Kennesaw State’s Science Lab Addition opens

by Yolanda Rodriguez
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The College of Science and Mathematics officially opened its $21 million Science Laboratory Addition Oct. 25. With its six teaching labs and 17 research labs, the building is a key component of Kennesaw State’s strategy to become a nationally recognized university.

Classes in the 73,000-square-foot building will start in spring 2013. But Kennesaw State’s scientists and biologists have already installed much of the equipment they will use in their research. The new labs are awash in natural light, have adaptable workspaces and make collaboration among the researchers easier. It also frees lab space in the older science building.

For Kennesaw State’s chemists and biologists, the building represents an investment in their work. In recent years, the College of Science and Mathematics has seen an increase in grant funding from sources such as the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH). In 2006, grants to the College totalled $892,615. So far in fiscal year 2013, which started on July 1, it has received $4.7 million in grants.

Kennesaw State is among a few schools of its size in the country to have several major lab instruments that are key to understanding how molecules behave. Taken together, three of the instruments give researchers a clearer picture of how molecules behave, how fast they bind to one another or to other substances, and how much energy is required to form the bond.

“The multiple platforms gives us a capability almost no one else has,” said Jonathan McMurry, an associate professor of chemistry. “The fact that we have them is still a little bit stunning.”

Additionally, a confocal microscope that uses laser light to produce very sharp images will be one of the new tools available to Kennesaw’s researchers.

Kennesaw State University breaks ground in September on the Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art, a 9,200-square-foot facility that will house the University’s permanent art collection.

The museum, named in honor of retired businessman Bernard A. Zuckerman, who provided $2 million for the $3 million project, will include three exhibition galleries, as well as the Leo Delle Lassiter Jolley Foundation Collection Research Center and the Ruth V. Zuckerman Pavilion, a glass atrium devoted to the sculpture of Zuckerman’s late wife, who was renowned for her work in stone and bronze.

Other major donors include the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation and the Leo Delle Lassiter Jolley Foundation.

Bernard A. Zuckerman Museum of Art is a wonderful example of the important role private funding plays in the University today,” said Daniel S. Papp, president of Kennesaw State University. “We are deeply grateful to Mr. Zuckerman, the Woodruff Foundation, the Jolley Foundation and so many others who understand the value of providing a state-of-the-art museum on the Kennesaw State University campus. This project would not have been possible without their support.”

The Zuckerman Museum of Art will adjoin the Dr. Bobbie Bailey Family Performance Center, which houses two gallery spaces — the Don Russell Clayton Gallery and the Anna F. Henriquez Atrium — and the Audrey B. and Jack E. Morgan, Sr., Concert Hall. It is located near the Howard Logan Stillwell Theater and the Onyx Theater, enabling campus visitors to move easily between the University’s performance and exhibition venues.

“The art museum will become the hub of the arts district on campus, providing a welcoming center that physically connects the corridor between the concert hall of the Bailey Performance Center and the two theaters,” said College of the Arts Dean Joseph Meeks. “Students and the community will be able to partake in multiple arts experiences on every visit to campus.”

Kennesaw State faculty and staff received more than $16 million last year to fund research projects. “Research Report” keeps you abreast of the university’s increased research activity.

The Center for the Study of the Civil War Era received a $23,392 award from the National Park Service for educational outreach commemorating the sesquicentennial of the Civil War. The center and Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park will jointly sponsor a public symposium on the Civil War as well as workshops and seminars designed to assist K-8 educators in reinvigorating their approach to teaching the Civil War.

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Gita Tasseobhirat, associate professor of educational psychology, received $7,500 from the American Psychological Association to test ways introductory-level physics majors solve physics problems. This knowledge may be used to improve the methods of teaching and learning physics problem solving.

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Kennesaw State coach Scott Whitlock announces retirement

by Robert S. Godlewski
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After 27 seasons at the helm of the Kennesaw State softball program, head coach Scott Whitlock announced that he would retire at the end of the 2013 season.

