29th Annual Public Service and Outreach Awards
2020 Awards for Excellence in Public Service and Outreach

Award Recipients

Walter Barnard Hill Fellow Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach
Walt McBride

Walter Barnard Hill Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach
Jennifer Ceska
Kris Irwin
Shana Jones
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Mara Shaw

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Walter Barnard Hill Fellow Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach

About the Award

The Walter Barnard Hill Fellow Award is UGA’s highest award in public service and outreach and is comparable to a distinguished professorship. It recognizes sustained, distinguished, superb achievement, and contributions to improving the quality of life in Georgia or elsewhere. The selection committee considers long-term achievements, special projects having extraordinary impact and collaborative efforts. The creativity, impact, and superb nature of a Hill Fellow’s achievements greatly exceed the normal accomplishments of a productive faculty member.

The appointee receives a medallion, a framed certificate and an award to sustain or enhance the honoree’s public service and outreach endeavors or to support the development of new ones. Like the Hill Award, the Hill Fellow Award is named in honor of Chancellor Walter Barnard Hill, who led UGA from 1899 until his death in 1905. His desire for more university involvement in Georgia and his application of these goals and ideas helped pave the way for a modern public service-oriented university.

Walt McBride
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Walt McBride is a senior public service associate in the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and the institute’s representative to the state in the area of governmental education. In that position, McBride develops new certificate and certification programs, courses and curriculum, organizes and facilitates conferences and events, and evaluates programs and monitors contracts.

In his 21 years at the Vinson Institute, McBride has led more than 800 leadership and development and strategic planning sessions, providing relevant topics related to current and emerging trends and issues. He has worked with 15 statewide associations, 18 state agencies and regional commissions, three University System of Georgia institutions, the Technical College System of Georgia, dozens of cities and counties, and 12 electric membership cooperatives.

McBride’s achievements have continued to grow since 2011, when he was presented the Walter B. Hill Award. In 2015, he oversaw the resurrection of the Georgia Certified Public Manager® (CPM) program, which the institute offered from 1976 to 1998 before it was discontinued because of a lack of interest.

To restore the program and gain accreditation from the National Certified Public Manager® Consortium, McBride developed 300 hours of curriculum covering seven competency areas and added a service-learning component, which allows participants to make an impact on communities throughout the state while earning their certification. Since its relaunch in 2017, the Georgia CPM® program has drawn participants from 92 different state agencies and local governments, while also bringing inquiries from other states on how they can incorporate elements of the program into their own teachings.

His other major accomplishments since 2011 include the development of a training program for federal administrators in Brazil, the creation of a leadership program for the Georgia Public Library Service, and a close collaboration with the UGA College of Engineering and the American Public Works Association that resulted in an APWA-funded graduated research assistant position.

“Without a doubt, Walt has been instrumental in leading the way for developing leadership and management programs and curriculum for the public works profession, not only in the state of Georgia, but throughout North America,” said Stan Brown, director at large for APWA. “With sustained, distinguished, and superb achievements in public service and outreach, and his lasting contributions to improving the quality of life in Georgia and throughout the nation, Walt McBride is most deserving of the Hill Fellow Award.”
Jennifer Ceska
State Botanical Garden of Georgia

Jennifer Ceska is the conservation coordinator for the State Botanical Garden of Georgia. For the past 25 years, Ceska has played a significant role in plant conservation efforts at the garden and throughout the state.

Ceska also serves as the statewide coordinator for the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance (GPCA), a network of private and public organizations, state and federal agencies, universities and gardens working together to prioritize state plant conservation needs.

Over the past 24 years, the GPCA network has continued to expand under Ceska’s leadership and now includes 51 partner organizations, including Georgia Power, The Nature Conservancy and Zoo Atlanta. Thanks to Ceska’s collaborative approach to building a state-based network, 101 imperiled plant species are in active recovery and 99 species are in safeguarding collections for conservation and research. In her role as statewide coordinator, Ceska contributed to the development of the State Wildlife Action Plan in 2005 and 2015, which is considered one of the best in the nation. Additionally, the GPCA serves as a national model for how to build state-based plant conservation alliances, and Ceska has worked with colleagues in 16 states to help build their own plant conservation alliances.

Ceska was a central figure in the creation of the Georgia Native Plant Initiative at the State Botanical Garden. She initiated Connect-to-Protect, an education and outreach program that establishes gardens of native pollinator plants at schools, businesses and in communities. Ceska helped develop the Mimsie Lanier Center for Native Plant Studies where students, volunteers, interns and garden staff propagate Georgia native plants for use in habitat restoration, endangered species recovery, and introduction to the gardening and green industry community.

Ceska’s dedication and passion for plant conservation has made an impact not only at UGA, but statewide and nationally.

“Jennifer’s commitment, creativity, and ability to inspire collaboration through the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance has been a tremendous example for the national and international botanic garden community,” said Abby Meyer, executive director of Botanic Gardens Conservation International, U.S. “Under her leadership, the alliance has developed into a well-oiled machine that builds regional capacity to conserve local species.”

Walter Barnard Hill Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach

About the Award

Since 1992, the Walter Barnard Hill Award has recognized distinguished achievement in public service and outreach by UGA faculty members and service professionals. Recipients have made contributions to the improvement of the quality of life in Georgia or elsewhere of an order that greatly exceeds the normal accomplishments of a productive faculty member. A maximum of five Hill Awards may be presented each year.

