WRITE ON 'CUE

Over his 40-year career, Jim Auchmutey (B.A. ’77) has become one of Atlanta’s most decorated writers. In his latest book, the veteran journalist and award-winning author goes whole hog on the history of BBQ in America.
THE REFORMERS

These professors aren’t just teaching in prison. They’ve built a program that allows inmates to earn college credit.

CAREER IN THE FIRST YEAR

Georgia State is pioneering a new initiative to ensure students from all majors are ready to start careers as soon as they graduate — no matter what they studied.

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Georgia State is pioneering a new initiative to ensure students from all majors are ready to start careers as soon as they graduate — no matter what they studied.

As a graduate of Georgia State, you’re one of more than 250,000 proud alumni making a footprint worldwide. When you join the Alumni Association, your support helps us award scholarships, keep Panthers connected to the university and strengthen the Georgia State network for future generations.

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GEORGIA STATE ALUMNI

COVER ART BY REID SCHULZ (B.F.A. ’18)

PHOTO BY STEVEN THACKSTON

BROOKE WEINER

(B.A. ’19)

has more beach volleyball victories than anyone else in university history. Read her story on p. 12.

Brooke Weiner (B.A. ’19) has more beach volleyball victories than anyone else in university history. Read her story on p. 12.
IF YOU READ the highly entertaining and informative cover story in the last issue of Georgia State University Magazine, you know that Kell Hall, an iconic building in the middle of the Atlanta Campus, is about to come down.

The state legislature has authorized $5 million in bonds for our Kell Hall project, so after years of planning we have started the long-awaited demolition of the structure and part of Library Plaza. Their removal will make way for Georgia State’s new signature gathering space at the center of the Atlanta Campus, which is the cornerstone of the university’s campus master plan.

Crews began the demolition of Kell Hall in April, and work will progress through the summer. They’ve also started the process of removing the elevated Library Plaza platform surrounded by Kell Hall, Sparks Hall, Courtland and Collins streets, and Library North. We expect both structures to be gone by the end of 2019.

Other sections of Library Plaza, which rise up between Langdale Hall and Library North, will remain, joining the ground-level greenway via another new staircase and a set of elevators. While the U Lot and the Langdale Hall loading dock will stay underneath the surviving section of the plaza, a wall of trellises supporting decorative plants will screen the area from view for people enjoying the greenway. We are also taking measures to preserve as many of the dawn redwoods planted around the plaza as possible.

Early next year, when this work is expected to be completed, we will start building an entirely new façade for Library North that includes a vastly improved entrance, which we hope to finish by the end of 2020. We have the funding for these renovations, which are in the planning stages. These projects, anticipated by the university community for so long, will provide a vibrant gathering place and pedestrian thoroughfare for our students, faculty and staff as well as residents, workers and visitors.

Kell Hall, a utilitarian building that served the university in so many eclectic ways, is once again the center of attention on our campus. Like Kell, its removal is a project that will transform the university for years to come.

Sincerely,
Mark P. Becker
President

LETTERS
RAZIN’ KELL
I remember Kell Hall well from my undergrad days. Your article truly captured it. I have one question, however: Where’s the snake?

In the early 1980s, a fraternity, which shall remain nameless, kept a snake that was their mascot in a glass aquarium on one of Kell Hall’s upper floors. Periodically, one of the frat brothers was dispatched to catch a mouse that would be fed to the snake.

Students would gather to watch the snake dine. Such a frat “pet” would be totally not allowed today, but it is an indelible part of the history of Kell. I treasure my memories of my time at Georgia State. Thanks for the great read.

Diane Thomas (B.A. ’64)

Your inclusion of the “Extra Credit” story in “Razin’ Kell” is one of the grossest stories I’ve ever read, and I’ve read about some horrible stuff. I can’t believe you included that in the magazine. Yuck!

Pat Morris

Thanks for doing justice to an essential (and odd!) piece of Georgia State history.

Stephanie Devine (Ph.D. ’18)

ON THE COVER
SOME PIG
Illustrator Reid Schulz (B.F.A. ’18) rolls ink on a hand-carved linoleum plate at Georgia State’s printmaking lab where he’s creating the cover art for this issue. Visit magazine.gsu.edu for a time-lapse video of Reid’s entire printmaking process.

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ON CAMPUS / COMMENCEMENT

REJOYCE!

For Joyce Lowenstein (B.A. ’19), a framed bachelor’s degree is the realization of a dream seven decades in the making.

BY TORIE ROBINETTE | PHOTO BY MEG BUSCEMA

WHEN JOYCE LOWENSTEIN pictured her graduation day at Georgia State, she never imagined anyone would make a big fuss over it.

But on the May morning she joined her peers at Georgia State Stadium for the university’s 104th commencement ceremony, Joyce got a special shout-out from Georgia State President Mark Becker.

He recognized her as the class of 2019’s oldest graduate and applauded her determination. Just off the heels of her 93rd birthday, Joyce was finally crossing the stage to accept her diploma — her grandchildren and great-grandchildren cheering proudly from the stands.

It was an occasion she’d imagined over and over again since withdrawing from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in the early 1940s. Three semesters in, she’d left to reunite with her fiancé in New York.

Life brought on marriage, children, jobs and busy schedules in the Big Apple. Joyce turned a passion for art into a career. As the years rolled on and the work got bigger and bigger, she became a major player in the city’s arts scene. Still, she harbored one regret.

“I didn’t want to be degreeless!” she said.

The years flew by until 2006, when Joyce’s husband, Larry, died. After more than 40 years as an art buyer, interior designer and antiques dealer, she knew it was time for the next chapter, to make time for what she’d set on the backburner. She found Georgia State’s GSU-62 program, which waives tuition for students older than 62, and prepared to re-enter the classroom for the first time in more than seven decades.

Despite some initial intimidation, Joyce embraced the culture shock and learned to roll with the punches. She scaled back her businesses and called on longtime friend Barbara Domir for help typing up her handwritten papers. (She never learned to type.) She got a rolling suitcase to haul her heavy textbooks around campus, hired math tutors to help her conquer algebra and captured class notes on a tape recorder. She picked up PowerPoint, pulled all-nighters and forced herself to find her voice in class.

