Innovating the Everyday:  
A Provost Looks Forward; A Legacy Lends Promise

In 1975, newly armed with a bachelor’s degree, my plan was to take on the world. I thought a few more pointers on how best to do that would prove helpful, so I reified myself for graduate school. There was never a choice: I headed to Atlanta University, now Clark Atlanta University, which I knew would lift me academically and professionally throughout life. Turns out, I was right.

All that I learned changed how I perceive the world. I owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to this institution for the opportunities I’ve been privileged to explore and enjoy over the past three decades. My experiences produced a mental and spiritual ladder, affording me a higher vantage point on what matters in life. Academic, professional and spiritual mentors engendered in me the confidence and the curiosity necessary to climb it. Classmates, peers, and colleagues have continually motivated me to climb higher.

Those early steps, which began and continue to inform my personal and professional mission and values, are in many ways planted in the “Spirit of Greatness” at CAU.

The climb is what I love most about Clark Atlanta. It’s also the focus of this issue of Clark Atlanta Magazine. In these pages, you will see how an incredibly prolific cross-section of our students, faculty and staff are searching for higher vantage points, new perspectives, deeper meanings and broader implications to problems and solutions affecting the world community. From critical thought on artificial intelligence to models for corporate governance, and from nanotechnological breakthroughs to the ever-evolving sexual revolution, the CAU community is fully engaged in “innovation and discovery,” improving what is and searching for what can be.

Any climber will tell you that each ascension is unique. Some climb rugged terrain, as with research on race in the classroom or environmental injustice. Some tread deep into the complexities of the misunderstood or the unknown, as with the mathematics of chaos or new approaches to disease detection. Some scale above the known universe seeking new knowledge, as with our advances in prostate cancer research. Others are not necessarily climbing to find their place in the world as much as they are changing the world so that more have opportunities to climb.

Because Clark Atlanta University has been and will continue to be so much a part of my life, anyone who inquires about my next steps need only ever listen for one signal response: forward.

*Joseph H. Silver Sr., Ph.D. (M.A., AU ’77; Ph.D., AU ’80)  
Former Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*
Cover Story: From Exploration to the Everyday

Meet a few of the university’s elite corps of researchers, those whose work impacts how we manage our health, tend to our businesses, sustain our communities, and even fuel our engines. These individuals are veritable mile markers in the race to a continuously evolving “cutting edge.”

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DEPARTMENTS
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Young Shares a Lifetime of “GoodWorks” With Business Students, CAU community

Although not an alumnus of Clark Atlanta University, Ambassador Andrew Young’s love and affinity for CAU and its students often betrays that fact. His most recent gift to the institution included lessons learned during his years of experience successfully navigating the international political arena.

Young was the keynote lecturer for the School of Business’ Deans Lecture on April 2. In his remarks, he shared sage counsel and practical advice, and challenged students to think globally.

The life-long humanitarian and ordained minister began his work after graduating from Dillard University. He served as an aide and confidante to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the civil rights movement and in the U.S. Congress from 1972-77. President Jimmy Carter in 1977 appointed Young Ambassador to the United Nations. He was elected mayor of Atlanta in 1981 and served two terms. In 1996, Young published his memoir, A Way Out of No Way: The Spiritual Memoirs of Andrew Young, and co-founded GoodWorks International, a consulting firm offering international market access and political risk analysis in key emerging markets in Africa and the Caribbean.

In 2007, the Andrew Young Foundation produced the documentary Rwanda Rising. His 2010 documentary, Crossing St. Augustine, chronicled one of the darkest chapters of the civil rights movement. Young was awarded an Emmy for lifetime achievement in 2011, one of innumerable honors and awards he has received throughout his career.

He and his wife, CAU Trustee Carolyn McClain Young, continue to serve the CAU community in addition to humanitarian causes around the globe.
CAU Celebrates Founders Day

CAU alumnus and professor emeritus Winfred Harris delivered the keynote address at the university's 2012 Founders Day Convocation on March 14 in CAU’s Henderson Center. Harris, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Clark College and Atlanta University in 1955 and 1957, respectively, earned a Ph.D. degree in biochemistry from West Virginia University in 1965. He dedicated more than 50 years to educating students and serving as an administrator for what is now Clark Atlanta University.

Harris' life and professional experiences enabled him to share what some might call the "back story" of the 1988 consolidation of Clark College and Atlanta University with a unique level of insight and perspective.

He began his career as an assistant professor of biology at Clark College in 1957. His tenure there included positions as chairman of the Department of Biology, dean of Faculty and Instruction and interim president. Following the consolidation of the two institutions, he was appointed vice president for Administration and served as provost and vice president for Academic Affairs from 1997-2003.

He was twice appointed by Gov. Jimmy Carter to serve as a lay representative to the Board of Examiners for Speech Pathology and Audiology. Harris also has served as a consultant to the Division of Research Resources/Minority Biomedical Research Support, National Institute of General Medical Science/National Institutes of Health; the National Science Foundation; and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

TME Enterprises CEO and CAU Trustee Michael Melton, who was part of the august dais party, brought greetings for the occasion. "Nearly a quarter of a century ago, two prestigious institutions — the nation's first African-American graduate school and the nation's first private liberal arts college for African-Americans — with complementary missions intact, joined forces to become one great university," he noted. "Over the past 24 years, we have endured and achieved against sometimes seemingly insurmountable odds. This great university is the result of a steadfast, immovable line of faithful crusaders."

Those crusaders include the wise and stalwart Winfred Harris, Ph.D., ever a son of CAU.

School of Education Earns Accreditation with Commendations

Clark Atlanta University's School of Education on June 11 announced its official accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In addition, NCATE cited CAU's strength in two of the six accreditation standards: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice and Unit Governance and Resources. The school was last accredited in 2004.

Accreditation covers initial teacher preparation, in such areas as early childhood, special education and secondary math and science, and advanced programs offered for the purpose of preparing teachers and other education professionals to work in P-12 school environments. Advanced offerings include the educational leadership programs, as well as counselor education and community counseling programs, which are accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). The university is the nation's only private HBCU and one of only six black institutions nationwide to carry a CACREP accreditation. NCATE's Board of Examiners also noted President Brown's and then-Provost Joseph H. Silver Sr's exceptional knowledge and understanding of the educator preparation dynamic.

"This could not have happened without the creativity, expertise, collaboration and absolute passion for teaching and learning found among our school's faculty and staff," said Dean Sean S. Warner, Ed.D. "We now look to build upon this milestone and hope to continuously advance the course of teacher preparation as we continue our mission."
Nobel Laureate Expands Horizons for CAU Scientific Community

He helped discover the Buckminster-fullerene. If you’re a part of the global chemistry community, you understand why that’s enough to earn one the title of Nobel Laureate. If you’re not, you need only spend a few minutes with the renowned British chemistry professor Sir Harold Kroto, one of three individuals awarded the 1996 Nobel Prize for Chemistry, to know that he is not only a brilliant scientist, but also a passionate researcher, educator and humanitarian.

Sir Kroto’s work, along with that of Robert Curl and Richard Smalley, produced C_{60}, a third allotrope of carbon or, for the lay person, a spherical, very stable form of pure carbon consisting of interconnected pentagons and hexagons. He shared his discovery with CAU students on Feb. 21, during a visit hosted by the university’s Department of Chemistry and funded by the National Science Foundation and the CAU chapter of the National Organization of Black Chemists and Chemical Engineers.