Each awardee receives a medallion and a framed certificate. Only Hill Award winners are eligible for a Walter Barnard Hill Fellow Award for Distinguished Achievement in Public Service and Outreach.

The award is named in honor of Chancellor Walter Barnard Hill, who led UGA from 1899 until his death in 1905. Hill first articulated the university’s modern public service and outreach mission. He admired the close relationship that existed between the University of Wisconsin and the state of Wisconsin and led a pilgrimage of nearly 100 Georgians to see the “Wisconsin Idea” in action. As a result of this journey and the power of Hill’s vision, Georgia’s leadership endorsed Hill’s plan for a modern, public service-oriented university and backed that endorsement with increased support for the institution.
Shana Jones
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Shana Jones is program manager of planning and environmental services at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. In that role, she created the Georgia Sea Grant Law Program and conducted research on the impact of increased coastal flooding and sea level rise on local governments and coastal management and policy.

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Through her work with the Environmental Policy Academy, a project funded by the Dobbs Foundation, Jones has provided key legislators detailed information on the state’s most critical environmental issues. Under her leadership, the academy has developed a reputation for providing quality programming and encouraging important discussion. The annual event draws current and new members of the House and Senate Natural Resources and Environmental Committees to locations where they can get a hands-on look at the state's environment successes and concerns.

Jones created the Georgia Sea Grant Law Program in 2015 in partnership with Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant. The program addresses critical environmental, economic and hazard mitigation concerns in coastal Georgia. Each year, two to three law students work as Georgia Sea Grant Legal Fellows, conducting law and policy research to support coastal projects. Since the program’s establishment, Jones has mentored 12 fellows.

Over the past four years, Jones has overseen $2 million in contracts and grants. Her research agenda focuses on four main areas: coastal hazards and risks; oyster aquaculture; local property rights; and environmental law and policy. Her research collaborations include UGA colleagues as well as faculty members from other states, including the Virginia Institute of Marine Science at the College of William and Mary.

“Shana is a great listener and organizer with invaluable outreach and public service skills. She is a pleasure to work with and a quick problem solver whenever unexpected situations arise,” said State Rep. Lynn R. Smith, chair of the Georgia House Natural Resources and Environment Committee. “She fulfills the university’s public service mission in all regards in her work to make the academy the success it has become.”

Kris Irwin
Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources

Kris Irwin is a senior public service associate and associate dean for outreach at the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. Since joining UGA in 1996, Irwin has spent the past 23 years building sustainable environmental education programs for university students, K–12 students and teachers, private landowners and natural resource professionals.

Irwin co-founded the Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia (ATEEG) program, making Georgia the first state in the country to have an environmental education certificate program accredited by the North American Association for Environmental Education. The three-year program, which provides high-quality professional development for formal and non-formal environmental educators, has graduated 43 participants since its accreditation in 2012.

He is also the co-founder and co-director of the UGA Environmental Education (EE) Certificate program, which supports UGA undergraduate students interested in pursuing an environmental education career. Irwin utilized his Foundations of Environmental Education service-learning class to help develop the EE certificate in 2016, with his students conducting surveys, analyzing data, and preparing needed documents in support of the EE certificate proposal.

Additionally, Irwin has been involved with the national environmental education program Project Learning Tree (PLT) since 1997, serving as the Georgia state coordinator since 2006. His contributions to PLT have been recognized with the Outstanding Service Award (1997), the Outstanding Educator of the Year (2001), the Facilitator of the Year (2003, 2004), and the National PLT Outstanding Educator Award (2002). Irwin is also the author of Science of Forestry Management, which is used nationally to teach forest science curriculum to high school and middle school students in the agricultural education program.

“I have always found Dr. Irwin to be extremely dedicated, dependable, organized and the type of professional who brings the best out in others,” said Amanda Buice, science program manager at the Georgia Department of Education. “He goes above and beyond for the work he is so passionate about. Georgia students and educators are truly fortunate to have such an advocate working on their behalf.”
Eleanor Lanier
School of Law

Eleanor “Ellie” Lanier is the associate dean for clinical programs and experiential learning, and the mediation clinic director for the School of Law. She has spent her career working to improve the legal services available to Georgia’s most vulnerable populations, while also preparing the next generation of lawyers to carry on that effort.

Lanier joined the School of Law as an adjunct professor in 2004, and began looking for ways to expand experiential learning opportunities for law students. She added a service-learning component to a course on elder law by pairing students with practicing Georgia lawyers to provide service to low-income seniors.

Lanier was a driving force behind the creation of Athens Access to Justice (AATJ) in 2017—a program through which local attorneys, assisted by law students and volunteer paralegals, staff pop-up clinics to provide legal assistance to low-income and underserved members of the community. Since the first pop-up clinic in 2017, more than 1,000 clients have received free legal assistance. Another initiative driven by Lanier, Court Help, which provides free assistance to low-income litigants who are representing themselves in court, served over 500 community members during 2019.

Last year, Lanier participated in fundraising and oversaw the distribution of $133,000 to support law students doing summer public service and outreach throughout Georgia. One of those programs, Rural Access to Justice Fellowships, supports students going into rural communities to practice law.

As associate dean, Lanier has overseen the expansion of experiential learning at the law school to include 18 different clinics and externships. For each of the past several years, 90 percent of law school graduates have participated in at least one semester-long experiential learning program that was not part of the required curriculum. More than half have participated in two or more semester-long experiential opportunities.