Now, she’s got her eye on an online certification course in fine art appraisal.

“I’m proud of my age,” she says. “I’m 93, and I made it through seven years to get my degree at Georgia State. I can handle a year online.”
In July, Kash Molwani will embark on the second-biggest journey of his life: a 6,800-mile trip from New York to Beijing, where he’ll join a handful of other international fellows in an intensive global affairs master’s degree program.

The Honors College grad is Georgia State’s first Schwarzman Scholar. Molwani beat out more than 2,800 applicants to participate in the international fellowship program in which students study business, public policy and global affairs in China, analyzing how those topics shape the country’s links to the rest of the world.

Fortunately, he had plenty of success learning to navigate and thrive in new surroundings. When he was 8 years old, Molwani’s family moved from Karachi, Pakistan — where they had relocated from the village of Talhar — to Augusta, Ga.

His earliest memories are of his grandfather’s sugar cane and potato farm, the village’s one-room schoolhouse and the cab his father drove for 20-hour shifts around Karachi, Pakistan’s bustling business capital.

In Georgia, everything was different and new. The transition was difficult, Molwani said, but he and his brother offered to wash neighbors’ cars and clean their toilets. That’s when Molwani’s entrepreneurial spirit surfaced.

There wasn’t extra money in the family budget, so he and his brother offered to wash neighbors’ cars and clean their toilets. That’s when Molwani’s entrepreneurial spirit surfaced.

“I learned early on how important managing finances was for a household, but I had no idea I could have a career in finance until I got to college,” Molwani said.

“I had an English dictionary at home, and I read it every day. We couldn’t afford cable or video games, and I didn’t have the patience to keep moving those little antennas to watch public channels.”

Before being named a Schwarzman Scholar, Molwani worked as an investment banking analyst for Credit Suisse in New York.

Now, he’s looking forward to expanding his knowledge of emerging markets and private equity, all to help make his dream of owning his own media company a reality.

“I want to run the kind of company that helps people get to know other communities and other cultures in a positive way,” he said. “I want them to be able to enjoy retirement together.”

His got less than seven years to make it happen, but Molwani loves a challenge.

“I had an English dictionary at home, and I read it every day,” he said. “We couldn’t afford cable or video games, and I didn’t have the patience to keep moving those little antennas to watch public channels.”

Molwani became the family’s translator, helping his parents with paying bills and handling finances.

“My parents worked their whole lives and sacrificed so their kids could have a better future,” Molwani said. “My parents sacrificed so their kids could have a better future.”

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A LIFE OF SERVICE

GEORGIA STATE MOURNS THE DEATH OF HELEN ADERHOLD (B.A. ’76), a treasured alumna, friend and partner who died on April 21 at the age of 93.

Few individuals embodied the Panther spirit more than Aderhold. The Helen M. Aderhold Learning Center on the Atlanta Campus is the most visible mark of Aderhold’s commitment to her alma mater. The donation that created the classroom building at 60 Luckie St. NW was Aderhold’s birthday gift from her husband, John, in 1998.

The president of the Alumni Association in 1991 and 1993, Aderhold also endowed need-based scholarships for Georgia State students and was a founding member of the Panther Athletic Club. She leaves behind a legacy of selfless support for the university community.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

The school will enable the university to focus on the success of graduate students.

Georgia State is creating a new Graduate School as part of the university’s strategic efforts to expand and strengthen graduate and professional programs.

The school, which will begin in the fall semester, will work to increase the number and quality of graduate students and enhance their opportunities, building upon programs in admissions, marketing and professional development.

Growing graduate and professional programs is part of the university’s strategic plan, which has also called for innovation in student success and research, internationalization, and solutions to the issues of modern cities.

“The Graduate School will partner with the colleges to ensure that students are provided with the support and preparation they need to pursue their goals and meet the demands of today’s workforce,” said Lisa Armstead, associate provost for graduate programs.
California native Brooke Weiner spent her childhood within earshot of the Pacific Ocean. Growing up in Ventura, Calif., where her father built surfboards for a living, she passed the time on the beach playing volleyball.

After a successful beach volleyball career in high school, she set her sights on the East Coast, hoping to expand her horizons. “I immediately fell in love with Georgia State and the city of Atlanta,” Weiner said. When moving across the country, Weiner’s biggest worry was not knowing anyone, but to her surprise, she instantly felt welcomed. “Coach Beth (Van Fleet) has such a warm heart,” Weiner said. “She always has us over for dinner and became a second mom to me.”

Everyone from the team has been amazing, for dinner and became a second mom to me. “Coach Beth (Van Fleet) has such a warm heart,” Weiner said. “She always has us over for dinner and became a second mom to me.”

WHEN AYUB MOHAMMAD WAS IN EIGHTH GRADE, his family decided to leave their home in Bangladesh for Malaysia. From there, they boarded a boat bound for Malaysia. After 27 days floating in the Indian Ocean, many without food or water, the group was rescued by the Sri Lankan navy.

Mohammad spent four years in Sri Lanka before a resettlement program sent him to the U.S. He arrived in Clarkston, Ga., in February 2012. A little more than two years later, he founded the Burmese Rohingya Community of Georgia (BRCG), a nonprofit dedicated to supporting refugees and immigrants.

“When I came here, I didn’t see anyone helping refugees except resettlement agencies, and typically only for a very short period of time,” Mohammad said. “It takes much longer than that for people to become acclimated and self-sufficient.”

BRCG is one of a dozen partners — community groups, organizations and new citizens — who will inform and direct the work of Georgia State’s new Clarkson-based Prevention Research Center (PRC) when it opens on Sept. 30. The center, funded by a $3.75 million grant from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), will focus on the health and health disparities of migrants and refugees.

The PRC’s network of community-based participatory research makes it unique. The advisory board, which includes BRCG, will help guide the center’s research and offer input on health concerns that should be addressed. Dr. Heval Kelli (B.A. ’08), cardiology Fellow at Emory University who arrived in the U.S. as a refugee in 2001, will chair the board. Community engagement will be overseen by Mary Helen O’Connor, assistant professor of English at Perimeter College and director of Georgia State’s Center for Community Engagement.