Rachelle Ferrell Brings Down House on Harkness Quadrangle

Rachelle Ferrell is to jazz what water is to life: essential, awakening, empowering. She lived up to her reputation as a living legend and far exceeded expectations as the headliner for this year’s Jazz Under the Stars Concert and Silent Auction held May 5 on the front lawn of the university’s historic Harkness Hall.

The brainchild of the Clark Atlanta University Guild, Jazz Under the Stars and Silent Auction has raised more than $250,000 to fund scholarships for performing arts students since its inception 19 years ago.

With her “six-and-change” octave range in fine form, Ferrell delighted the sold-out crowd of more than 1,000 and graciously invited a group of CAU students on stage to show off the rewards of a May 4 master class held exclusively for Department of Music majors.

CAU Women Seek to Succeed Against the Odds

More than 200 women from throughout the Atlanta University Center and the Atlanta metro-area gathered March 16-18 intent upon “succeeding against the odds.” Participants in the university’s 2012 Women’s Empowerment Conference were treated to a “pamper me” party, workshops, a luncheon discussion, and a worship service. The annual event, now in its third year, is co-sponsored by the university’s Student Health Services, Office of Religious Life, and Counseling and Disabilities Services Center.

“We are grateful to gather for a third year, and even more for the impact on the participants. Our goal is to remind young women of the critical role they play in society, one that often goes unrecognized and unrewarded,” said CAU chaplain Rev. Dr. Valerie T. Everett.

CAU Art Galleries Celebrates 70th Anniversary

The Clark Atlanta University Art Galleries on May 6 celebrated its 70th anniversary by unveiling a new catalogue, In the Eye of the Muses: Selections from the Clark Atlanta University Art Collection. Dr. Johnnetta B. Cole, director of the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., lectured on the topic “Great Art Collections at Our Historically Black Colleges and Universities: To Whom Do They Belong.” The cost of the catalogue is $60 (hard cover) and $45 (soft cover). To purchase a copy or for more information, visit www.cau.edu-About CAU-Art Galleries or call 404-880-6102.
CAU Celebrates Fourth Spirit of Greatness Gala

For the fourth consecutive year, Clark Atlanta University and the Clark Atlanta University Alumni Association celebrated the annual “Spirit of Greatness Gala,” honoring university alumni, faculty, and friends. The March 17 event raised more than $115,000 to fund scholarships for deserving students. It also included a live stage performance of Hitzville: The Show, courtesy of Trustee William Shack.

CAU Alumni Association’s National President Devin P. White said that “the gala allows CAU’s alumni and friends from around the nation to reunite, celebrate our legacy, and fulfill a our undying mission…all while having a great, great time!”

Each of the 2012 “Spirit of Greatness” honorees enlivens the ideals for which the university stands — excellence, professional achievement, compassionate service, and community uplift.

Dr. Reatha Clark King, a former student and university trustee, served as president and executive director of the General Mills Foundation and vice president of General Mills Inc. She is a former trustee of Exxon Mobil Corp., Wells Fargo & Co., Minnesota Mutual Companies, H. B. Fuller Co., and Lenox Group Inc. She also is a life member of the University of Chicago Board of Trustees.

CAU trustee and former board chair Carl Ware (’57) joined the Coca-Cola Company in 1974 as an urban and governmental affairs specialist. Within five years, he became vice president of Coca-Cola USA’s special markets. By 1986, he was a senior vice president and in 1993 became head of the company’s Northeast Europe and Africa interests. That same year, Ware was named head of Coca-Cola’s Africa Group, and helped negotiate positive economic responses to the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa during his tenure. The former Atlanta City Council member currently serves on the boards of The Chevron Corp. and Cummings.

Professor James Patterson (’57), tenured member of the CAU Department of Music and director of the CAU Jazz Orchestra, has invested his passion and expertise in educating students for more than 50 years. Immediately following graduation, Patterson traveled with the Motown Sound Band, playing chart-topping tunes for musicians such as Aretha Franklin, Diana Ross and the Supremes, Stevie Wonder, and Gladys Knight and the Pips. Under his direction, the CAU Jazz Orchestra has performed internationally. In addition, he continues his work in the classroom and beyond, working to preserve the legacy of jazz through the James Hardy Patterson Foundation.

Emmy Award-winning news anchor Monica Pearson was the first female and the first African American to anchor a 6 p.m. broadcast in Atlanta. Since that 1975 milestone, she has continued to set the standard for journalistic excellence and service to the community. In 1977, the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust honored her with its Humanitarian Award for her documentary Prejudice and Hate: Georgians and the Holocaust. In 1986, she was awarded Atlanta University’s doctorate of humane letters honoris causa, and in 2011, Yahoo! named her one of Atlanta’s “10 Most Powerful and Influential People.”

“We are so blessed to have role models of this caliber within the CAU family,” White said. “Not only is this a source of immense pride, but it’s also important that our students understand that the path to greatness is hewn through CAU.”
CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
Learn. Lead. Change the World!

When the nation’s first private liberal arts college for African Americans, Clark College (1869), joined with the nation’s first African-American graduate school, Atlanta University (1865), what emerged was one of the world’s foremost institutions of higher learning, Clark Atlanta University (CAU). Rooted in nearly 200 years of rich cultural heritage and tradition, CAU today is one of America’s great universities, embracing global diversity and leadership development. Among the largest of the nation’s 39 member UNCF institutions, CAU sets the pace for academic excellence, research and service.

International City, Global Education

Located in the heart of Atlanta, one of the world’s great international cities, CAU is the only co-ed undergraduate institution in the prestigious Atlanta University Center. Our 3,500 students enjoy the cachet of a private education alongside classmates from around the nation and the world, all engaged in academic pursuits at the bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral levels in 38 areas of study. CAU students enjoy Atlanta’s rich, international arts and culture, access to international corporate and political forums and, of course, world-class shopping and entertainment. Our students also enjoy study abroad opportunities at universities around the globe.

A Legacy to Uphold

Once at the heart of student involvement in the Civil Rights Movement, CAU today provides opportunities to address issues that plague a global population, from safe drinking water for third world citizens to HIV/AIDS prevention in local communities, to engineering nanotechnologies to cure disease worldwide.

Whether you want to research cancer therapies, revolutionize the music industry, teach calculus or be the next global CEO, Clark Atlanta is where you will find your place in history. At CAU, you will walk in the footsteps of legendary alumni like poet, author and activist James Weldon Johnson, Rev. Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, educator Marva Collins, Tony Award-winning director Kenny Leon, journalist Jacquie Reid and former professors W.E.B. DuBois and Whitney M. Young, Jr. More important, you will carve your own pathway to excellence.

At Clark Atlanta University, you won’t just learn about how the world has changed. You will become a leader, empowered and ready to change the world for the better!

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Michael Baisden Headlines “Take a Millionaire to Lunch” Series

Author, nationally syndicated host and activist Michael Baisden spent the day with hundreds of CAU students on April 19 during the School of Business’ “Take a Millionaire to Lunch” series. The university’s CEO Academy event, now in its 15th year, allows first-year business students to hear directly from certified millionaires what it takes to create, build, and maintain wealth.

Armed with free copies of his books and DVDs for audience members, Baisden urged students to “stay ahead of the curve and understand the market. You’ve got to diversify yourself. The days of media ‘personalities’ — headliners who hold down one major block of time — are over.

Radio, and media in general, is a new game now.”

In addition to addressing the CEO Academy, Baisden spoke to students in the university’s Mass Media Arts Department and conducted on-air interviews with Riva Blue of WCLK-91.9FM and student hosts from WSTU-FM, the university’s student radio station.