“Dean Lanier has educated and equipped a multi-generational, state-wide network of advocates (for elder care),” said Aimee E. Stowe, an adult guardianship specialist at the Georgia Department of Human Service’s Division of Aging Services. “Dean Lanier is an outstanding professor and academic in all the traditional ways, but she is also an outstanding champion of human rights. She has set up the networks, pathways, and tools that advocates must have to close the gap between what the law requires and what happens in practice.”

Mara Shaw
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Mara Shaw is the interim associate director for governmental training, education and development at the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. For nearly seven years, Shaw has dedicated herself to improving education for elected local government officials, appointed local government officials, and future local government policy makers or managers. Working with several organizations, Shaw has made a significant impact locally and statewide through her work.

Shaw has worked in partnership with five organizations in recent years to develop programs that address the educational needs of their members. Shaw helped develop expanded session programming for the National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA) Executive Leadership Institute. She also helped create new courses for the Association County Commissioners of Georgia (ACCG) and the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA), expanding learning opportunities for local government officials throughout the state.

Shaw serves as the lead faculty member for the Georgia City-County Management Association’s (GCCMA) education program. Working with GCCMA’s board of directors and its educational program planning committee, she has helped improve the overall quality of educational programming available for Georgia’s city and county managers. In 2017, Shaw developed a professional skills workshop series for Master of Public Administration students in the School of Public and International Affairs. Seventy students have completed the workshop series.

Shaw’s passion for continuing and professional education is clear in all of her work not only as a unit and program manager, but as a course instructor. She has led classes for 2,198 newly elected municipal officials and 423 newly elected county commissioners.

“Mara possesses the characteristics one looks for in a leader—she is a person of great integrity and character, a highly driven and motivated professional unafraid of challenges and committed to making a difference in service to the public,” said Larry H. Hanson, executive director of the Georgia Municipal Association. “She has a collaborative leadership and management style and possesses a unique ability to bring groups of people together from different backgrounds, experiences and socioeconomic factors, and create a sense of team to find common ground on solutions.”
Public Service and Outreach Staff Award for Excellence

About the Award

The Public Service and Outreach Staff Award for Excellence, the most prestigious award for Public Service and Outreach staff members, recognizes individuals who have demonstrated a strong work ethic, commitment to service and exceptional job performance. The award honors outstanding effort, encourages workplace creativity and innovation, and celebrates the achievements of Public Service and Outreach staff. Honorees receive a certificate and an engraved award. Eligible staff members must have been employed for a minimum of two continuous years in any Public Service and Outreach unit. The award’s inaugural year was 2006.

Cora Keber
State Botanical Garden of Georgia

Cora Keber has been the director of education for the State Botanical Garden of Georgia since the summer of 2017, and has worked within the department since 2007. In her roles, she has developed and expanded children’s and adult programming, overseen summer camps, and developed relationships with UGA colleagues and members of the local and statewide community that have proven beneficial for all.

In advance of the opening of the Alice H. Richards Children’s Garden, Keber worked alongside the design team and led plans to introduce the new education space to the public. This included tours to various interested groups and volunteer training for the grand opening, which drew 3,500 visitors. She mentored teams to develop the Garden Earth Explorers program that has served 1,700 participants and the Georgia Discovery Quest field trip curriculum. Additionally, she helped launch the children’s garden performance series, which has engaged and entertained more than 800 people.

Since Keber joined the garden’s education team in 2007, the education department has hosted 2,350 programs serving 88,000 people. As education coordinator, Keber managed all adult education program communication and logistics, led field trips, organized festivals, and served as co-director for summer camps. Throughout her time at the garden, Keber has built strong relationships between families and schools as well as UGA professors and students.

In addition to her role at the garden, Keber is an active member of the Athens community, helping organize and facilitate fundraisers for local nonprofits and serving as board chair for Keep Athens–Clarke County Beautiful.

Keber manages Learning by Leading™, an experiential learning program offering leadership skills and real-world opportunities for students as they address Earth’s most important environmental issues.

“I have partnered with the State Botanical Garden for the past three semesters to provide service-learning opportunities to students taking my course in leadership and service, and as the point person, Cora has been accommodating, energetic and forward thinking about experience that would develop my students as leaders and stewards of our land,” said James Anderson, lead certificate coordinator for Learning by Leading and a faculty member in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. “She exemplifies the characteristics of a servant leader and has had an indelible impact on my students who volunteered at the garden and how they view the importance of serving the economy.”
T. Clark Stancil
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Clark Stancil serves as a creative design specialist with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. There, he uses his first-class design skills and his knowledge of Georgia’s history to create unique plans and designs for local governments across the state, helping communities envision new possibilities while maintaining their history and character.

Working in the Vinson Institute’s Planning and Environmental Services unit, Stancil creates professional landscape designs, plans and renderings for the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership, an award-winning program that combines the resources of the university, the Georgia Municipal Association (GMA) and the Georgia Cities Foundation to help communities revitalize their downtowns. As a student Downtown Renaissance Fellow in the College of Environment and Design and since joining the institute full time in 2015, Stancil has worked on numerous projects around the state. One project that stands out among Stancil’s colleagues is his work with the City of Fitzgerald.

As a Downtown Renaissance Fellow, Stancil worked with Fitzgerald leaders to create designs for their historic downtown. The city has since worked to implement these concepts, including a mural honoring Fitzgerald native and civil rights advocate Morris B. Abram. Using Stancil’s design, the city obtained a grant from the Georgia Council for the Arts to commission the mural. The city was so pleased with his work, Stancil was invited back for the mural’s 2019 dedication.

