We celebrate the generosity of our many donors whose gifts positively impact the lives of Georgians through UGA Public Service and Outreach.

Inaugural Bobbi Meeler Sahm Service and Outreach awards benefit town-gown partnerships

In the spring of 2022, five projects were awarded a total of $32,000 from the Bobbi Meeler Service and Outreach fund.

An Athens native and UGA alumna, Sahm made a generous gift to support service-oriented partnerships between Athens-Clarke County organizations and the University of Georgia. Inspired by Sahm’s gift and its potential impact on the local community, President Morehead directed a $100,000 contribution to this fund in 2022 using discretionary funds provided to him by the UGA Athletic Association.

Administered by the Office of the Vice President of Public Service and Outreach, this award is open to applicants from across the UGA community who can demonstrate meaningful and effective partnerships with local organizations. All applications are reviewed by a committee made up of representatives from UGA and the Athens Clarke County community.

“This award is a visible and powerful representation of the bond between UGA and the Athens-Clarke County community,” said Jennifer Frum, vice president for UGA Public Service and Outreach.

Click here to see the inaugural awardees

Click here to learn more about the program

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Kyla McNair quickly scanned the app on her iPhone, touched the screen and watched her robot car come to life. She then used the app to maneuver the car, built from a kit, around the floor as other campers worked on their robots or raced them in a nearby hallway.

McNair was one of 22 participants in this summer’s B.L.A.C.K. (Building Leaders through Analysis, Conceptualization and Knowledge) engineering camp at the University of Georgia. That camp, and a second, ExCEL (Experience Creativity, Excitement and Learning) for females were designed to introduce potential future engineers to a field that historically does not have a strong representation of either African Americans or women.

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A 16-year-old junior at Ribault High School in Jacksonville, Florida, McNair plans to pursue an engineering career and used the UGA camp as an opportunity to learn which field of engineering she likes best.
“No matter what [engineering] field you go into, whether it’s electrical or computer science, you’re helping people solve problems,” said McNair.

The camps were part of the Summer Academy at UGA (SAUGA), hosted by the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education & Hotel, a UGA Public Service and Outreach unit. Fifty-nine camps were offered through SAUGA this summer, drawing 1,043 participants.

The NCR Foundation, the philanthropic arm of the NCR technology company, based in Atlanta, provided full scholarships for participants at the B.L.A.C.K. and ExCEL camps.

The NCR Foundation values working with partners with a strong brand, and one with goals aligned with NCR, said foundation director Yvonne Whitaker.

“We want to make sure that we’re leveling the playing field and bringing opportunities to students or adults who may not have those,” Whitaker said. “You just never know what the impact is going to be, and that’s why we wanted to bring in opportunity where there’s so much potential.”
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For more than 50 years, educators at the UGA Marine Education Center and Aquarium on Skidaway Island have hosted pre-K-12 grade students for hands-on programs about the coastal environment.

This year, those educators are taking their show on the road.

With support from Bass Pro Shop, Georgia Power and Friends of the UGA Aquarium, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant faculty, staff and volunteers from UGA’s Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant are taking these programs into every Savannah-Chatham County school.

“Classroom outreach brings exciting marine science experiences to students and teachers who don't have the resources or time in their teaching schedules to visit the aquarium in person,” said Anne Lindsay, associate director of education at Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant. “We don’t want communities whose all schools, regardless of have limited resources, to miss out on enjoy these important learning opportunities.”

Angela Willis, who teaches the STEM Lab for grades K-5 at Heard Elementary School in Savannah, signed her third graders up for the CrabEcology outreach program to expose them to outdoor activities that get them excited about the world around them.

“If we can stimulate children in a way that they’re using their sight, sound, sense of touch...it really engages them and anchors whatever topics you’re trying to teach,” said Willis. “Anything that’s hands-on is absolutely fantastic. When they saw there was a touch tank, just about all of them wanted to touch the crabs.”

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The position was created to connect metro Atlanta businesses with the UGA SBDC services in their area.

A generous two-year gift from Fiserv funded a new full-time business consultant at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

The UGA SBDC at Morehouse is a collaboration between UGA and the Morehouse Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center. The center, which opened in 2020, supports economic growth in Atlanta’s West End neighborhood and the greater Fulton County area.

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