Wade Ford CEO Steve Ewing, who heads the number-three Ford auto dealership in Georgia and the number-eight Ford dealership in the Southeast, joined Baisden at the event.

“This is more than just a way of giving back to a great institution,” Ewing said. “It’s also about pushing the next generation of leaders forward.”

President Brown Appointed to Association of Governing Board Council of Presidents

Clark Atlanta University President Carlton E. Brown on May 31 was appointed to a three-year term on the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (AGB) Council of Presidents. The appointment became effective Oct. 31, 2012.

The Council of Presidents is a standing AGB advisory group of college, university and system chief executives who provide guidance to the association on issues, trends and practices related to higher education and citizen trusteeship. Its members are eminent professional leaders in higher education and are highly knowledgeable about the roles, responsibilities and practices of effective governance.

Representing one of only three HBCUs on the council, Brown said, “I am honored to have the opportunity to serve the higher education community in such a strategic and visionary role. It takes diversity of experiences and perspectives to better serve our nation’s changing higher education needs as the American population shifts. I am excited to serve on a team with esteemed colleagues who have made such a profound commitment to the higher education arena.”

Listed in May for the second year as one of the “100 Most Influential Atlantans” by the Atlanta Business Chronicle, Brown joined CAU as executive vice president and provost in 2007 and was named president in May 2008.

President Brown chats with Lorri Saddler Rice, a CAU MBA alumna and the Graduate School’s Assistant Director for Recruitment, Marketing and Retention
Clark Atlanta University Appoints Henry W. Taylor Vice President for Institutional Advancement and University Relations

Henry W. Taylor, previously chief development officer for the Level Playing Institute (LPFI) in Oakland, Calif., is the university’s newly appointed vice president for Institutional Advancement and University Relations, effective July 23. Taylor, selected for the position from a national pool of finalists, has more than 15 years of development experience with some of the nation’s most prestigious institutions.

Taylor’s significant experience in higher education and fundraising prowess are just two of the strengths he brings to Clark Atlanta and that inform his approach to leadership.

Prior to his work at LPFI, he served as the director of individual giving at the KIPP Foundation. He also has held prominent fundraising roles at Stanford University, Claremont McKenna College and Princeton University. Taylor is an experienced fundraising consultant and an active presenter at conferences on the “power of philanthropy to create, impact and influence.”

When he announced the appointment, President Brown expressed delight “that we have identified and brought on board a candidate of Henry Taylor’s vast experience, breadth of knowledge in fundraising and capacity building, and obvious passion for the education of young leaders. He is an individual of tremendous integrity whose values and ideals align perfectly with the mission of this great institution.”

Taylor noted that he admires the legacy and the more recent “undaunted repositioning” of CAU.

“In my role as chief development officer at LPFI, I had the opportunity to work with an incredibly diverse array of young people, preparing them to excel in higher education. I’m keenly aware of what colleges and universities have to offer a student and, more important, an institution’s ability to sustain that proposition regardless of the current environment,” he said. “As tough as the nation’s economy, the political climate and social issues have been on the HBCU community, Clark Atlanta continues to rise above to meet or exceed challenges that too often prevent students of color from attaining a college degree. CAU is far more than a community of survivors, it is a community of conquerors.”

In his new role, Taylor will work aggressively to expand the channels through which CAU shares that message, in addition to preparing for a major fundraising campaign that celebrates the legacy and secures the future of the university.

Taylor earned a B.A. in government from Claremont McKenna College and a master’s degree in leadership at St. Mary’s College. He and his wife have a son and daughter.

Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development Holds Eighth National Symposium

What began eight years ago as a “meeting of the minds” on the best practices and emerging trends in the detection, treatment, and eradication of prostate cancer, has grown into a major international forum attended by some of the world’s foremost researchers of the disease.

Under the helm of Dr. Shafiq A. Khan, eminent scholar and executive director of Clark Atlanta University’s Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development, this year’s symposium, held March 18-20 in the Thomas W. Cole Jr. Center for Science and Technology on CAU’s main campus, included 150 scholars and researchers from across the nation and around the world, including keynote speaker Dr. Donald J. Tindall of the Mayo Clinic, and Dr. Leland W. K. Chung of the University of California Los Angeles.

The annual event is the only one of its kind in the United States and is organized in a manner that ensures student and junior researchers have an opportunity to participate alongside veteran researchers in the field, a hallmark of CCRTD’s operation at Clark Atlanta.

Miller Brings Diverse Perspectives to CAU

Jerome Miller (MBA ’79) is known for staying ahead of the curve. It’s no surprise, then, that he made his homecoming to CAU on Jan. 19, far ahead of the annual October rite. Miller, then vice president of Diversity and Social Responsibility for Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A. Inc., shared industry insights on quality, business and professional ethics and competing in the global workplace. He underscored the importance of diversity — a concept that far transcends mere racial classifications. Since Miller’s visit to CAU, he has joined TIAA-CREF and now serves as its chief diversity and inclusion officer.
CAU Rallies for ‘Peace in the Hood’

If “the shot heard round the world” sparked the American Revolution, the shot that killed Trayvon Martin, an unarmed 17-year-old African-American youth who was killed Feb. 26 while returning to his Sanford, Fla., home after purchasing Skittles® and an iced tea beverage at a local market, sparked a revolution of sorts throughout the Clark Atlanta and Atlanta University Center communities. An estimated crowd of 1,500 gathered at the front of Clark Atlanta’s Harkness Hall March 28 to pray for Martin’s family and to issue a collective call for justice. Participants donned hooded sweaters despite 85-degree weather, a tribute to Martin’s attire the day he was shot.

Martin’s shooter, George Zimmerman, had not yet been arrested at the time of the rally. Law enforcement officers initially released him under the protection of Florida’s “stand your ground” self-defense statutes. He was subsequently taken into custody after charges were filed April 11 by a special prosecutor.

CAU Alumni Association National President Devin P. White along with alumnus and Elizabeth Baptist Church Senior Pastor Craig L. Oliver Sr. were key in organizing the event, including having congregants in Elizabeth’s four Atlanta-area locations bring bags of Skittles which were mailed to the Sanford, Fla., Police Department. “Trayvon never got to have his skittles,” said event organizer Ernita Hemmitt, “so we’re sending these in his honor, to remind the legal community in Florida, that he deserves to have justice.”

Speakers at the event charged the students to be aware of their own rights, to be responsible for educating others and, most of all, to move forward with an attitude of peace. In addition to White and Oliver, the line-up included CAU Vice President for Enrollment Services and Student Affairs Carl E. Jones Jr., CAU Chaplain Rev. Dr. Valerie Everett, former CAU Undergraduate Student Government Association (SGA) President Katrina Hertz, current Undergraduate SGA President Tyler Joshua Green and CAU Alumnus DJ Drama. Rev. Derrick Rice, pastor of Sankofa United Church of Christ, organized and recruited leading area clergy for the event, among them: Rev. Frank Brown of Concerned Black Clergy; Rev. Dr. Gerald Durley, former pastor of Providence Missionary Baptist Church; Rev. Timothy McDonald of First Iconium Baptist Church; Min. Autumn Wilson of the Interdenominational Theological Seminary; and Min. Wan Smith of Sankofa United Church of Christ. Following remarks from student leaders representing Spelman and Morehouse colleges, Attorney Mawuli Davis and State Representative Sandra Scott closed out the rally by exhorting students to be vigilant and steadfast in the pursuit of truth, liberty and “justice for all.”