Stancil has shown a rare ability to identify the unique character and values of every community he works with. Whether coordinating with city leaders, Vinson Institute faculty and staff, or UGA students, Stancil leaves a lasting impression with his work ethic, creativity and his love of Georgia.

“Clark Stancil has impressed me from the moment I interviewed him,” said Chris Higdon, GMA community development manager. “His passion for both design and public service was immediately evident. In the years I have worked with Clark since, his dedication to Georgia’s communities, as well as his poise in representing the University of Georgia, go well beyond his age.”
Engaged Scholar Award

About the Award

The Engaged Scholar Award, established in 2008 as the Scholarship of Engagement Award, recognizes a tenured associate or full professor who has made significant career-spanning contributions to UGA’s public service and outreach mission through scholarship, service-learning opportunities for students and campus leadership. The award serves to sustain or enhance the honoree’s public service and outreach endeavors or to support the development of new ones.

Stephan Durham

College of Engineering

Stephan Durham is a professor and the assistant dean for student success and outreach at the College of Engineering. He joined UGA shortly before the creation of the College of Engineering in 2012, helping to shape the current direction of the civil engineering degree program through the implementation of curriculum, hiring of faculty, and the designing and building of instructional and research facilities.

Durham has worked closely with Public Service and Outreach throughout his time at UGA, helping to improve the educational experience of engineering students while also benefiting Georgia communities. He began working with the Archway Partnership in 2014, connecting civil and environmental engineering capstone students with Georgia communities in need of engineering analysis, guidance, and solutions. Since then, more than 150 students in 50 separate design teams have worked on projects throughout the state, including recreational parks, structural assessments and redesigns of historic buildings, site designs for industrial developments, and more. This unique partnership has allowed students to complete real-world engineering designs while helping Georgia communities that might otherwise not have access to engineering work.

In 2016, Durham partnered with the J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development on the creation of the Emerging Engineers Leadership Development (EELD) program. The program has since been implemented throughout the college, ensuring that every engineering graduate will be introduced to professional engineering and leadership development ideas—concepts not traditionally represented well in engineering curricula.

Additionally, Durham has worked with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, helping place engineering students with public works divisions internships in cities throughout Georgia. This includes a recent collaboration between the College of Engineering, the Vinson Institute and the American Public Works Association (APWA) that funds a graduate student to work on a larger state-wide or nation-wide project selected by APWA.

“The value that the students’ work and Dr. Durham’s guidance brings to communities, especially rural communities such as Hart County, cannot be overstated,” said Dwayne Dye, director of economic development for the Hart County Industrial Building Authority. “We are grateful for the time and energy Dr. Durham pours into his students and our community and look forward to our continued partnership with him [and his students] for years to come.”
Four for the Future

Now in its eighth year, the Four for the Future Awards, co-sponsored by Georgia Trend magazine and UGA, recognize communities and regions that have worked across public-private sector and nonprofit boundaries to address challenges in ways that will lead to improved quality of life. These partnerships demonstrate effective collaboration, leadership and innovation, and offer the promise of long-term community benefits. The 2020 recipients are:

**McDuffie County:** High school and local industry JumpStart workforce development

Before Thomson–McDuffie County became a UGA Archway Partnership community, local industry leaders were not engaged with Thomson High Schools workforce development activities and were largely unaware of opportunities to collaborate. Students were graduating from high school and having a difficult time transitioning into the local workforce, as they often did not have relevant experience and training or even know what opportunities were available. Through Archway, the community formed a work group, bringing representatives from schools, local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce together. One of the first issues to emerge was the need for more welders for local industries. Using grants from Georgia Power, Jefferson Energy and the state, they were able to establish a state-of-the-art metals lab and welding program in fall 2019. More than 100 students enrolled in the introductory class.

**Cobb County:** Management program builds Executive Competence, Excellence and Leadership (EXCEL)

As Atlanta’s population swelled over the past decade, neighboring Cobb County grew as well and developed into a vibrant suburb of Atlanta. Along with that growth came service delivery expectations beyond the capabilities of existing county government staff. The county needed a more productive, effective and consistent delivery of public services. Working with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, Cobb County adopted the EXCEL program to help county government supervisors and managers better manage their human and material resources, and identify an appropriate succession plan for the growth and replacement of supervisory staff. Both efforts resulted in a more efficient use of resources. In addition to presenting the best trained public service employees possible to county residents, the program has resulted in reduced management level turnover which in turn reduces county expenses in replacements, hiring and training.

**Copper Basin RSVP:** Regional collaboration leads to area revitalization

Following a long decline of the mining and related manufacturing, leaders and industrious local residents from the close-knit towns of McCaysville, Georgia, Copperhill, Tennessee, and Ducktown, Tennessee, have been redefining their community and local economy. Through the Carl Vinson Institute of Government, with funding from the Lyndhurst Foundation, the communities collaborated on the Copper Basin Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning (RSVP) process to create a downtown master plan and regional brand. Working together, the communities have an economy built primarily around outdoor and regional tourism. Georgia House Speaker David Ralston served on the steering committee for RSVP, which is offered in partnership with the Georgia Municipal Association and the Georgia Cities Foundation. Copper Basin was the first two–state RSVP program.