Whitlock, one of the most respected coaches in NCAA softball, led the Owls to two national titles and 13 regional crowns, produced 18 consecutive 35-win seasons, 15 40-win campaigns and four seasons in which he won 50 or more games. The Owls were ranked in the top 10 nationally at the season’s end from 1991 through 2002.

He was named A-Sun Coach of the Year three times (2006, 2007, 2012) since Kennesaw State joined the conference in 2006. Whitlock received the highest honor of his profession when he was inducted into the National Fastpitch Coaches Hall of Fame in Orlando, Fla. He was also inducted into the Georgia Dugout Club Hall of Fame in 2010.

“No doubt Scott Whitlock has been an icon to Kennesaw State University and KSU athletics,” Director of Athletics Vaughn Williams said. “He has been very instrumental to every phase of growth of this institution. His legacy does not end, but it continues just in another way that will benefit this institution. He will become an important part of the administrative senior management team. I am very honored and fortunate to work with an individual that has been so successful in impacting lives and really showcasing the values of Kennesaw State then, now and in the future.”

Assistant coach Wes Holly Jr. will act as co-head coach for the 2013 season, then become head coach at the end of the season. Whitlock will remain on staff as senior associate athletic director.

“When the time is right,” Whitlock said. “I have had a great ride and a lot of fun, but after weighing things over the past three months, I just feel that it’s now a good time to start the process of having someone with fresher eyes come in.”

Whitlock has never dreamed that he would have had such a rewarding career.”

Kennesaw State opens first graduate library in Georgia

by Jennifer Hafer
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Kennesaw State University’s Sturgis Library is now one of only a handful of libraries in the country to have a designated graduate research library and the only one in Georgia.

Following a $1 million renovation, including construction of seven new rooms for group study and three additional classrooms, the third floor of the library was transformed into the graduate library, a facility usually found on campuses like Michigan, Yale, Princeton and Stanford. And just to ensure quiet, 26,000 square feet of new carpet was installed. The library has also hired two Ph.D. graduate librarians, Elizabeth Shields and Mary Wilson. Associate Professor of Library Science Cheryl Stiles is also on the graduate library team.

“We wanted to create a graduate library because for years and years we were an undergraduate institution — but all that’s changed now,” Assistant Vice President for Library Services David Evans said.

Kennesaw State offers 26 master’s programs, an education specialist degree and four doctoral programs, as well as four graduate certificate programs. This fall, 1,849 students were enrolled in graduate programs at Kennesaw State, an increase of 4.7 percent over last year.

A dedicated space with staff specifically hired and trained to work with graduate students will help our students produce better quality research and become more aware of the various tools available to them,” said David Baugher, director of graduate admissions. “With the growth in our graduate student body and graduate programs this is a much needed resource. The graduate library is another example of Kennesaw State’s dedication to graduate education on our campus.”

Kennesaw State among nation’s “Best Colleges for Food in America”

by Jennifer Hafer
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And the accolades just keep on comin’.

The Daily Meal, an online publication dedicated to culinary trends and news, ranked Kennesaw State University’s Culinary and Hospitality Services 10th in its “52 Best Colleges for Food in America” issue, released in September. It was the only university in Georgia to place in the top 10. This is the third national recognition for Kennesaw State’s dining program in the past year.

“This year, The Daily Meal went big, setting out to determine the best in campus dining across the nation — from small liberal arts colleges to Big 10 mega-universities,” wrote editor Nina Fomufod. “In an epic study that spanned the entire summer, we examined the dining programs at every four-year college in America — more than 2,000 of them.”

The publication looked at Kennesaw State’s dining program as a whole. Students raved about the food at The Commons, the University’s dining facility operated by Culinary and Hospitality Services. Kennesaw State has a national reputation for freshness and sustainability, which also helped boost its ranking as among the very best in the nation.

“Everything we do is in small batches — we cook nothing in advance,” said Gary Coltek, director of Culinary and Hospitality Services. “The Food Network has made our business a sexy business. Today’s students demand good food, and they demand to know where it comes from.”