Months after the rally, keepsake fans bearing Martin’s image still haunt windows, bookshelves and the occasional bulletin board around Clark Atlanta’s campus. As his shooter awaits trial, the question of justice for the slain teenager haunts us all.
Jason Williams, a recipient of the master’s degree in educational counseling, takes in a standing ovation as he receives his diploma. Williams, who is blind, traveled to CAU from Detroit by bus and lived off-campus during his studies here.

Clark Atlanta University President Carlton E. Brown presents the Doctor of Humane Letters honoris causa to U.S. congressman and Assistant Democratic Leader U.S. Rep. James E. Clyburn of South Carolina as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Joseph H. Silver Sr., Ph.D., (far right) and Ceremonial Marshal Laurent Monye, Ph.D., chair of the French Department, look on.

President Brown and Provost Silver award the B.A./M.A. five-year degree posthumously, along with earned honor cords, to Cassandra and Tiffany Watson, mother and sister of the late Simone Michelle Watson, the university’s 2012 salutatorian. The late Ms. Watson, who died two weeks before commencement on May 6, maintained a 3.97 GPA in her undergraduate studies and maintained a 4.0 GPA in her graduate studies.
Nhoj-Trebor Steede, a 2012 honors graduate of CAU’s five-year B.A./M.A. program.

Members of the 50th year class enjoyed the events of their Golden Reunion, including participation in the University’s 2012 commencement exercises.

CAU Board of Trustees Chairwoman Juanita Baranco brings greetings to the more than 10,000 ceremony guests.

Class of 2012 Valedictorian Lesha Spencer enjoys the moment as President Brown shares her many accomplishments with the audience.

CAU Board of Trustees Student Delegates Katrina Hertz (far left) and Daniella Kyei (far right) join President Brown and Rep. Clyburn, following the ceremony. From left to right: Ms. Hertz, Trustees Joe Laymon, John Daniels and William Shack; Board Chairwoman Juanita Baranco; President Brown and Congressman Clyburn; Board Secretary Delores P. Aldridge, Ph.D., Trustees Dr. Alvin Trotter, Carolyn M. Young, Thomas W. Dortch Jr., Alumni Trustee Devin P. White and Student Delegate Daniella Kyei.
Panthers on Purpose:
The Movement continues at CAU!

During an historic address by the “Dean of the Civil Rights Movement,” the Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, keynote speaker at Clark Atlanta University’s Fall 2012 Convocation on Tuesday, Sept. 18, he reminded students to protect the rights for which he and his colleagues fought and died. “Don’t let anything hold you back,” he exhorted.

In a day commemorating the movement that resulted in African-Americans’ hard-won right to vote, CAU answered Rev. Dr. Lowery’s charge with its own call to action. In a post-convocation voter registration rally, championed by CAU Junior Marquez Davis, an international business and management major who serves as president of CAU’s NAACP chapter, 136 students registered to vote. The rally, held in the lower level of Epps Gymnasium, included assistance from the non-partisan Atlanta Voters United and the Rev. Willie Bolden, who also shared his recollections from the movement.

CAU hosted the Joseph E. Lowery Institute’s “Great Student Debate” Oct. 3, allowing students from the University’s Political Science Department to argue the Democratic and Republican platforms of the 2012 Presidential Election alongside students from Morehouse and Spelman colleges, as well as Usher’s New Look Foundation. The CAU Student Government Association also sponsored an event on Oct. 11 so that members of the campus community who did not have a state-issued ID could secure one free of charge from an official Fulton County Voter ID machine.

Rev. Dr. Joseph E. Lowery (left), CAU Students and Atlanta Voters United representatives at the post-convocation voter registration rally (right).
The dispensation of knowledge is to those whose intellectual lives revolve around the university experience as the circulatory system is to human physiology. It is the passing forward of information and the discourse provoked by the transfer of ideas that feeds the mind.

At the heart of that proposition are the ideals of innovation and discovery: reexamining the known by using new and different methods, perspectives and approaches; searching for and unfolding the previously unseen and unknown.

The course of human history has always depended on the undaunted exploration for broader, deeper truths that define and govern every aspect of our lives. From medical mysteries hidden within our cellular makeup, to the manner in which the masses react to mechanical stimuli, the way we live our lives is in no small measure the result of advances by the professionally curious in countless fields of study.

Clark Atlanta University’s academic enterprise is intentionally grounded in and inextricably tied to research, not as a means unto itself, but as a key vehicle through which we affirm the University’s commitment to improve the quality of life for citizens in the global community. To accomplish this goal, we strategically leverage the diverse skills and expertise of our students, faculty, researchers, and administrators to foster the growth of our research enterprise, provide exceptional research and educational experiences for our students, and make significant discoveries and contributions to the knowledge of humankind.

On the pages that follow, you will meet only a few of the University’s elite corps of researchers, those whose work impacts how we manage our health, tend to our businesses, sustain our communities, and even fuel our engines. These individuals are veritable mile markers in the race to a continuously evolving “cutting edge.” Their progress constitutes the manner in which Clark Atlanta University’s research enterprise bridges from exploration to a spatial paradigm that ultimately matters to us all: the everyday.

Marcus W. Shute, P.E., Ph.D.
Vice President of Research and Sponsored Programs
Translating Prostate Cancer: Nearing Breakthroughs

Despite many accomplishments, Shafiq A. Khan is a modest man. He is a professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and the director of CAU’s 13-year-old Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development (CCRTD). There he presides over an internationally-respected facility with a trio of high, if reachable, goals.

CCRTD conducts biological research that assists in the development of successful cancer-fighting therapeutic strategies, does educational outreach in the black community, and trains future cancer researchers. Roughly 200,000 new prostate cancer cases are diagnosed and 30,000 lives taken by the disease annually. Khan, a native of Pakistan, says it is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths among American men, but black men are more than twice as likely to die of it compared to white men.

The center, which is supported by the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, and the Georgia Research Alliance, is a university-wide Center of Excellence. It focuses on cell and molecular biological research and education that draw upon the expertise of CAU natural and social scientists. The center, says Khan, was created “to understand what prostate cancer is, how it develops and metastasizes, and to develop ways to fight its many forms.”
A Cell is Not Just a Cell

A cancer cell was a normal cell until it began behaving abnormally. Genetics tells cells, or cells can tell themselves, what they should or shouldn’t do based on chemical communicators like hormones. Cancer metastasizes when the communication breaks down or is misinterpreted. CCRTD analyzes those signals, and tries “to understand what causes those changes in cell behavior,” Khan, 58, explains.

In the CCRTD labs, experiments are conducted using established prostate cancer cell lines, animal models and human tissues that come from patients. The cell line models supply researchers with signals that show how cells behave. The center grows cells in plastic containers where they are easier to manipulate, and uses the tissue culture to establish cell lines. Sometime they represent different stages of cancers that are compared to see what may have gone wrong in the disease’s advanced stages.

“The body is a perfect social structure until cancer doesn’t listen to the norms of the body and the disease happens. We study to see how it behaves,” Khan says.

Since 2004, seven CAU students have graduated from the CCRTD, and there are about 16 CAU graduate doctoral students currently working in the lab. During the school year, undergraduate students work at CCRTD, and each summer some work fulltime for two-and-a-half months.

Beyond the basic biological research, CCRTD’s therapeutic side makes it CAU’s only university-wide center of excellence. It collaborates with the schools of social work, education, arts and science, computer science, mathematics, and uses the university’s radio and television stations to provide prostate cancer information to the black community.