**Walton County:** Leadership training yields improved graduation rates and school engagement

When Principal Sean Callahan joined Walnut Grove High School in 2015, he recognized that students weren’t very engaged in school activities and didn’t have a voice in decisions that were made that affected them directly. He approached the J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development about creating a program that would provide leadership training for all students. Working together, Walnut Grove and Fanning created a Student Steering Committee and Student Steering Board to provide opportunities for the students to receive leadership training and play a role in projects and initiatives that benefit students and improve school culture and climate. Fanning faculty also provided leadership training for more than 100 teachers at the school as part of their professional development. Students began reporting greater confidence in communications with peers and adults, and an increased ability to work as an effective team member and manage conflict positively. As their engagement increased, so did their graduation rates. In 2013–14, Walnut Grove’s graduation rate was 78.3 percent, below the state average of 82 percent. In 2018–19, the rate had increased to 93.6 percent, well above the state average.
Entrepreneur of the Year Award

About the Award

The Entrepreneur of the Year Award recognizes a successful small business owner, who has realized significant growth in business, benefited from a variety of formal learning opportunities through the UGA Small Business Development Center and served as a public advocate of business ownership. The 2020 award is sponsored by Cadence Bank.

Brad Hardy
Hardy's Peanuts Inc.

Brad Hardy is the co-owner and president of Hardy's Peanuts Inc. in Hawkinsville, Georgia, home of the “Country Caviar,” as he calls his salty boiled peanuts, and one of the only oil and dry roasted peanut facilities in Georgia.

After graduating from the University of Georgia, cousins Brad and Ken Hardy opted to return home and start a sister company to their families already successful green peanut business. They started Hardy's Peanuts Inc. in the late 1990's focusing on the boiled peanut market and became well-known for their roadside stands throughout middle Georgia. Before long, their boiled peanuts were being marketed on grocery store shelves across the southeastern U.S.

But the Hardys recognized the market for roasted peanuts was global. When they decided to open a state-of-the-art roasting facility in 2014, they turned to the UGA Small Business Development Center for advice.

SBDC consultants helped them explore different markets, including private label packaged peanuts and bulk roasted peanuts for candies, trail mixes and other processed foods. At the time, no one else in Georgia was doing those things.

The Hardy cousins worked with the SBDC to develop their financial projections, looking at cash flow scenarios, expenses for equipment, where to locate, and the estimated cost to build the plant. The SBDC helped them write a business plan, which was instrumental in them obtaining a loan.

Within a few months of opening, Hardy's was getting requests from buyers in China, Germany and Haiti as well as across the United States.

Hardy's Peanuts roasting plant can produce up to 3,000 pounds of oil and dry roasted peanuts an hour. The company is currently undergoing an expansion plan that will allow it to produce up to 5,000 pounds per hour. The company does private label packaging and sells peanuts in bulk for companies who use them in their products. The Hardy's own retail brand comes in four flavors: Simply Salted, Sweet Southern Sriracha, Delicious Dill Pickle and Crushed Black Pepper, and are sold in major groceries across the country.

Brad Hardy is a 1996 graduate of the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (CAES). He is a longtime member of the Georgia 4-H Foundation Board of Trustees and serves on the CAES alumni association board of directors. His company is a two-time winner at the Flavor of Georgia competition and has been named to the Bulldog 100 for the past two years.
Donor Impact Award

About the Award

The Donor Impact Award, established in 2018, recognizes a donor whose gifts to Public Service and Outreach at the University of Georgia have had an extraordinary impact on the lives of the citizens of the State of Georgia and beyond.

The Lyndhurst Foundation

The Lyndhurst Foundation in Chattanooga, Tennessee, is the recipient of the 2020 Donor Impact Award in recognition of its support of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government and projects designed to boost economic vitality in northwest Georgia.

Since its first gift in 2015, the Lyndhurst Foundation has enabled the Institute of Government to improve and revitalize northwest Georgia and Tennessee cities. Over the course of this partnership, the foundation has empowered communities and improved the region by supporting planning and design projects in McCaysville, Copperhill, Ducktown, Trenton, Chickamauga, Chatsworth, Rossville, Ringgold, Lookout Mountain, and unincorporated Murray County.

Funding from Lyndhurst converted a historic rail depot in Chickamauga into a welcome center, updated the grounds around the duck pond at the historic John Ross home in Rossville, and determined whether an old textile mill in Rossville could be a site for business and social ventures—initiatives that all contribute to long-term livability and resilience of the greater Chattanooga region, which includes communities in Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama.

Funding in 2017 supported a unique economic development partnership with communities in Georgia and Tennessee. The Copper Basin Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning (RSVP) collaboration united key leaders from McCaysville, Georgia, its twin city of Copperhill, Tennessee, and nearby Ducktown, Tennessee, in a community-driven alliance to help the region’s economy flourish.

It was the first two-state RSVP, a component of the Georgia Downtown Renaissance Partnership, which is a Carl Vinson Institute of Government community revitalization initiative with the Georgia Municipal Association, the Georgia Cities Foundation, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and other partners.

The Copper Basin RSVP strategy complements public and private quality-of-life amenities underway or already in place, including the privately funded Rivers Crossing restaurant development in McCaysville. It also leverages tourism opportunities, such as paddling and tubing on the Toccoa and Ocoee river, scenic railways based in Copperhill and McCaysville, and the Ducktown Basin Museum, where people can visit a historic copper mine. The RSVP also enhanced existing partnerships among the cities, all of which are members of the Fannin County Chamber of Commerce.

Georgia House Speaker David Ralston and his staff worked with the Institute of Government since the initial discussions about this project. A longtime proponent of economic development initiatives like the RSVP, Ralston’s district includes McCaysville and Fannin County.