According to Coltek, The Commons currently makes all soups from scratch, smokes its own meats and fish, makes its own pickles and makes all breads in house, including sliced white and wheat breads.

This past summer, Kennesaw State joined Stanford University and the University of Massachusetts in receiving top honors from the National Association of College and Food Services for sustainability outreach and education. The 2012 bronze medal award, presented in Boston, recognized the University’s sustainable food program, which includes a farm-in-campus initiative launched in 2010.

Prillaman earns LEED Gold certification

The use of low-flow toilets, motion-detected lighting, a shower for faculty or staff who walk or ride a bike to work, and a system to recapture rainwater for irrigation were just some of the reasons Prillaman Hall was awarded a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold certification by the United States Green Building Council. “We worked very hard to develop a building with a learning environment that focused on the future and sustainability,” said Richard Sowell, dean of the WellStar College of Health and Human Services. “We are very pleased to have received this LEED designation. Prillaman Hall provides our faculty and students an environment that facilitates the best in educational methodology.”

McNeill named top 50 journalism professor

Jade McNeill, a lecturer in the Department of Communication, has been named one of the Top 50 Journalism Professors for 2012 by JournalismDegree.org, a website dedicated to providing timely and relevant information about journalism degrees and programs. Since joining Kennesaw State’s communication department in 2005, McNeill has taught a variety of digital media production courses including photojournalism, advanced audio production, and a course titled “Multimedia Visions of Community.”
Nearly 400 people were packed into Rooms 300 at the KSU Center Monday, Nov. 19, but you could have heard a pin drop as Elizabeth Smart recalled the harrowing details of her 2002 kidnapping and recovery.

Smart delivered the keynote address at the 6th Annual World Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse Conference at Kennesaw State.

In addition to students and alumni, the conference brought together professionals involved in various phases of the child welfare process, from investigation to prosecution.

Smart was 14 years old and looking forward to going on a trip with friends to celebrate graduation from junior high school the night her world was forever changed.

With painstaking detail and poise beyond her years, Smart recalled how Brian David Mitchell, a handyman who had worked at her family’s Salt Lake City home, kidnapped her in the early morning hours of June 5, 2002, as her younger sister lay sleeping beside her.

While she was held captive, Smart was threatened and abused on a daily basis. She was rescued on March 12, 2003, and Mitchell was sentenced to life in prison in 2011.

“I decided that no matter what happened, if it was within my power, I would live,” she said. “That decision saw me through nine months of a lot.

And, it’s that resiliency that makes Smart an inspiration for victims and victims’ advocates, Kennesaw State Assistant Professor of Social Work Lisa Johnson said.

“She really epitomizes resiliency,” Johnson said. “She is an incredible inspiration to anyone who has suffered abuse, and is a tremendous example that even when bad things happen, you can go on and lead a successful, happy life.”

About 60 Kennesaw State human services undergrads and social work master’s degree students attended the conference.

“I hope they come out of this (conference) with a renewed passion and sense of purpose,” Johnson said. “We are the voice of these children. We work to prevent things like this from happening, but if it happens, we need to be a safe haven for them.”

Nearly 200 KSU students observed Homeless Awareness Week by sleeping overnight in makeshift shelters on campus.

Kennesaw State expands global footprint

by Sabbaye McGriff

Kennesaw State University’s first permanent international education site will open in Montepulciano, Italy, enabling the expansion of study-abroad programs the university has conducted in that historic Tuscan city for the past 15 years.

Under the rental agreement approved this week by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, Kennesaw State will occupy 4,000 square feet in the soon-to-be restored and renovated historic Fortezza Poliziana beginning in fall 2014.

Funding for the $520,000, 25-year agreement will be provided by private donations and the Kennesaw State Foundation.

“This represents a major milestone for Kennesaw State’s international initiatives and our commitment to providing students high-quality, global learning opportunities,” said President Daniel S. Papp.