That transmission is critical because “prostate cancer is 100 percent curable if you catch it early. Black men have the highest rate of death because the disease is often diagnosed very late,” says Khan.

At the center, research projects include finding biomarkers that help screen for prostate cancers. These are signs that can identify a protein that a cancer cell may require for growth. Once spotlighted, specific drugs may be developed to eradicate or hinder cancers.

Joining Forces

Since 2009, Khan also has worked with Georgia Tech scientists and surgical oncologists from St. Joseph’s Hospital of Atlanta in the Collaborative Cancer Genomics Center (CCGC). The cross-institution project, through the collection of cancer tissue, studies and identifies genetic and environmental factors underlying prostate, ovarian, pancreatic and lung cancers.

“Research is based upon reciprocal relationships and mutual dependence. Currently in science, you cannot do anything alone,” says Khan.

The CCGC wants to understand what cancer is genetically speaking and how to personalize medicine to fight it.

“Every cell has about 30,000 genes that are switched on at any given moment,” Khan says. “We look at a cancer cell and a normal cell to see why it becomes malignant. All cancers are different, and this identifies the cell’s genetic change in the particular place.”

The research results are sent to Georgia Tech whose super computers do the analysis. As neither CAU nor Georgia Tech have a medical school, the tissue samples and data are shared with St. Joseph’s Hospital.

The research combines information about prostate cancer generally with individual genetic analysis to help develop patient-specific drugs to treat genetic changes in a specific part of the body. That is important, says Khan, because “we can now look at the whole human genome and see how one’s DNA differs from the next.” There is no unified treatment, but the CCRTD is on a quest to perfect procedures treating specific cancers.

Beyond the basic biological research, CCRTD’s therapeutic side makes it CAU’s only university-wide center of excellence.

The Clark Atlanta University cancer center has an annual budget of about $3 million and recently received a $5.8 million renewal grant award from the National Institutes of Health/National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities. Its research technology includes a genetic sequencing system; devices to separate mixtures rapidly, using protein liquid chromatography; and cutting-edge cell imaging, laser capture micro-dissection and other core resources for cell and molecular biological research.

Looking forward, Khan says that his approximately 45-person CCRTD team is heading toward recognition as the premier prostate cancer research, research training and community outreach facility in the nation.

The center also is a perfect springboard for its graduates. Institutions they have joined include the MD Anderson Cancer Center at the University of Texas, Georgetown University’s Lombardi Cancer Center for further training as post-doctoral fellows, and Shaw University as faculty members. In 2013, three doctorates will be awarded.

Frank McCoy is a Baltimore-based freelance writer.
Dr. Ishrat Khan was admittedly small-minded as a boy, and still is as a 56-year-old professor of chemistry at Clark Atlanta University. But his focus now is on minutiae that can provide big positive changes in health care, and has nothing to do with narrow-mindedness or intolerance.

Khan’s future was set 46 years ago, when as a 10-year-old in the Republic of Bangladesh, he read a Newsweek/National Geographic feature article on macromolecules. A macromolecule sounds big, but it’s actually just a large molecule that the Merriam-Webster dictionary defines as “the smallest particle of a substance that retains all the properties of the substance and is composed of one or more atoms.”

Fast-forward decades and Khan is one of the nation’s leaders in nanotechnology, having used his childhood fascination with things small to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry from Susquehanna University and a Ph.D. degree in organic polymers from the University of Florida at Gainesville.

Nanotechnology is the science of creating smaller-than-the-human-eye-can-see devices by manipulating material on an atomic or molecular scale. How small is that? Pretty tiny. The devices, or structures, created have dimensions between 1 and 100 nanometers. In the metric system, a nanometer is a unit of length that is equal to one billionth of a meter, and a meter is 3.38 feet or 39.37 inches long.
Beyond his work with the CCRTD, Khan is also the director of Clark Atlanta’s six-year-old Center for Functional Nanoscale Materials, a National Science Foundation-supported Center for Excellence in Science and Technology. The CFNM, which is multidisciplinary and multi-institutional works with other academic and scientific organizations and is comprised of three interdisciplinary teams that deal with functional inorganic nanostructures, functional organic nanostructures and biofunctional nanostructures. Khan also is a research member of the CAU Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development (CCRTD), that focuses primarily on prostate cancer cell biology research to find therapeutic strategies to combat the disease.

Members of CAU’s biology, chemistry, and physics departments combine their expertise at the CFNM, which uses its annual budget of $1.5 million to $1.8 million on such projects as developing a drug delivery system that relies on functional nanostructures to battle prostate cancer cells.

Khan says the development of synthetic macromolecules is a complex step-by-step process. It begins with the design of new synthetic macromolecules that must be shaped, or rendered topologically, in order to control different biological cells needed to specifically fulfill particular applications and structures.

The next big thing in nanoscience, Khan says, is the creation of designer functional nanostructures that he believes within the next two to three years may be commercialized for use in electrochemistry, molecular electronics, metal alloys, metallic glasses and catalysis informatics.

Khan believes that synthetic biofunctional polymers, or large macromolecules, which he suggests one should imagine as very small pieces of modified polystyrene (which make up Styrofoam) could be used therapeutically to improve human health. To do so, CCRTD is developing curved synthetic macromolecules of around 100 nanometers in size.

How these macromolecules can serve as drug delivery vehicles or tissue engineering devices depends on their design and functionality of the polymers. Khan, who has published nine papers on related subjects, says to imagine a nano-robo drug as a tiny car that drives to a specific house that may need some work.

“At the site, the passengers, or drugs, get out and pretty much start working to fix parts of the house, which may be delivering medicine to a specific human organ or perhaps producing material to grow new tissue,” he explains.

That process of creating new material, or scaffolding, has been particularly boosted by nanoscience. It allows for the creation and insertion of items, such as specially-created polymers that dissolve after they encourage the growth of bone marrow and real bone.

Some implantable devices, which could be one-tenth to one-fortieth the size of the diameter of a single strand of hair, may remain in the body for months, monitor changes and activate as needed before exiting or degrading naturally.

“The value of the nano-drugs is their ability to sense what is happening in the tissue and release the drugs on demand. That is the work we do to develop novel polymers that do that, or a pill that has minute particles that are programmed to find the cell that is bad and respond appropriately,” Khan says.

After the design stage, Khan and his CFNM senior staff collaborate with doctoral students and research fellows from CAU, Cornell and Emory Universities, Morehouse College and other center-affiliated schools, to plot a variety of approaches for their work in the laboratory.

Much of their research requires specialized equipment, such as high-vacuum techniques and state-the-art characterization. That is using external techniques to affect material’s specific properties or internal structure. Characterization must also be carried out at the sub-molecular level and to do that the center uses instruments that permit imaging with resolution as small as 201-202 nanometers.

The next big thing in nanoscience, Khan says, is the creation of designer functional nanostructures that he believes within the next two to three years may be commercialized for use in electrochemistry, molecular electronics, metal alloys, metallic glasses and catalysis informatics. The latter is related to using atomic-scale processes for the creation of sustainable energy, and perhaps someday leaders in all those areas will have graduated from CAU.

Khan says that says that as CFNM director his most important tasks are its day-to-day operation, ensuring that the center continues to develop as a national resource for transformational research and training the next generation of scientists. The greatest satisfactions he finds in his work, he says, are mentoring graduate students; publishing scientific papers with graduate students as the lead author, that are cited by peers; and advising doctoral students who already have become leaders in science and technology.
Dr. Valerie Marah, assistant professor of biology who has been at Clark Atlanta University for six years, says that at CAU’s Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development (CCRTD) “we are trying to discern how cancer works and how it should be targeted. It is known that cancer kills when it begins to spread to other parts of the body, but why does prostate cancer have a tendency to spread to the bone, for example? What makes it go to that location rather than another?”