“Initiatives like this combine private-sector resources with public-sector expertise to revitalize downtowns to generate economic activity and create jobs,” Ralston said. “I am excited about the potential of this project.”
Public Service and Outreach Programs

Public Service and Outreach Fellowship Program

In 2011, the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach established the Public Service and Outreach Fellowship Program to provide full-time tenure-track and tenured faculty members the opportunity to immerse themselves in the work of a Public Service and Outreach unit for one semester. The experience provides opportunities for fellows to enhance their academic courses, conduct research (e.g., applied, community-based, policy and program evaluation) and apply their academic expertise to outreach initiatives. The 2019–2020 Public Service and Outreach Fellows are as follows:

1. **Ayah Abdelwahab**, International Affairs/Sociology, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
2. **Mennah Abdelwahab**, International Affairs/Journalism, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
3. **Chris Akin**, Biology, **Office of Service-Learning**
4. **Charley Claudio**, International Affairs/Public Administration, **Carl Vinson Institute of Government**
5. **Mikaela Cohen**, Journalism/Theatre, **Public Service and Outreach Communications**
6. **Emma Bay Dickinson**, Ecology/Music, **Alumni Mentor**
7. **Logan Folger**, Psychology/Criminal Justice, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
8. **Jake Forcier**, Biochemical Engineering, **Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant**
9. **Emma Goldsmith**, International Affairs/Journalism, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
10. **Thomas Hines**, Psychology/Statistics, **Office of Service-Learning**
12. **Jena Jibreen**, International Affairs/Psychology, **Carl Vinson Institute of Government**
13. **Olivia Marenda**, Biology/Spanish, **Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant**
14. **Katy Miles**, Marketing/Religion, **Archway Partnership**
15. **J. Conrad Newton**, International Affairs/Classics, **State Botanical Garden of Georgia**
16. **Atithi Patel**, Biology, **Archway Partnership**

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Public Service and Outreach Student Scholars Program

The Public Service and Outreach Student Scholars Program, supported by the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach, provides undergraduate students with the experience of an internship in a Public Service and Outreach unit as well as cohort group activities to explore the purpose, breadth and depth of public service and outreach. The program helps students relate these experiences to their educational and career goals and creates a community of undergraduate student scholars who understand the role of public service and outreach in Georgia and more broadly. The 2019–2020 Public Service and Outreach Student Scholars are listed with their major and their internships in a Public Service and Outreach unit.

- Ayah Abdelwahab, International Affairs/Sociology, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
- Mennah Abdelwahab, International Affairs/Journalism, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
- Chris Akin, Biology, **Office of Service-Learning**
- Charley Claudio, International Affairs/Public Administration, **Carl Vinson Institute of Government**
- Mikaela Cohen, Journalism/Theatre, **Public Service and Outreach Communications**
- Emma Bay Dickinson, Ecology/Music, **Alumni Mentor**
- Logan Folger, Psychology/Criminal Justice, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
- Jake Forcier, Biochemical Engineering, **Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant**
- Emma Goldsmith, International Affairs/Journalism, **J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development**
- Thomas Hines, Psychology/Statistics, **Office of Service-Learning**
- Ramatulai Jagne, International Business/Management Information Systems/Spanish, **Office of Service-Learning**
- Jena Jibreen, International Affairs/Psychology, **Carl Vinson Institute of Government**
- Olivia Marenda, Biology/Spanish, **Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant**
- Katy Miles, Marketing/Religion, **Archway Partnership**
- J. Conrad Newton, International Affairs/Classics, **State Botanical Garden of Georgia**
- Atithi Patel, Biology, **Archway Partnership**
Public Service and Outreach Graduate Assistantship Program

The purpose of the Public Service and Outreach Graduate Assistantship Program is to increase the number of graduate assistantships in the Public Service and Outreach units and to give UGA graduate students expanded opportunities for engaging in research and public service and outreach endeavors. The program provides a unique learning experience for students while contributing to UGA’s goal of enhancing graduate education. The 2019–2020 Public Service and Outreach Graduate Assistants are:

- Phil Adams, Office of Service-Learning
- Ijaz Ahmad, Small Business Development Center
- Nipuna Ambanpola, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- Alexa Arndt, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- Courtney Balling, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Michelle Bardgett, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Sombal Bari, Archway Partnership
- Jessie Barrett, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Sara Beresford, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Megan Bramlett, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Kelsey Broich, Archway Partnership
- Hilary Carruthers, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Hee Sung Chang, Center for Continuing Education & Hotel
- Muriel Clauson, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Emylee Connally, Small Business Development Center
- Kira Crowe, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Rafael Da Silva, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Hemanth Dandu, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Caroline Dickey, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Timothy Dickinson, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Donald Dunagan, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Blake Dodd, Archway Partnership
- Sarah Entrekin, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- David Evans, Archway Partnership
- A. Brooke Felt, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Jordan Fleming, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- J. Rob Grabowski, Archway Partnership
- Taylor Hafley, Archway Partnership
The UGA Public Service and Outreach Facilitation Academy is a professional development program that provides faculty and staff the opportunity to cultivate effective facilitation, leadership and presentation skills. The curriculum incorporates core competencies that address the set of skills, knowledge and behaviors needed to facilitate in a wide variety of environments. The skills participants learn will aid them in creating collaborative client relationships; planning appropriate group processes; creating and sustaining participatory environments; guiding groups to appropriate and useful outcomes; and building professional knowledge and modeling positive professional approaches. The 2019-2020 Public Service and Outreach Facilitation Academy Graduates are:

