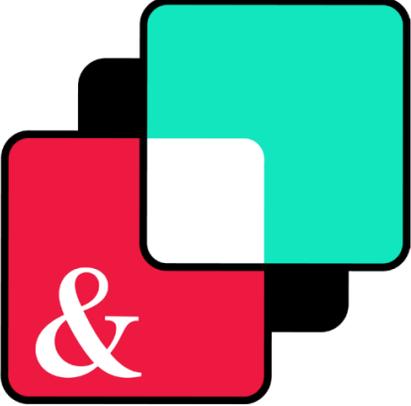


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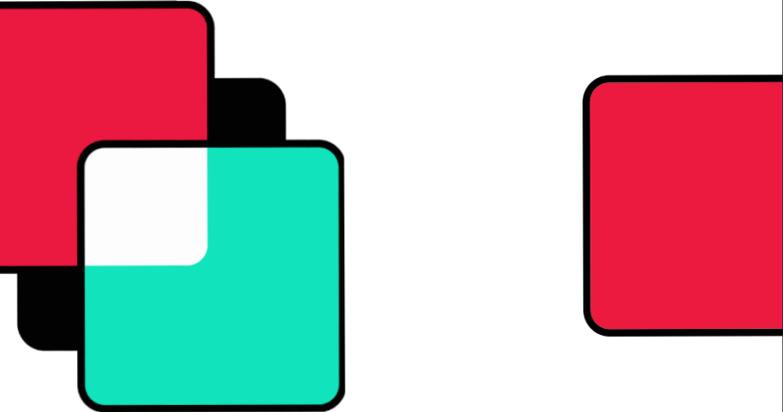
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#### ACROSS

- Some trophies
- Slant
- Hit in the ring
- “Carmen” selection
- Poor, as excuses go
- Outback runner
- Pulmonary problem
- Child occupier
- Collar, as a perp
- Puts on the line
- Staff of life
- Unexciting
- Salad topper
- Miles off
- Application blank
- Classified material?
- “The Pirates of Penzance” heroine
- Smidgen
- Prepared to drive, with “up”
- Curious, plus
- “No \_\_\_”
- Grand Canyon-esque
- Out of practice
- “Peter and the Wolf” bird
- Oregon \_\_\_
- Haul
- Impassively
- Start and end of the Three

#### DOWN

- Feather holder?
- Caterer’s dispenser
- Bake sale offering
- Hot spot
- Amorphous mass
- First name in spy fiction
- Who or where follower
- Browns
- Fleet components
- Crazily
- Acquires
- Palindromic title
- Charge carrier
- Bridge site
- Fair feature
- In addition
- Wooden shoe
- Mining finds
- Clappers
- Mall conveniences
- Spar
- On pins and needles

- Songlike
- Deep vein thrombosis (abbr.)
- Ancient fabulist
- Asia/Europe divider
- Hoo-ha
- Downtime
- Like a crone
- Pugilist’s weapon
- Enough to tango
- United
- Turned on
- Ang or Spike
- Compliment to the chef



# Alexis Derickson

## Communications Manager

### How has your coursework at Grady College prepared you for your role at The Red & Black?

Most recently in my time with Grady for grad school, I've learned a lot about branding, visual storytelling and what messages can be conveyed to viewers, even in a seemingly quick Instagram post. I've been able to apply this knowledge to be increasingly mindful of the visual decisions I make on a day-to-day basis at The Red & Black.

### What has been the most rewarding part of serving in a leadership role at The Red & Black?

The most rewarding part of serving at The Red & Black is building and strengthening my relationships with alumni, friends and community members. Having served in the role for a few years, it always brings a smile to my face to reconnect with familiar faces, whether that looks like catching up at events, hearing about their lives and families or learning more about their time and cherished memories at The Red & Black.

#### Major:

Journalism (Master's program)

#### Position Description:

I am responsible for writing short-form interviews and news updates for the alumni newsletter; creating graphics and daily posts on The Red & Black alumni social media channels; and planning alumni outreach and fundraising campaigns, promotions and special events.

*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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Taking the time to gain real-world experience isn't detrimental to achieving my goals, but rather it's an investment in ensuring that my goals are aligned with who I am and what I want to contribute to the world."

– Natalia Daniel, Class of 2028



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