“Having taught in Clarkston for more than a decade, I’m excited to have an initiative that will develop innovative approaches to address persistent disparities in this community,” said O’Connor. “We look forward to learning together how to make measurable and sustainable improvements in the health of our neighbors and students.”

The center’s core research project will address the health and well-being of migrant children by adapting SafeCare, an evidence-based parenting program. Georgia State researchers will use SafeCare to conduct the first systematic effort in the nation to develop culturally and linguistically relevant care and interventions for migrant and refugee children.

Led by Daniel Whittaker, professor in the School of Public Health and co-director of the National SafeCare Training and Research Center, the project will examine whether the program can improve the parent-child relationship, alleviate parenting stress, and boost children’s social and emotional health.

“We are deeply honored to join the CDC’s Prevention Research Center network, which has played a vital role in advancing public health in this country for more than 30 years,” said Michael Eriksen, interim vice president for research and economic development at Georgia State, who will direct the center. “Nationally, very little is being done to address issues affecting refugee communities, and having a campus inside Clarkston presents a tremendous opportunity to work with a population that needs support and research.”
We talked to Coach Lanier about his journey to Georgia State and what we can expect from his Panther teams.

**Welcome. How are things coming along?**
As good as can be. Everything’s happening really fast, which is normal in this business. The most energizing part is getting to know the players, and the more I get to know these guys, the more excited I get.

They’re a group of really good young people with a lot of potential. Some of them have been a big part of winning here, and others have been exposed to what it takes to win. So, already, there’s a positive culture of competition.

Every bit as exciting is assembling a coaching staff. At this stage, we buck up and spend a lot of time together. You really get to know your coaches and get to know their families. I love that part, and it’s been great.

**What attracted you to Georgia State?**
Well, I didn’t know much about the place. I’ve spent a lot of time in Atlanta and have quality relationships with many basketball people here, but I didn’t know much about the campus.

When I first got a call, I started reading about [university president] Mark Becker, and the word “innovative” was mentioned several times, and that struck me. And I have close, trusted colleagues – coaches and administrators – who know and have a lot of respect for [athletics director] Charlie Cobb.

I know how important those two people are to the life of a program, so I was drawn to the place right away because of those two. But I’m excited mostly because it feels like a program that’s ready to take a big step forward.

**Yeah, the team will be playing in a new arena in just a couple of years.**
For me, it’s not so much about the place but what it represents. When you’re going to be breaking ground on a new arena, well, now you’re walking the walk on building up a program. And for the university to want me to carry us into that … that’s pretty attractive.

**What’s your style of play?**
If you ask people to describe in one word how our teams at Tennessee or Texas played, I would like to think they’d say “tough.” Generally, a tough team starts with defense, so defense and rebounding are really critical to what we’ll do.

We’ll play full-court, man-to-man defense. Offensively, we’re going to play to the strengths of our players. We’ll have lineup options, both small and big. We’ll have lineup options, both small and big. I’ve spent a lot of time in Atlanta and have been exposed to what it takes to win. So, already, there’s a positive culture of competition.

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**Tennessee was ranked No. 1 last season and has steadily gotten better since you and Coach Barnes arrived. Is there a blueprint there?**
There are definitely things we will draw from, but what’s essential to me is player development on and off the court.

I don’t look at that as a Tennessee thing, per se. Whether it’s Rick Barnes or Billy Donovan, I’ve been around coaches with a lot of potential. That’s what I’m about. You take pride in seeing a guy go from a freshman who doesn’t understand what it takes to win or improve to a dedicated player you’ve helped develop. And you also get to see the changes in their personal lives as young men. Player development is at the core of the program, and that will be the case here.

**Besides coaches Barnes and Donovan, a national championship winner and an NBA head coach, who else has been instrumental in your career?**
My first boss was a guy named Jack Armstrong at Niagara. He was a really young coach, and I was even younger when I got the job. He was truly organized, and I learned so much from him.

For me, it was like “OK, this is how you do it.” My second boss was a guy named James Baron at St. Bonaventure, my alma mater, and we went there with the goal to resurrect a program at a school that was in bad financial straits at the time. And we did it. To be around a guy who always saw things through a positive lens was so important. There was never a bad day with that dude.

So, early in my career, those were the guys who influenced my outlook on things. Then, when I got with Rick and Billy, it was like “OK, this is how you do it. This is how you win.”

I was with Rick for 10 years, and I saw how being physical and tough affects winning. The emphasis on having a relentless and great defense, rebounding and being tough – and getting your team to buy into that – is bringing that here.

**When you’re going to be breaking ground on a new arena, well, now you’re walking the walk on building up a program. And for the university to want me to carry us into that … that’s pretty attractive.”**
Dawn has yet to break when Peter Lindsay plugs the coordinates for Sparta, Ga., into his GPS. It’s a tiny rural town 100 miles east of Georgia State’s Atlanta Campus that seems an unlikely destination for the political philosophy teacher. But on this dreary Friday in late December, a few minutes before 9 a.m., he steers his black hybrid into a parking spot outside today’s classroom. Before heading inside, the professor glances over his notes on today’s reading, Peter Singer’s 1971 article “Famine, Affluence, and Morality.”

To get to class, Lindsay empties the pockets of his black sport coat, passes through a metal detector and stands still inside a full-body X-ray scanner. He’s then escorted past four locked metal doors and several barbed wire fences. Inside a room brightened by sterile fluorescent lights, he can see students looking over printouts of the Singer article.

Once he walks through the door, they each shake his hand as if they’re his advisees. On a wooden lectern, he fans out a stack of photos of his two dozen students. He flips through each image, matching faces to names. Here, more than in most classrooms, remembering a name is the ultimate sign of respect.

Lindsay asks his students to turn to the third page of Singer’s article — home to one of the philosopher’s classic cases. After laying out a few assumptions — that suffering and death from lack of food, shelter and medical care are intrinsically bad and we’re morally obligated to prevent something bad from happening if it doesn’t require great sacrifice — Singer argues someone ought to pull out a drowning child from a shallow pond, even if it means getting his clothes muddy. Leaning on the lectern, Lindsay asks the students: “Would you save the child?”