- Sarah Adams, Archway Partnership
- Brittany Adams-Pope, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- Ted Baggett, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Suzanne Beckham, Center for Continuing Education & Hotel
- Kay Brooks, College of Pharmacy
- Tyson Browning, Facilities Management
- Sherry Clouser, College of Veterinary Medicine
- Krista Coleman-Silvers, Office of University Architects for Facilities Planning
- James Crawford, Student Affairs
- Michelle Elliott, Archway Partnership
- Laurie Fowler, Odum School of Ecology
- Kelly Simmons, Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach

- Philippa Hawker, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Makinizi Hoover, Archway Partnership
- Eunjin Hwang, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Portia Johnson, Archway Partnership
- Yujung Jung, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Danielle Kerr, Office of Service-Learning
- Shannon Kirk, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Peter Kreutzer, Office of Service-Learning
- Vikas Kunchala, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Paris Lawrence, Archway Partnership
- Rose Mayo, Archway Partnership
- Theodore Moeller, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Lisa Nguyen, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Farah Pathan, Archway Partnership
- Rebecca Perdomo, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Elizabeth Pfieler, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Brandon Platt, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Benjamin Proulx, Archway Partnership
- Mia Rochford, State Botanical Garden of Georgia
- Sumer Singh, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Rachel Smith, State Botanical Garden of Georgia
- Elizabeth Solomon, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- John Soper, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Yanyan Tan, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Shiwei Tang, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Luciano Todeschini, Archway Partnership
- Sahar Voghoei, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Jeremy Walton, Small Business Development Center
- William Trey Walker, Archway Partnership
- Emily Whisenant, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Jessica Will, Archway Partnership
- Brianna Yoder, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- Alyssa Yuhouse, Office of Service-Learning
- Jiyue Zhao, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development

- Philippi Hawker, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Makinizi Hoover, Archway Partnership
- Eunjin Hwang, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Portia Johnson, Archway Partnership
- Yujung Jung, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Danielle Kerr, Office of Service-Learning
- Shannon Kirk, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Peter Kreutzer, Office of Service-Learning
- Vikas Kunchala, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Paris Lawrence, Archway Partnership
- Rose Mayo, Archway Partnership
- Theodore Moeller, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Lisa Nguyen, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Farah Pathan, Archway Partnership
- Rebecca Perdomo, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Elizabeth Pfieler, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- Brandon Platt, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Benjamin Proulx, Archway Partnership
- Mia Rochford, State Botanical Garden of Georgia
- Sumer Singh, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Rachel Smith, State Botanical Garden of Georgia
- Elizabeth Solomon, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- John Soper, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Yanyan Tan, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Shiwei Tang, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Luciano Todeschini, Archway Partnership
- Sahar Voghoei, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Jeremy Walton, Small Business Development Center
- William Trey Walker, Archway Partnership
- Emily Whisenant, Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- Jessica Will, Archway Partnership
- Brianna Yoder, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
- Alyssa Yuhouse, Office of Service-Learning
- Jiyue Zhao, J.W. Fanning Institute for Leadership Development
PUBLIC SERVICE AND OUTREACH UNITS

The ARCHWAY PARTNERSHIP establishes long-term relationships with selected communities to identify the issues they face and then coordinates UGA faculty, staff and other resources to help them address their community and economic development needs. Seven counties in Georgia are participating; six have already graduated from the program.

Rob Gordon, gordon@uga.edu, 706-542-1098

The CARL VINSON INSTITUTE OF GOVERNMENT provides training and development, specialized assistance and data-driven studies to help governments throughout Georgia and the world become more efficient, more responsive and better managed.

Laura Meadows, lmeadows@uga.edu, 706-542-6192

The CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION & HOTEL is a 300,000-square-foot, comprehensive public service educational unit that annually enrolls more than 100,000 adults in its on-site and distance-learning programs. Other activities for the campus, community and state serve an additional 100,000 people each year.

Stacy Jones, Stacy.Jones@georgiacenter.uga.edu, 706-542-3451

The J.W. FANNING INSTITUTE FOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT works with communities, nonprofits, professional associations and youth to help develop knowledgeable, skilled and committed leadership that will enhance community and economic development in Georgia communities, the nation and beyond.

Matt Bishop, mlbishop@fanning.uga.edu, 706-542-6201

MARINE EXTENSION AND GEORGIA SEA GRANT works to increase the efficiency of existing marine industries, to identify new industries that do not harm the environment and to increase public awareness and understanding of coastal ecosystems. The programs delivered through locations in Athens, Atlanta and on the coast extend economic and cultural benefits throughout the state and region. Georgia Sea Grant sponsors research that addresses problems unique to Georgia as well as other research that has a national scope.

Mark Risse, mrisse@uga.edu, 706-542-5956

The OFFICE OF SERVICE-LEARNING supports UGA faculty members in increasing and expanding service-learning opportunities for students in campus-based and study abroad courses. The unit also cultivates community-based partnerships that respond to expressed community needs. The Office of Service-Learning reports to the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach and the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

Shannon Brooks, swilder@uga.edu, 706-542-0535

The SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER provides a wide range of educational opportunities to small business owners, potential entrepreneurs and community leadership organizations that support efforts to create, sustain or expand business ventures.

Allan Adams, aadams@georgiasbdc.org, 706-542-2762

The STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF GEORGIA provides the public and UGA faculty and students opportunities for education, research and events through its natural areas, display gardens and building spaces.