“Not only have we found a long-term home for one of our fastest-growing study-abroad programs, we are expanding the Kennesaw State brand internationally — an exciting development as we approach the University’s 50th anniversary.”

The announcement coincided with Kennesaw State being named among the top campuses in the nation for student participation in study-abroad programs. The Institute of International Education, in partnership with the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, annually publishes the Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange. The just-released 2012 report ranked Kennesaw State 8th among the country’s top 40 master’s degree-granting institutions in study-abroad participation. During the 2003-2011 academic year, 734 Kennesaw State students studied abroad.

Kennesaw State’s study-abroad programs in Montepulciano have grown from serving eight students in 1996, to 76 in 2011. Nearly 1,100 students and faculty have participated in study-abroad programs in Montepulciano since the program began. Participants include Kennesaw State’s students and faculty, as well as students and faculty from other University System of Georgia institutions with whom KSU partners.

So far, four classrooms in an unused wing of an elementary school outside of Montepulciano’s city walls have been rented. When finalized, the agreement will provide space in the Fortezza Poliziana for five classrooms, a program office, residential quarters for the program director and a teaching kitchen for a proposed culinary program.

Kennesaw State students participate in competitiveness forum

by Sabbaye McGriff

Two Kennesaw State University administrators participated in the Americas Competitiveness Forum (ACF) in Cali, Colombia, one of the Western Hemisphere’s preeminent conferences on economic competitiveness.

Barry Morris, vice provost for strategic initiatives, and Adrian Epps, associate dean of the College of Science and Mathematics and director of its center for Advancing the Teaching of Mathematics and Science (A.T.O.M.S.) were among the panelists that discussed public-private strategies to develop a high-quality teacher workforce.

Kennesaw State recently earned the distinction as Georgia’s top producer of K-12 science and math teachers.

The STEM-focused forum, the ACF’s first education forum, was presented through a partnership with CIFAL Atlanta, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the InterAmerican Development Bank.

“CIFAL Atlanta is a public-private partnership between the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the City of Atlanta,” said Morris.

“It was an honor to partner with CIFAL Atlanta and UNITAR to bring together distinguished leaders from throughout the Americas to focus attention on the important role that innovation in education contributes to the region’s economic viability,” said Morris. “This forum is a great opportunity to illustrate how Kennesaw State’s strategic focus on global education, engagement and enhancing our students’ math and science teacher workforce all come together to reflect real-world needs and objectives.”

The forum, hosted by Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos Calderon, brought together leaders of some 34 countries across South and North America, including ministers of education, economy, finance, industry and commerce, as well as competitiveness authorities from around the world.

Kennesaw State’s delegation to the ACF also included Kathy Schwaig, dean of the Coles College of Business; Sheb True, associate dean of graduate business programs and director of the Coles College International Center; and Nikita Patterson, assistant professor of mathematics education.

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University staffers win three Chancellor’s Customer Service awards

By Neil B. McGahee
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Kennesaw State won three awards in the annual University System of Georgia Chancellor’s Customer Service Competition. The awards recognize individuals and teams who have demonstrated outstanding customer service over the last fiscal year. A nominee’s actions must reflect all five of the USG customer service attributes — courtesy, helpfulness, accessibility, responsiveness and knowledge.

Regents approve new student activities center

by Robert S. Godlewski
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The Board of Regents of The University System of Georgia approved the construction and naming of the Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center on the Kennesaw State University campus. The $38.7 million, 176,000-square-foot facility will include an indoor competition swimming pool, an outdoor leisure swimming pool, an outdoor basketball court and four indoor courts, eight tennis courts, a weight and fitness area, a rock climbing wall, an indoor track, an expanded wellness center and volleyball and racquetball courts.

“The Dr. Betty L. Siegel Student Recreation and Activities Center will be a testament to the ‘student-first’ philosophy exemplified by Kennesaw State’s president emeritus,” said Daniel S. Papp, president of Kennesaw State University. “We are deeply grateful to Dr. Siegel for her quarter-century of leadership at the helm of this great institution. Her bold vision planted the seeds for what our more than 24,000 students enjoy today.