CCRTD was established in 1999 but in 2004, several of its researchers decided to narrow their focus on a disease that has become increasingly deadly to African Americans — prostate cancer — because they believed it would set them apart. The more targeted, in-depth research was essentially because of one person’s drive — Dr. Shafiq Khan, director of the center, but now there are ten people similarly aligned, along with undergraduates, graduate students and post-doctoral students. CCRTD is the only center focused on prostate cancer and why it seems to attack African Americans more than other races.

African Americans are prone to certain diseases, not just prostate cancer, yet few researchers seem to be concerned with studying the reasons. CCRTD, however, is very concerned.

“Everyone in the science world was excited about the sequencing of the human genome [In 1998, scientists began working to create a kind of diagram of where human genes are located so that, among other things, the
genes that cause diseases could be singled out but it was that of a white man so the discoveries might not be totally representative of a black person,” Marah says, adding pointedly that “the human genome of a black man should have also been sequenced.”

The center and its work have earned a strong reputation in the scientific research stratosphere. When Marah ventures out to review grants, for example, instead of people wondering what and where CAU is, as in the past, they now inquire about Dr. Khan and CCRTD’s work.

“There is awareness of what we are doing and who we are,” she says with pride.

For non-scientists, it can be a bit daunting to hear researchers froth over DNA sequencing, cells, proteins, and coding but it should be comforting to know that scientists at CCRTD are at the top of their game. In simplistic terms, researchers know that normal DNA is laid out in a certain way but that arrangement changes when cancer or other diseases are present.

With cancer, diabetes, and other diseases there are “reactive oxygen species” (ROS) that are overproduced and aid the growth of cancer cells. Dyes have been developed to detect these species but usually the imaging of these ROS is done with live cells.

“This can be measured by comparing the genetic makeup of DNA from a normal person to that of a person with a disease. Similarly, one can examine those changes in sequence alignment by sequencing the DNA to measure response to treatment,” adds Marah.

There are no patients in the center; rather, it has a lab set-up and purchases human tissue of cancer patients to assist in the research. Progress is being made, although incremental, regarding prostate cancer research. CCRTD has applied for two patents, which will help make disease detection and treatment easier.

With cancer, diabetes, and other diseases, there are “reactive oxygen species” (ROS) that are overproduced and aid the growth of cancer cells. Dyes have been developed to detect these species but usually the imaging of these ROS is done with live cells. This necessitates fixing the cells so they can’t move around, staining them with the dye and imaging the ROS under the microscope. According to Marah, it’s “a tedious process that entails using the cells only once, then growing them again and repeating the whole process” if imaging needs to reoccur.

With the first patent application, Marah, along with other researchers, has found an easier way to detect ROS by utilizing cells that are no longer alive. Via this method, cells can be grown, ground up and mashed and then stored in the freezer, taken out and re-used again and again, making disease detection easier, because cells do not need to be re-grown each time.

The second patent application is for a natural product, produced and used by plants as “an antibiotic to escape bacterial attack,” that kills cancer cells that don’t normally respond to conventional treatments.

“This product appears to work by overloading the cancer cells with the same ROS that they once used to survive,” notes Marah. Ironically, at very high levels the ROS can actually do a reversal and kill the cancer cells.

CCRTD researchers are quite active and publish their research in its various stages. Marah, for instance, publishes three journal articles a year. Having tested the use of plant extracts as therapy on cancer cells, she is seeking grants to move onto the next stages of testing on mice and then on humans. Another researcher, Dr. Jaideep Chaudry, is working on a compound that has decreased tumors in mice, also necessitating funds to proceed to research on humans. These clinical trials are “pieces of a puzzle” and require time and money.

But because of its research and ground-breaking discoveries, CCRTD has garnered welcome funds for the university. Additionally, it provides vast opportunities for undergraduate students, with the assistance of grants through the National Institutes of Health, to work 20 hours weekly; students who receive summer internships; and graduate and post-doctoral students who all receive top-notch training. Even the undergraduates, paired with older students, are able to conduct “novel” research by focusing on something for which the answer is yet unknown. Students must make final presentations before the dean and others as well as present at a symposium during the school year.

CCRTD also provides an invaluable community service component with a monthly radio show that discusses health issues and a significant presence at school sports events. There they pass out flyers informing the community about the ongoing prostate research and provide helpful tips about African Americans and their proclivity to cancer and other diseases.

Tricia Elam is a Washington, D.C.-based writer.
The project’s next steps include identifying vehicles on campus that might be good candidates to run on biodiesel and eventually ramping up to commercial-level production and supplying the city of Atlanta or other buyers with biodiesel.
Research activities at Clark Atlanta address some of today's most pressing problems. The university's Center for Alternative, Renewable Energy, Technology and Training (CARET2) has taken on two that are critically important to the nation's near-term future — the need for viable fossil fuel alternatives and the demand for a scientifically and technologically trained workforce.

The project centers around an everyday household byproduct — used cooking oil, donated in this case by Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport and Atlanta Fire Rescue. With support from the U.S. Department of Energy, CARET2 has designed and built a processor that converts the donated oil to biodiesel. Biodiesel is a biodegradable alternative to gasoline; its widespread use could significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The CARET2 biofuels project has the potential to provide green fuel for campus vehicles. It also could serve as a model for other universities and lead to new technology that might benefit developing countries. In addition, it is training students in alternative energy technology and production while giving them the skills and knowledge they need to develop their own businesses.

“The students can find investors and have their own processing plants,” says CARET2 founder and CAU engineering professor Olugbemiga Olatidoye. “That is what is exciting about it.”

Product and byproduct
CARET2 launched the biodiesel initiative following the Renewable Energy Act of 2008. A research team under Olatidoye designed a system using potassium hydroxide and methanol, and showed it delivers a comparatively higher yield of usable biofuel. The biodiesel lab also uses a centrifuge and ionic exchange resins during the reaction and purification process to generate a high-quality fuel.

The conversion process yields glycerin as a byproduct. With the help of CAU’s School of Business, this glycerin could be refined to create a university brand of bio-plastics, candle wax, crayons, car wash soap, tire shine and other industrial products, says Olatidoye.

The biodiesel processor, located in the university’s Thomas W. Cole, Jr. Research Center for Science and Technology, has run one 500-gallon batch of biodiesel to date. The project’s next steps include identifying vehicles on campus that might be good candidates to run on biodiesel and eventually ramping up to commercial-level production and supplying the city of Atlanta or other buyers with biodiesel. It is commonly used in large transport vehicles, back-up power generators, agriculture and also by first responders.

Longer term, Olatidoye hopes he and his students can acquire the resources to conduct research related to biodiesel-combustible engines.

International aspect
Olatidoye and his students also are studying the potential benefit of converting palm oil wastes into biodiesel, which could have tremendous significance in many developing countries where palm oil is a kitchen staple.

“The results we are getting are promising,” says Olatidoye. “We believe palm oil could yield greater output.”

Just as the biofuels project at CAU helps train students in alternative energy and green technology, this palm oil emphasis could lead to educational opportunities internationally — even economic ones, says Olatidoye. Students are never far from his mind as he conducts engineering research and related activities.