Jennifer Cruse-Sanders, crusesanders@uga.edu, 706-542-6131
Previous Awards

2019
Stacy Culpepper

Hill Award
Jeffrey Humphreys
Amanda Burgess Marable
David Meyers
William G. Tyson
Theresa Wright

Engaged Scholar Award
Alexander Scherr

Staff Award
Genell Gibson

2018
Kim Coder

Hill Award
Julia Gaskin
Beverly E. Johnson
Tori Stivers

Engaged Scholar Award
Ruth Harman

Staff Award
James Marty Higgins

2017
Hill Award
Tracy Arner
Melanie Biersmith
Danny Bivins
Dennis Hancock
Janet Rechtman

Engaged Scholar Award
Tina Harris

Staff Award
Kate Smith

2016
Hill Award
Karen Payne

Engaged Scholar Award
Phillip Tomporowski

Staff Award
Fei Zhang

2015
Hill Award
Eric P. Prostko

Engaged Scholar Award
Alfredo Martinez-Espinoza
Raye Rawls
Paula E. Stanford
Clint Waltz

Staff Award
Anna Karls

2014
Hill Award
Jeffrey R. Sanford

Engaged Scholar Award
Marsha Davis

Staff Award
Karen Duncan
Melanie Hardman
Lindsey Parker

2013
Hill Award
Ronnie Barentine

Engaged Scholar Award
Matthew L. Bishop
Janet Bittner
Lori Purcell Bledsoe
Doris Miller
John Worley

Staff Award
Dan Evans
Tim Holcomb
Linda Rhodes

2012
Hill Award
L. Ray “Rusty” Brooks

Engaged Scholar Award
Glenn H. Beard
W. Dennis Epps
Maritza Soto Keen
Margaret E. Melnik
Eric P. Prostko

Staff Award
Lorilee R. Sandmann

2011
Hill Award
L. Mark Risse

Engaged Scholar Award
Richard C. Lacy
Walt McBride
Karen Payne

Staff Award
Sandy Christopher

2010
Hill Award
Judy Hibbs

Engaged Scholar Award
Louise Hill

Staff Award
David C. Berle

2009
Hill Award
Mark Foster

Engaged Scholar Award
misty Hill

Staff Award
Annie Burgess
Melanie Lee

2008
Hill Award
Virginia Nazarea

Engaged Scholar Award
Dianne Campbell
Marie Scoggins

Staff Award
Judy A. Harrison

2007
Hill Award
Gail Hanula

Engaged Scholar Award
John O’Looney
Paul Sumner
Paul Vendrell
Joanna Wilson

Staff Award
William Kisaalita

2006
Hill Award
Anne Sheng

Engaged Scholar Award
Kitty Shollenberger

Staff Award
Joseph E. W. Roehrs

2005
Hill Award
Richard Hitchcock

Engaged Scholar Award
James McKay

Staff Award
Mary E. Stakes

2004
Hill Award
Elizabeth L. Andress

Engaged Scholar Award
Judy A. Harrison

Staff Award
Deborah W. Purvis

2003
Hill Award
Donald W. Bower

Engaged Scholar Award
John R. Glisson

Staff Award
Anant V. Jain

2002
Hill Award
Richard L. Milford

Engaged Scholar Award
William C. Merka

Staff Award
Scott N. Brown

2001
Hill Award
Mitchell J. Padilla

Engaged Scholar Award
Michael D. Reaves

Staff Award
David A. Payne

2000
Hill Award
Beverly L. Sparks

Engaged Scholar Award
Howard A. Schretter

Staff Award
John H. Jeffreys

1999
Hill Award
Kathleen E. Wages

Engaged Scholar Award
Dennis Hancock

Staff Award
Karen Payne

1998
Hill Award
Kathleen E. Wages

Engaged Scholar Award
Michael E. Schretter

Staff Award
Russell M. Wight

1997
Hill Award
Donald W. Bower

Engaged Scholar Award
Thomas E. Reaves

Staff Award
William M. Ozburn

1996
Hill Award
William C. Merka

Engaged Scholar Award
James L. Cooley

Staff Award
Melinda D. Hawley

1995
Hill Award
John R. Glisson

Engaged Scholar Award
James D. Reaves

Staff Award
Lamar E. Zipperer

1994
Hill Award
Roméo S. Brown

Engaged Scholar Award
Sarah A. Reynolds

Staff Award
John P. Dieleman

1993
Hill Award
Robert E. Howard

Engaged Scholar Award
Michael E. Schretter

Staff Award
Sandy Christopher

1992
Hill Award
Paul D. Wigley

Engaged Scholar Award
Richard L. Milford

Staff Award
Douglas A. Bachtel

1991
Hill Award
William C. Merka

Engaged Scholar Award
Howard A. Schretter

Staff Award
Joseph E. W. Roehrs
1995
Hill Fellow
Mary A. Hepburn

Hill Award
James A. Feldt
Edwin L. Jackson
Helen H. Mills
Joy P. Johnson
Gary L. Wade

1994
Hill Fellow
James E. Kundell

Hill Award
Walter A. Denero
David L. Harrington
Howard A. Schretter
Charles R. Swanson
John M. Woodruff

1993
Hill Fellow
Wanda J. Grogan

Hill Award
Carolyn M. Ainslie
Ronald C. Atkinson
John R. Cole Jr.
William R. Lambert
Sam M. Mitchell

1992
Hill Fellow
Edward A. Brown II

Hill Award
Edward A. Brown II
Wanda J. Grogan
Mary A. Hepburn
Harold F. Holtz Jr.
James E. Kundell

Daffodils planted Day of Service
2019