Hands dart up in the air, students eager to weigh in.

“It’s like pulling someone from a burning house when you’re not a firefighter,” says one student with thick-rimmed glasses. “The decision is an instinctual one.”

“What if you’re wearing a $200 suit,” says another student in the front row. “It’s money versus life.”

For more than an hour, the students discuss a variety of moral quandaries: Do people have a responsibility to help starving children overseas? Is it better to give money or perform acts of service? In the back of the classroom, Lindsay calls on a student with a trimmed salt-and-pepper beard. He broaches the topic of whether personal motive matters in performing a good deed. As the students turn his way, he wonders whether it would be better to give a meal to an inmate sitting beside you instead of donating one anonymously to someone sitting in solitary confinement.

“For those who have more,” the student says, “more is expected.”

Lindsay continues on toward a broader Kantian conversation focused on duty and obligation. But the student’s point seems to resonate with the rest of the class.

After all, these students aren’t wearing Panther blue. Instead, they’re dressed in white scrubs. Nor are they sitting in his classroom at 25 Park Place, but rather inside a building at 701 Prison Blvd., the address for one of Georgia’s highest security correctional facilities, Hancock State Prison.
SENTENCED

Five years ago, Lindsay decided to teach philosophy inside a prison. There wasn’t a specific moment that had initially sparked his interest, but Lindsay’s curiosity arose at a perfect time.

Near the end of his first term, Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal was hoping to lower Georgia’s incarceration rate, then one of the nation’s highest. He proposed ambitious reforms that would not just save taxpayer dollars but also better prepare inmates for life on the outside.

Near the top of Deal’s list: education. According to a 2016 report from the Vera Institute of Justice, more than a third of the state prisoners in the U.S. offered college courses, but less than 10% of inmates had access to those lessons. Inmates, too, were half as likely to have a college education than the rest of the population. With studies linking prison education to reduced recidivism, Deal sought to expand those offerings to improve Georgia inmates’ chances of securing jobs in spite of their criminal records. He hoped education could prevent prisoners from ending up back where they had started.

With the help of a colleague, Lindsay secured a meeting with a pair of top officials at the Georgia Department of Corrections: Commissioner Brian Owens and Assistant Commissioner of Education and Services L. C. “Buster” Evans. When Lindsay brought up the topic of teaching political philosophy to inmates, their response was simple: Start yesterday.

Lindsay was encouraged to start off at the Atlanta Transitional Center. A first phone call later, he was in the middle of a hallway teaching Plato’s dialogue to a class of 15 men. None had read the article he had assigned, he noticed, in part because they were skeptical of his intentions. Who is this guy? Why is he here? Is he conducting research? As the class sat in a circle, Lindsay assured them he wasn’t seeking anything for his own gain. He simply wanted to make his course available in correctional facilities.

Lindsay returned week after week, intrigued by the dynamic that existed in a classroom of nontraditional college students. These students seemed more appreciative and attentive. Cell phones didn’t distract them. (Nor did they distract Lindsay, who has never owned a cell phone.)

After a year there, he contacted Sarah Higinbotham (Ph.D. ’15), who had co-founded Common Good Atlanta, a nonprofit that provides higher education opportunities to inmates. One day in 2015, Lindsay accompanied Higinbotham on a visit to Phillips State Prison in Buford, where she began teaching in 2009 while working on her doctor’s degree at Georgia State. Soon after, he returned to teach a four-week course on the ethics of warfare.

Lindsay loved the experience. Because this was his first time inside a higher-security state prison, Lindsay moved cautiously. He followed Higinbotham’s lead to not ask inmates about their convictions. The approach seemed to make sense: He wanted to focus on the students.

But one day in class, not long after he began teaching there, he told his students that he didn’t feel like knowing them from the worst thing they had ever done.

“All I know is what I see in the classroom,” he told the inmates.

“I like what I see.”

In the front row, one inmate spoke up, telling Lindsay something that he’d never forget: “No, I want you to know the worst thing I’ve ever done. And I want you to not judge me for it.”

EXPERIENTIAL TEACHING

Lindsay hadn’t known anyone who had spent time in prison until he was incarcerated himself. In the early 1980s, after graduating from the University of Colorado, he and a friend visited El Salvador. The nation was in the midst of a civil war. His friend was taking photos of the unrest. One day after rebels bombed a bus to scare potential voters, soldiers arrested the pair after his friend pointed his camera at a military building. He worried for his freedom, uncertain of how long he’d be detained. After hours of detention, he convinced a colonel they were harmless, “stupid tourists.”

More than three decades passed before Lindsay stepped back inside a prison. In the meantime, he taught high school students, earned his doctorate and lectured at Harvard University. In 1999, Georgia State offered him the chance to teach political philosophy.

Like those of many other schools, Georgia State’s political science program focused more on how politics worked than the ways justice, equality and morality shaped those systems. But when Lindsay first introduced political philosophy, only 13 undergraduates enrolled. The students signed up for his first two classes.

“I’ll tell you what happened,” Lindsay says, “I had a couple of students who seemed to think there was no such thing as accidents. I’ve had people come to class suspicious of the benevolence of the system.”

Over the next seven years, his courses gradually filled up with students who often debated the larger ideas concerning politics, including morality, equality and justice. In 2007, he became director of the Center for Teaching & Learning, which supports Georgia State faculty in their teaching responsibilities. Four years later, he returned to lecturing.

“What I enjoy most about teaching is how every setting offers a different experience,” Lindsay says. “I can take my course material to people with whom I have almost nothing in common and share a unique experience with them in a classroom.”

BOOKS BEHIND BARS

By the time Lindsay was making trips to Sparta in fall 2017, he had met Perimeter College instructors Andy Rogers and Katherine Perry. The three of them had each been dreaming of a single goal: a prison education program that offered college credit — and even diplomas.

With the vast majority of prisoners returning to society, the Georgia Department of Corrections had increased funding to place more than 200 teachers at every one of the state’s correctional facilities. Those education opportunities span from literacy and GED courses to specialized training in beekeeping, computer technology and design. In some cases, state prisoners can earn time off their sentences for enrolling in education programs. But while Georgia prisons have offered vocational courses for decades, few have offered a path toward receiving college degrees. The early courses Georgia State professors taught were simply for enrichment’s sake, Rogers says.