The center, which will be financed by student fees, will more than triple the size of the existing 55,000-square-foot student recreational center built in 1967. The new facility will also include sustainable design features, such as natural light throughout the building and adjustable lighting to accommodate different hours of the day and specific activity needs. Reduced power consumption will be achieved with computer-controlled energy management systems that provide more air movement through the recreation spaces to ensure comfortable use in lieu of more cooled air. It is anticipated the building will receive LEED Silver certification following its completion in fall 2014.

Kennesaw State honored by Anti-Defamation League

by Robert Godlewski
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Kennesaw State became the first university in the nation to receive a “No Place for Hate” designation from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) for the University’s work in Holocaust education and efforts to fight bigotry.

ADL southeast regional director Bill Nitug noted the designation to Catherine Lewis, executive director of Museums, Archives and Rare Books, before a performance of “Degenerate Music: Banned Composers in the Nazi Era.” The Kennesaw State School of Music’s special lecture and recital came 74 years after the infamous Kristallnacht and is significant because it reflects the University’s commitment to the community.

“We’re very excited about the honor,” she said. “The Museum of History and Holocaust Education has had a long-term partnership with ADL, and we’ve worked collaboratively on issues related to discrimination. This designation recognizes the University’s efforts, and we are thrilled.”

Chief Diversity Officer Erik L. Malewski said, “The University is honored to have been chosen as the first ‘No Place for Hate’ university by the Anti-Defamation League, recognizing our continued work to promote education and dialogue addressing prejudice and discrimination. We are at our best when we engage this difficult past and highlight the University’s commitment to the community.”

“We are thrilled,” said Rifka Mayani, associate director of the enterprise systems and services department, won the Silver Award for outstanding customer service leadership, for improving communication and operational efficiency by encouraging her department to build relationships with other departments at the University, as well as working closely with external vendors. She was also named the Administrator of the Year by the Kennesaw State Staff Senate in August.

The Enrollment Services Call Center, led by Kim West, received 13 nominations for the Kennesaw State monthly Shining Star award in a 12-month nomination period.

Career Fair draws hundreds of students, alumni

by Robert Godlewski
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As a possible sign of a shrinking economy, more than 85 companies and nonprofit organizations set up recruitment booths at Kennesaw State’s Fall Career Fair.

The prospect of a landing a job or an internship at the fair attracted more than 600 students when the event held in October at the Kennesaw State Convocation Center.

“We had a number of logistics firms here, as well as the CDC, IBM and NCR along with the Georgia Aquarium and Enterprise Leasing,” said Lori Trahan, associate director of career services. “These organizations love to hire Kennesaw State students and alumni because they know our students are smart and hard working.”

And what are the hot jobs these days? The usual sales and marketing positions, along with anything IT and information technology.

Nigut commended Kennesaw State on the achievement. “We wanted to honor Kennesaw State because of its work in Holocaust education and all of the other things Kennesaw State does to fight bigotry,” he said. “The ‘No Place for Hate’ designation is in recognition of all of that. The University is doing to remind people of the consequences of hatred and bigotry.”

Lewis said Kennesaw State’s designation as a “No Place for Hate” is significant because it reflects the University’s commitment to the community.

“It seems like there are more companies here this time,” said Allen Norris, a senior. “But the lines to see the recruiters were shorter. It’s better holding the event here at the Convocation Center than at the student center. There are lots more room here.”

MBA graduate Megumi Shimamura found the mix of companies to her liking, as did Marlon Romious. He and fellow international business major Chase Maire hoped to identify employers with management training programs that included an international component.

Ahmed Rahman, a sophomore with an undeclared major, was looking for a part-time job while he continues his studies. “Maybe something in sales and marketing. I was able to set up an interview with one of the companies for next week, so I’m hopeful.”