“It is very important—we have to always be cognizant—it’s not only theory we have to impart to our students,” Olatidoye says. “I don’t like to think any of my students are out there looking for a job. We have to help them create the opportunity before they get out there.”

Jacqueline Conciatore is an editor at the National Science Foundation in Arlington, Virginia.
Ronald Mickens is a very engaging conversationalist. But, the Fuller E. Callaway professor of physics was initially stumped when asked what he's been up to lately.

He said it's not possible to describe non-linear oscillation theory to a non-science person, but admitted that one can gain a sense of the subject from everyday experiences because oscillations are everywhere.

As Mickens explained, if you push a car hood up and down and then stop, the car will continue the movement for seconds. All objects generally oscillate with possible motions where they move back and forth in a limited space. Examples include a beating heart, water leaking from a faucet, and the changes in air temperature during the day.

Simply put, oscillation theory is trying to understand how these events occur in nature and predicting their behavior.

Ordinary language is too ambiguous to do that, and “the precision of mathematics is needed to assist understanding, defining and clarifying the concept,” he says.

Practical application of this research can be found in the creation of nanotubes and graphene sheets, both of which can be made to vibrate. The information about carbon nanotubes will interest NASA for construction of spacecraft, as the tubes are reported to have the highest strength-to-weight ratio of known materials.

Carbon graphene sheets, on the other hand, that are just one atom thick, may be created, making it possible to construct micro-systems that can measure the mass of molecules and other minute structures almost beyond human comprehension.

Touching upon the relationship of science to life, Mickens responded to a quote “Chaos was the law of nature:
Order was the dream of man,” by early 20th Century educa-
tor Henry B. Adams. He said that a “good” scientist may
respond by saying that while nature may or may not be gov-
erned by laws, and hence the chaos, human understanding
is clearly based on the assumption that such laws exist.

Mickens has held postdoctoral positions at MIT’s Cen-
ter for Theoretical Physics, the Joint Institute for Labo-
ratory Astrophysics, and Vanderbilt University. He also
taught physics at Fisk University from 1970 to 1981.

The springboard for the Petersburg, Virginia, native’s
research, he says, is the task of creating, analyzing, and
understanding certain features of the physical universe.
There are other scientists who have tried to be compre-
hensive, he says, and try to understand all of it at once.
These GUT (Grand Unified Theory) scientists are inter-
esting but have no direct relevance to his work.

“Even if GUTs are created they will provide no input
into how one should model the spread of disease or how
to obtain valid solutions for differential equations or how
to do a particular quantum calculation,” Mickens explains.

With that backdrop, Mickens, 69, who earned his Ph.D.
in theoretical physics from Vanderbilt University and his
B.A. degree in physics at Fisk University, outlined several
research interests beyond non-linear oscillations. One is

the mathematical modeling of periodic disease transmis-
sion and the use of differential equations, which also can
be applied in engineering, physics, and other disciplines,
to calculate and determine the spread of disease, and
to project how effective the use of vaccines might be in
retarding an ailment’s growth.

With a wide-ranging intellect and decades of experi-
ence, Mickens, who has published more than 300 peer-
reviewed scientific and mathematical research papers,
written six books, and edited nine volumes, doesn’t work
directly with CAU academic departments in an interdisci-
plinary manner in his research.

He is, however, fully engaged in daily discussions with
professors and students in several departments on topics,
including the methodology of science; creativity; learning
theory; and the history of physics, with special reference
to blacks; and applied mathematics.

Mickens meets daily with undergraduate and gradu-
ate students and fellow professors both formally and

knows what he’d like to see happen.

A key development would be new types of disease-
spread models. He would like to see the formulation of
new rules for the construction of related mathematical
models that incorporate information based on popula-
tions represented by integers or whole numbers.

“In mathematical modeling of disease transmission
and related issues, it is important to take into account the
fact that populations of humans are discrete units. You
can have ten people but you cannot have one-and-a-half
people,” Mickens said.

Mickens says that his greatest satisfaction as a scien-
tist is two-fold. The first is gaining a better understanding
of the physical universe and having the ability to shield
himself from the emotional, fear-laden explanations and
expectations of the ignorant. The second is his peers’ rec-
ognition of his work in various areas of scholarship and
research, and this includes the mentoring of both students
and colleagues.
A Good Model for Governance

Just about everyone in America has either been negatively affected by the nation’s financial crisis or knows someone who was negatively affected. Because of that, many people are still wondering why the crisis happened in the first place.

Investigation revealed that reckless policies and poor oversight by financial institutions played a significant role in destabilizing the nation’s economy. Simply stated, the public companies that manage and maintain our financial system became reckless and corrupt, putting the general public at risk. There was a lapse in what is known as corporate governance – the rules, practices and laws by which companies are operated, regulated and controlled in the best interest of all stakeholders.

Those stakeholders include not only the management, board of directors, employees and investors in the financial institutions that failed, but anyone who was affected by a particular public company becoming embroiled in scandal. That probably means you.

“We don’t know enough about corporate governance,” says Clark Atlanta University associate professor of accounting Siriyama Kanthi-Herath. Kanthi-Herath, who earned her Ph.D. in Australia and joined the CAU School of Business Administration in 2005, a year after moving to the United States. “We don’t know what’s happening in these corporations. We don’t know about board characteristics, and we don’t know how and what they are doing.” Kanthi-Herath is endeavoring to enlighten more people about corporate governance by authoring a series of research papers on the subject. In her initial paper, “Corporate Governance: A Research Analysis,” released in April, Kanthi-Herath and Solai Elyse Freeman (who was the primary researcher for the study) looked at public research on corporate governance that had already been conducted during the period between 2000 and 2010. Specifically, 15 studies of different aspects of corporate governance were reviewed to determine why there are so many companies with poor governance practices and how much ethics and leadership structures play a role in poor governance. Additionally, analysis of the studies uncovered some trends among the researchers themselves, including similarities in the motivations for the type of studies that were conducted, similarities in how they made sample selections or collected data, and differences in how the studies were designed.

But what makes Kanthi-Herath’s study of these corporate governance studies important is the conclusions that were reached. First, the research suggests the interest in corporate governance research is high — and it is because regulators worldwide are trying to determine what they can do to prevent companies from engaging in behavior that may bring about another economic crisis. There is evidence that good corporate governance can help.

Kanthi-Herath’s research also found that “there is no evidence of a direct relationship between corporate governance and company profitability. Similarly, there is no evidence that the quality of financial information is directly related to poor or strong corporate governance. However,
in many of the studies there was a linkage between cor-
gruption and ethics.” The connection was that more ethics
equals less corruption. Therefore, since establishing good
corporate governance could be viewed as choosing to be
more ethical, there is an argument to be made that estab-
lishing good corporate governance can lessen the amount
of corporate corruption.

“Confidence in corporations right now is minimal,”
says Kanthi-Herath. “Corporate governance is important
in rebuilding trust, therefore many companies are now
paying more attention to corporate governance and also
to corporate social responsibility.”

The idea that companies should be socially responsible
is a major component within corporate governance. For
the everyday person, corporate governance is important
because of what happened with financial reporting during
the period Kanthi-Herath studied. Accounting scandals
such as those that happened at Enron and WorldCom
damaged the public trust in American corporations and
more recent scandals have resulted in protest movements
like Occupy Wall Street. Kanthi-Herath says more study of
corporate behavior is needed.

“We need to do more and more research,” she says. “We
need to do practical reviews. We need to do empirical
examinations to see how corporate governance is linked
to corporate performance and also to know how we can
use corporate governance in rebuilding trust.”