For Rogers, the path toward teaching in prisons started with a lecture. He had listened to death penalty attorney Bryan Stevenson, author of “Just Mercy,” who had challenged the audience to consider ways to help inmates who might be estranged from family or friends.

For Perry, the choice was personal. Her brother’s incarceration for addiction-related charges had led her to teach through the Alabama Prison Arts and Education Project. She wanted to build a similar kind of program in Georgia.

“Having to sit across from him, with glass between us, talking via phone, jolted me into a realization about the ways our justice system separates people from other people as punishment without any assistance for improvement,” Perry says. “Once I went inside, I saw that what was true for my family is true for most people who are incarcerated or have incarcerated family members.”
So, the faculty worked with Common Ground Atlanta, along with Perimeter College dean Peter Lyons, on how to enroll incarcerated students at Perimeter. Hurdles stood in their way. First, inmates needed to pass an admissions test. Then, teachers would need to enroll them in courses. Those who got admitted would be held to the same standards required of students on campus. But they needed some admission waivers because they couldn’t be vaccinated or undergo background checks while in prison. The hardest part came after they got their student IDs: finding a way to pay for college.

In early 2017, three professors — later joined by associate professor of English Marissa McNamara — started several credit-bearing courses at Phillips State Prison, including English composition, American history and math. This past fall, the Laughing Gull Foundation awarded a $210,000 grant to Georgia State’s Prison Education project. Pending site approval by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the funds are intended to help start accredited associate degree programs for incarcerated students, including one proposed for female inmates at Lee Arrendale State Prison.

Perry hopes Georgia State can someday help train other universities on how to set up for-credit courses that lead to degree programs. And the group hopes that, as inmates get released, they’ll be able to take classes at Perimeter and eventually step foot inside Lindsay’s downtown classroom.

“There’s always a need,” Lindsay says. “The people at the Department of Corrections know what a no-brainer it is to offer education. The numbers don’t lie: People who get involved don’t come back to prison.”

Before his recent visit to Hancock, Lindsay followed the advice of his former student and looked up the convictions of those in his latest class. Most have life sentences for charges, including armed robbery, aggravated child molestation or murder. He knows these men will always be defined by the worst thing they’ve ever done. Confronted with that truth, he’s also trying to see the good in his students, most of whom have spent their days trying to improve themselves.

“You’ll notice most people don’t talk about their crimes,” Lindsay says. “But with this group, we could get into that conversation, trying to make moral sense of them.”

The conversations stretch long after Lindsay heads back to Atlanta. In a recent edition of the Hancock Herald, a newsletter published by prisoners, his students write that inmates gather in their dorms to continue those philosophical debates.

“It has opened up a new experience here at Hancock. Men who previously rarely interacted are now having conversations that some would be surprised to hear inside a prison fence. The class has broken religious and racial lines like few others have."

Lindsay has seen readings serve as conduits for broader discussions about morality within the lives of incarcerated students. In a recent class on Aristotelian ethics, one of Lindsay’s brightest students grappled with whether people should “do the right thing” for virtue’s sake as opposed to practical considerations. Lindsay couldn’t help but think about the fact his student was serving a life sentence without the possibility of parole. The student’s words are still in his mind: “I ain’t never getting out of here. All I’ve got left is my own integrity. I’m doing the right thing.”

“No one has ever brought the clarity of that debate to me,” Lindsay says on the ride home from Hancock. “Being in that environment, with perspectives that are so radically different, it brings to life material I’ve been teaching for years in ways I’ve never thought of.”

At the end of his class on Singer’s article, Lindsay pulls out a stack of course certificates and gives them to the prisoners who completed his six-week course that fall. As they step out into a main room, where the phrase “Knowledge is Power” is painted on the drab gray wall, Lindsay calls out the names of his students. One by one, they grab the sheets, followed by a slice of butter-cream cake. Once the small ceremony ends, a few students continue talking with Lindsay about the Singer article.

Before heading back to Atlanta, he reminds one of his students about the most important lesson.

“It’s not about the hour and a half we have together today,” he says. “It’s about where you take these lessons tomorrow.”
WRITE ON 'CUE

OVER HIS 40-YEAR CAREER, JIM AUCHMUTEY (B.A. ’77) HAS BECOME ONE OF ATLANTA’S MOST DECORATED WRITERS. IN HIS LATEST BOOK, THE VETERAN JOURNALIST AND AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR GOES WHOLE HOG ON THE HISTORY OF BARBECUE IN AMERICA.

BY CHARLES MCNAIR | PHOTOS BY STEVEN THACKSTON
Jim Auchmutey has cooked up some pretty good stories through the years.

In nearly three decades at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (AJC), Auchmutey was twice named writer of the year for the Cox Newspapers chain and twice named best feature writer. He earned Pulitzer Prize nominations, and he claimed honors from the Associated Press, United Press International and Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Awards. He also won a James Beard Foundation writing award for best food journalism.

Auchmutey wrote books, too. “The Class of ’65: A Student, a Divided Town, and the Long Road to Forgiveness,” written after he left the AJC in 2019 for freelance work, earned a Georgia Center for the Book designation as one of the 10 books all Georgians should read in 2016. Auchmutey also wrote cookbooks and co-edited a collection of essays on Southern culture, among other achievements.

Auchmutey’s distinguished career started in the humble offices of The Signal, Georgia State’s student newspaper. In 1975, still a young undergrad, he signed on as an entertainment editor and bylined stories on shows by Billy Joel, Steve Martin and others.

“That was when I started forming this idea of myself as a writer,” Auchmutey says. “I decided journalism was a fine way to make a living telling stories and arranging words.”

His achievements since The Signal have brought widespread professional respect. But Auchmutey may simply have been warming up to his newest, and meatiest, subject.

“Smokelore: A Short History of Barbecue in America” hit bookstores nationally in June. It’s a companion guide to the popular Barbecue Nation exhibit Auchmutey helped curate at the Atlanta History Center. His book captures from historical and personal perspectives why ‘cue has been essential fare at our nation’s public spaces and private tables for 250 years and counting.

“Barbecue,” Auchmutey explains, “is America in a mouthful.”

**Dawn of a BARBECUE NATION**

Barbecue, or something like it, has been with us for a very long time. Anthropologists generally agree that hominids cooked meat over flares some 400,000 years ago.

In “Smokelore,” Auchmutey duly notes the dawn of barbecue, but he quickly jumps ahead to the story of barbecue in the Americas.

In 1493, when Christopher Columbus waded ashore in the Caribbean on his second voyage to the New World, he found indigenous people grilling iguanas. The Spaniards heard the cooking practices called “barbaca,” or something like it. In time, that word became “barbecue,” which from that point on has richly flavored America’s culture.

Barbecue, in fact, had a distinguished presence at the very founding of the American republic.

On Sept. 18, 1793, with our republic barely a decade old, the roasting of a 500-pound ox highlighted a joyful celebration following the groundbreaking ceremony for the United States Capitol building.

George Washington himself placed the foundation stone for the Capitol that day, blessing it in a Masonic ritual while onlookers chanted Masonic phrases. Washington then sat down, false teeth and all, to disappear a plate of beef barbecue.

“The story of barbecue touches almost every aspect of our history,” Auchmutey writes. “It involves the age of discovery, the colonial era, slavery, the Civil War, the settling of the West, the coming of immigrants, the great migration of blacks and whites from the South, the rise of the automobile, the expansion of suburbia, the rejiggering of gender roles. It encompasses every region and demographic group. It is intertwined with our politics and tangled up with our race relations.”

Among hundreds of other barbecue books, only one previously tried to document the history of American barbecue: Robert Moss’s “Barbecue: The History of an American Institution.”

“It’s a valuable resource,” Auchmutey says, “but it doesn’t have that much art, and what it does have is in black and white.”

“Smokelore” isn’t a cookbook, a barbecue travelogue or an academic tome, although it has elements of all three. At 288 pages, it’s a lavishly illustrated popular history with 50,000 words of text, 26 recipes and 208 pieces of artwork — mostly vintage photos and amusingly retro magazine ads.

“It’s fun. It’s also serious history.

And that’s only right. Because, for Auchmutey, barbecue is a burning thing.

**Barbecue DNA**

“I’ve been researching this book since I was about 5 years old,” Auchmutey says, recalling family trips to a drive-in restaurant in his hometown of Decatur, Ga.

“We’d sit in our green ’53 Chevy and order curb service, the windows down because the car lacked air conditioning,” he says. “As we waited, we could smell the pork cooking over hickory smoke. I could have taken a bite out of the backseat.”

The craving could be genetic. Auchmutey’s grandfather, “Daddy Bob,” was a pitmaster from Bartow County who cooked hogs, goats and sheep for sheriff’s barbecues, church gatherings and all sorts of civic affairs in the Etowah River valley of North Georgia. Daddy Bob gained a measure of fame in 1954 when the Saturday Evening Post profiled him in a story on barbecue in the South.

And Auchmutey’s dad, Charles, a World War II Navy veteran who spent his civilian career as an auditor at a General Motors plant in south Atlanta, mastered the fine art of simmering up Brunswick stew. For more than a decade, he hosted an annual barbecue in Decatur where he would make the family’s secret recipe for more than 200 hungry guests.

“Barbecue is more than a food to me,” Auchmutey says. “It’s personal. It’s about where we came from and who we are.”

“Auchmutey came to writing about ‘cue in a roundabout way. Early on at the AJC, he only occasionally scribbled a food feature. His focus sharpened in 1990 when Susan Puckett joined the AJC as food editor and they became friends.

“Like me, Susan can talk the paint off a barn,” Auchmutey says. “As we became friends and talked about stories, she helped me understand that food was a good vehicle for exploring a lot of the things I’m interested in, history and American anthropology. After that, I wrote a lot more about the table.”

**Barbecue IS AMERICA IN A MOUTHFUL.**
In 1995, Auchmutey and Puckett co-wrote “The Ultimate Barbecue Sauce Cookbook: Your Guide to the Best Sauces, Rubs, Sops, Mops, and Marinades.”

The next year, Auchmutey’s feature “Cast in Iron,” a piece on cast-iron cookware, won a James Beard Award for food writing, and his second cookbook, “The South: The Beautiful Cookbook,” co-written with Puckett and Mara Reid Rogers, was published. From 1997 through 2000, he wrote a monthly feature in the Sunday AJC called “Tasting the South,” a travelogue about iconic foods and traditions. His food writing went to full boil after that.

“I wrote about the crawfish festival in Louisiana, an orange juice processing plant in Florida, the sweet potato ladies of Tuskegee, the duck hunting country of Arkansas,” Auchmutey says. “It was a blast and so very educational for me.”

Now in his sweet spot, he contributed to Scribner’s Encyclopedia of Food and Culture and the food volume of the Encyclopedia of Southern Culture. He also became a co-founder of the influential Southern Foodways Alliance at the University of Mississippi. John T. Edge, director of that organization, sings the praises of “Smokelore.”

“Jim Auchmutey has a great eye and a great ear for his native region,” Edge says. “His work on telling the stories of the South. He’s got an ear for stories — powerful, good-hearted truth-telling — and the passion to tell them.”

After 29 years at the AJC, when Jim wanted to take on bigger, longer writing projects, Pam kept her job at Emory so he could leave the paper and focus on his work. “Telling that story is the single thing I’m proudest of,” Auchmutey says. “We’re always going to need the stories, the truth-telling.”

As his editor at the AJC, Hank Klibanoff — a Pulitzer Prize-winning author himself — knows how well Auchmutey balances fact with emotion. “Jim is a very thoughtful writer,” he says. “He thinks with his head and writes with his heart, pulling his ever-eager reader along.”

Such powerful professional experiences convince Auchmutey that journalism matters more than ever in a digital age of fake news and diminishing subscriptions to traditional publications. “Yes, I would still recommend studying journalism,” he says. “We’re always going to need people who specialize in figuring out what’s going on and telling stories that make sense of it. When I came along, the dominant venue for telling those stories was newspapers. The venues have changed and will continue to do so. But we’re always going to need the stories, the reporting, the truth-telling.”

That’s it. That’s Jim Auchmutey’s secret sauce — powerful, good-hearted truth-telling — whether he’s writing about the smoke of war or the smokelore of a nation.

In 2005 and 2006, he profiled Georgia families with National Guardsmen who had In 2005 and 2006, he profiled Georgia families with National Guardsmen who had
Jeffrey Young, senior lecturer of history, teaches students to use data visualization software in his classes. By incorporating digital technology into their coursework, students learn valuable skills with applications on the job market.

Today’s employers value more than just a college degree. They want their new hires to have a broad range of skills and knowledge to solve complex problems. A new university-wide initiative aims to make students aware of tomorrow’s most sought-after career competencies as soon as they step on campus.

Photograph by Steven Thackston

By Maya Kroth
When freshman Brittan Smith enrolled in professor Jeffrey Young’s required lower-division history course last spring, she thought she knew what she was in for.

“I thought history was just going to be dates and remembering information,” says Smith, who was born in Jamaica and is the first in her family to attend college.

But she quickly realized that this was no ordinary history class. Instead of being forced to memorize the names of dead generals, Young’s students were required to learn data visualization software called Tableau to process complex historical datasets. Each week, they created charts, graphs, and color-coded maps in Tableau to understand and explain historical events like the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

“At first, I was like, ‘How is this really going to help me?’” recalls Smith, who isn’t sure what she wants to major in but is leaning toward marketing. “But when I thought about it again, I realized this isn’t just for historical data. I could see it being beneficial in accounting, math, finance and entrepreneurship.”

Getting students to understand the link between their undergraduate coursework and their future dream jobs is precisely what a new university-wide initiative called College to Career is all about. Rolling out in the fall as Georgia State’s new Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), College to Career will attempt to inject career readiness into nearly every aspect of campus life, inside and outside the classroom.

At a time of rising student debt and a shaky job market, when many are questioning the value of higher education, College to Career aims to ensure Georgia State graduates can pursue the fields of study they’re passionate about and emerge equipped to face the challenges of the 21st-century marketplace.

Will it work?

**SKILL BUILDING**

On the second floor of Student Center West, University Career Services is quiet. The vacant chairs and workstations serve as an apt metaphor for a worry among a third of Georgia State’s 2016 graduating seniors didn’t visit University Career Services until their senior year. That’s way too late, says Timothy Renick, vice provost and senior vice president for student success.

“That’s a bad recipe in general but an even more problematic recipe for low-income, first-generation students,” Renick says.

While the university has notched a number of well-documented recipe for low-income, first-generation students, “While we were doing increasingly good work in getting students to the point of graduation, we were not necessarily making them marketable in a job market,” says Angela Christie, the QEP’s faculty director who’s in charge of helping academic departments incorporate College to Career concepts into their curricula. These career-oriented upgrades to the college experience even extend to dorm life.

“University Housing has a curriculum that talks to students about being part of a community and how to resolve conflicts,” Christie says.

“Those are very important skills to learn. Now, they are changing that curriculum so it’s clear the message students are getting is not just, ‘This is teaching me how to live in my residential hall,’ but ‘This is teaching me skills that will help me be successful.’”

**FACULTY BUY-IN**

According to a 2018 national survey, 66 percent of college seniors felt they were not well prepared to succeed in a job search, and three-quarters said they didn’t know which jobs were an appropriate fit.

With student debt so high, the idea that a student would get out of college and not have the faintest idea of where to get a job is terrifying to me,” says Christie, also a senior lecturer in the English Department. “As much as I love teaching literature, I need to know my students are going to be OK.”

Christie’s office is tasked with getting faculty on board with College to Career — no easy feat at a time when professors are already wary about administrative requirements impinging on the way they teach.

“Faculty don’t like to be told how they need to teach material that they are experts in teaching,” Christie says. “They want to make sure they’re not sacrificing the content of their courses for the need to professionalize their students.”

The administration gets that, so College to Career starts with recognizing faculty as the authorities they are.

“They’ve stepped back and said, ‘Faculty, you’re the experts. Tell us how to transmit this material to your students,’” Christie says. “They’ve stepped back and said, ‘Faculty, you’re the experts. Tell us how to transmit this material to your students’.”

When overhauling her own department’s curriculum with College to Career in mind, Christie and her colleagues made a list of about 60 interpersonal skills — accepting criticism, thinking critically and communicating clearly — and a list of about 15 skills — English majors learn how to write, math students learn how to communicate clearly, for example. “Four years later, we’ve taken those two lists and connected them to the National Association of Colleges and Employers competencies.

For example, Christie teaches a poetry course that already includes a project where students take a novel and turn it into a graphic novel. “This is teaching me skills that will help me be successful,” says Christiana Christie, a senior. “When I was learning those things, I was picking up skills that I have used in every single job I’ve had since I got out of college: how to interpret, how to analyze, how to present material, how to take cues from an audience, how to recover when I make a mistake.”

As one of the most highly valued skills in the job market, “College to Career is an attempt to recognize that, from their very first semester at Georgia State, students should be engaged in significant activities that get them ready for life after graduation.” — Timothy Renick

The Competencies

**Critical Thinking/Problem Solving**

• Oral/Written Communication

• Teamwork/Collaboration

• Digital Technology

• Leadership

• Professionalism/Work Ethic

• Career Management

• Global/Intercultural Fluency

The idea behind the initiative is that, regardless of what students study, whether sculpture or neuroscience, they’re acquiring the skills they need to ensure they remain marketable in a changing economy.

“This is a university-wide way of making it clear to students that everything they do on this campus has some connection to some skill,” says Angela Christie, the QEP’s faculty director who’s in charge of helping academic departments incorporate College to Career concepts into their curricula. These career-oriented upgrades to the college experience even extend to dorm life.

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**PORTFOLIUM**

Portfolium’s deployment, students and alumni uploaded more than 30,000 artifacts. Some 98 percent of alumni and 71 percent of current students rate Portfolium’s deployment, students and alumni uploaded more than 30,000 artifacts.

Next come connection and demonstration. New lower-level major and pathway-specific gateway courses will help students connect the skills gained in their coursework to careers in their field of study. As students progress toward graduation, they will also be encouraged to articulate the connections between their co- and extracurricular activities and the career-readiness competencies they’re acquiring.

For instance, when Smith completed a data visualization project for her history class about U.S. morbidity rates broken down by county — a detailed, color-coded map based on data from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, complete with captions explaining the story the numbers tell — she would have the option to upload it to Portfolium and tag it as an example of her fluency with the Digital Technology competency. Ideally, by the time Smith graduates, her e-portfolios will be full of such examples. That way, when they go to apply for internships and jobs, she can curate the artifacts that best showcase her skills to employers.
The history major has been shedding students nationwide," he says, attributing the decline to factors that include a failure to convey the practical uses for the skills students learn in history courses, such as using logic and evidence to craft compelling arguments and present ideas clearly. "These are instrumental to practically any job that involves critical thinking, but as a discipline, we just haven’t been able to articulate that.

So, when Young and some of his colleagues learned the new QEP would have a career focus, they were excited. Young had already been using Tableau and historical data in his teaching.

"Every imaginable corner of the economy is filled with companies that are hiring people to do this kind of work," says Young, gesturing at his computer monitor, which displays one of the colorful map presentations that his students created this semester in Tableau.

Christie’s office has also helped connect 27 faculty Fellows with grant money and training to bring College to Career concepts into the classroom. Over at the School of Public Health, for example, assistant professor Christa Watson-Wright is showing her students how they can develop critical thinking, writing and public speaking skills while investigating environmental health issues.

FLEXIBILITY FOR THE FUTURE

There was another thing Britanni Smith didn’t expect to see when she enrolled in that required history course: an extra-credit assignment challenging students to take a stab at writing a resume.

A key piece of College to Career is strengthening the relationships between students in every course of study with University Career Services (UCS). Starting this fall, incoming freshmen will have contact with staff or peer advisers from UCS from the very start of their college careers.

"We hear it all the time: ‘I didn’t even know we had career services’," says Catherine Neiner, director of UCS. “We hear our seniors saying, ‘I wish I had known to get this experience or make this internship.’ We need them to be thinking about this earlier so they can make strategic decisions and get the experiences, coursework and knowledge they need to progress into a career and thrive.”

Neiner stresses that College to Career is not meant to preshore 18-year-olds into making binding career decisions right out of the gate.

“We don’t want to overwhelm them,” she says. “Not everybody knows what he or she wants to do.”

Instead, she hopes to expose students to all the resources the career center has to offer, from career counseling to help with resumes, internships and meetings with employers. Thanks to a recently developed pilot program, they’ll also have the opportunity to talk through their career concerns with peer advisers.

Like many of her peers, Smith is already nervous about finding a job even though she isn’t slated to graduate until 2022.

“It’s just confusing and frustrating,” she says. “Ambitions change, your path changes. I’m curious about where I’m really going to end up. What kind of job am I going to end up doing? It makes me anxious sometimes. Most times.”

Rather than viewing the university as a training ground for a very specific job, Neiner aims for something broader. She uses the term “future-flexible.”

“Half of the jobs we’ll have over the next 20 years don’t even exist right now, and most people do not stay in their first job,” she says. “Often that first job doesn’t even set you on your path to your ultimate career, and yet that’s traditionally what we’ve been preparing our students for. That’s what makes our College to Career initiative so important.

“The unspoken goal of these activities is that our students feel confident presenting their credentials to employers. It’s important to us that others in our community are able to see that all of our citizens — regardless of economic background, race, gender, educational status — have all the potential to be contributors to our community.”

MIND THE DATA

As College to Career weaves its way throughout the Georgia State student experience, the question remains: How well do we know if it’s working?

One way is by tracking how many students have found satisfying, meaningful employment after graduation, making sure to account for those who pursued graduate study or paused to raise families instead.

"We want to make sure all of our students feel confident presenting their credentials to employers," she says. “The majority of those we are tracking have returned to their roles as full-time employees. Only about 5 percent of those invited to fill out surveys actually do so, and it’s usually not a representative sample.

"At Georgia State, the goal is always to make sure the outcomes are improving," he says.

As a religious studies professor, Ronick knows there’s more to college than just getting a job.

"I’m a humanities professor; I’m the first to say that college is not all about career — maybe not even primarily. It’s about learning and experience and growing," he says. "But in addition, it’s about giving students the opportunity to have a fulfilling career after graduation.”

Like Renick, Christie hopes that College to Career will encourage students to stick with the subjects they love.

"The career competency skills students learn in anthropology, English and history are the same they’d learn in every other major here," Christie says. "We know that when students have a passion for what they’re learning, there’s nothing to stop them."
Q: The dawn redwood trees in Library Plaza are a rare sight in Atlanta and on the East Coast. They make a rather undistinguished space a beautiful place to relax, read or travel from class to class. What do you know about them?
Submitted by Richard Sinrich, Administrative Assistant, College of Education & Human Development

A: Georgia State’s dawn redwoods, Metasequoia glyptostroboides, were planted in 1972 or ’73 during the second phase of Library Plaza construction, which expanded the quadrangle to its current configuration. Many of us thought the trees were cypresses, but they are indeed dawn redwoods. They’re a rare deciduous conifer — unique because they produce cones like evergreens but shed their feathery leaves seasonally. For this, they’re sometimes called “living fossils.”

With roots firmly anchored under the plaza, the dawn redwoods along Library North and Sparks Hall are now taller than both buildings.

Do you have a question about Georgia State history? Ask Laurel Bowen, university archivist. Send an email to archives@gsu.edu or contact @gsu_archives on Twitter or Instagram. We’ll include a few of the top questions and answers here in our next issue.
OUR CITY.
OUR TIME.

8/31 at TENNESSEE
9/7 vs FURMAN
9/14 at WESTERN MICHIGAN
9/21 at TEXAS STATE
10/5 vs ARKANSAS STATE
10/12 at COASTAL CAROLINA
10/19 vs ARMY
10/26 vs TROY
11/9 at ULM
11/16 vs APPALACHIAN STATE
11/23 vs SOUTH ALABAMA
11/30 at GEORGIA SOUTHERN

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