As she pushes for more corporate governance research
at Clark Atlanta, Kanthi-Herath would also like to see a
research training component included in the curriculum
so that students can learn a critical skill that will make
them more marketable and help them discover break-
throughs in the field. Freeman, a CAU graduate and
accounting major, conducted valuable research for the
study and Kanthi-Herath says she would like to keep this
model in place for future studies.

Kanthi-Herath attended a grant writing seminar earlier
this year and is considering applying for a grant to continue
her research into corporate governance. If successful, she
would prefer to conduct empirical research concentrat-
ing on three areas: corporate governance, corporate social
responsibility and international accounting. That would help
her incorporate the research training component and enlist
accounting students to take part in this important work.

“This is a new area, so I am also learning,” Kanthi-
Herath says. “Reviewing corporate governance is impor-
tant for everybody because what corporations do has an
impact on everybody, not only for the shareholders, or for
management, but for the society at large.”

Matthew Scott is a New York City-based writer.
Péter Molnár is fascinated by self-organized systems of behavior. What are they? Familiar ones include patrons walking through Buckhead’s venues, geese flying over Cobb County, NASCAR drivers jockeying for position at the Atlanta Motor Speedway and Clark Atlanta University students moving everywhere on the main campus promenade and adjacent streets.

These types of activity, which public, private and non-profit organizations already record extensively by video, digital sensors and other means, fascinate Molnár, 45. The CAU associate professor in the Department of Computer & Information Science sees those movements and related behaviors as rich data sources that can be verified, analyzed, and used as inspiration for innovation in such areas as medicine, the economy, and technology.

Most people, of course, are unaware of the patterns of organization that their actions create or how that data can be used to develop computer simulations to assist people and mechanical devices. And Molnár says that studying the intricacy of individual and group interactions is a natural for the multidisciplinary scientific approach taken at CAU.
These computer models, says Molnár, are not developed to predict the specific actions of a single individual. Instead, he is concerned with observing how the actions of the simulated population match what is observed in the real world. The computer simulations can then be used to develop programs that will make one device, or many, behave in a certain ways.

One form of observation Molnár pursues is complex systems modeling. He uses its integration of physics, mathematics and computer science to track the movements that people make when they interact with each other, objects, or their daily activities.

“In my research, we try to replicate these behaviors in a computer program based on some rules, equations or algorithms,” he says.

For Molnár, who was born in Germany and earned his Ph.D. in theoretical physics and sociodynamics from the University of Stuttgart in Germany in 1995, the analysis of human interactions has two major benefits. On the social science side, it helps predict some human responses to external stimuli, and on the scientific side it assists the development of computer programs for non-human actors to respond as individuals and collaboratively.

People understand how advertisements, direct mailing, education, and personal interactions affect their decision making. Now, Molnár says, scientists can project as they add and subtract variables in their computer simulations not only how a single device might respond to new input but also how multiple linked devices may respond to each other.

There are four stages to computer modeling of humans. The first, Molnár explains, tracks the simulated subjects as they go through their daily routines of rest, school, work, friendship, transportation, worship, leisure, and other activities.

Second, a subject’s exposure to audio and visual impressions transmitted by multimedia and interactions with friends, colleagues, family, and others are captured, as well as how this stimuli can change an individual and a group’s interaction with each other.

The program also tracks how subjects maintain and develop relationships, and demonstrates that the strength of those connections may alter a person’s beliefs. That conclusion leads to the simulation’s final component, the way the subject develops opinions and makes decisions.

Those examples have shown Molnár how scientists can create computer simulation-based programs with practical applications of self-organized behavior by machines.

The military can create and deploy sensors that sleep when not needed, share power and information, and react in concert or singly as they are approached physically or electronically.

A transformation might also occur in the telecommunications industry, if self-organizing systems of mobile phone devices can decide collectively which machines will act as relays for voice or data, instead of relying on local cellphone towers or wireless access points. That, Molnár says, could create “a self-organization process so that the total network bandwidth is optimized.”

The commercial applications of computer simulations may also be used in facilities like airports, stadiums, or shopping malls where increasing a facility’s size is not the only way to make its movement more efficient. The modeling demonstrates ways to improve individual experiences and comfort, whether by better signage, venue placement, or products and services, leading as well to new and different marketing campaigns.

Molnár also is researching along with other departments ways to position CAU at the forefront of the next big thing in information technology: the expansion of computational science.

Supercomputing provides scientists with the opportunity to “see” the unattainable. That can be phenomena Molnár says, “that are too small, too large, too fast, too slow, too complex, or too dangerous.”
In the age of seemingly endless budget cuts, parents are rightly upset about the limited resources available to public schools. But the educational community does have one thing going for it in uncertain times: reams and reams of standardized testing data, ready for analysis by any educator committed to improving student performance. School of Education professor Veda Jairrels’s research combs through the data to reach a simple, albeit important, point for African-American parents: Reading to children from birth can raise reading test scores.

For Jairrels (J.D., Indiana University; Ph.D., University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa), the point may be simple, but not without controversy. Not only is there the ongoing question of whether standardized tests actually measure students’ mastery of a subject, many experts believe the tests have a cultural bias that leaves minorities at a disadvantage. And, testing data long ago proved what most would suspect about income disparities: wealthier students, on average, score better than their poorer counterparts.

None of that makes the trend Jairrels found in College Board testing data more palatable. The shocker in her research? Looking at 2007 SAT critical reading mean scores by race and by wealth, she found that African Americans from families with annual incomes above $100,000 scored lower than white students from families earning less than $10,000.

There was a legitimate concern about how these types of data reflect on African Americans, although the findings mirrored similar research published by the College Board in 1999. Fortunately, higher reading achievement for African Americans is not out of reach, and early childhood language acquisition may be the key to success.

A history of limited access takes its toll
For Jairrels, it all comes down to creating a culture of reading that has not existed before, something she was all too aware of growing up in Anniston, Ala. At the time,
Anniston was infamous for reprisals against peaceful civil rights protesters. Perhaps a predictor of her research to come, the violent confrontations included a 1963 attempt to integrate Anniston’s whites-only library.

“At least until the 1960s in the South, generations of African Americans grew up without ready access to schools, libraries, books and/or reading,” Jairrels wrote in her 2009 book, African Americans and Standardized Tests. “From West Africa to America, conditions did not allow for the development of a familiar reading habit to be passed down from generation to generation.”

“Now,” she added, “for those with at least access to libraries, we have the power to increase our scores if we increase our reading.”

One book a day, from birth to age six
Research has found that 30,000 may be the magic number in this effort: 30,000 words a day spoken to children by their mothers from birth to the age of three. Reading to children can move parents a long way toward reaching that goal and can enhance emergent literacy, where infants attempt to recognize word shapes on the page as they follow their parents reading from books.

According to Jairrels, parents can stay on track, and take their children to the next phase of childhood literacy, by aiming to read a short book each day to them from birth to age six. That translates to 2,000 books, and she has started “The 2,000-Book Movement” on Facebook as part of her grassroots effort to reach parents and encourage daily reading.

Instilling a love for reading in children
As children reach school age, Jairrels’s research indicates children can continue to progress with 30 minutes or more of pleasure reading per night, above and beyond any reading assigned as homework. The data from high-scoring SAT test takers provide ample support for the recommendation. Jairrels points to the book SAT Perfect Score: 7 Secrets to Raise Your Score, which surveyed and interviewed students who had perfect SATs. Tip number one was to “read everything.” The analysis indicated that perfect score students did 20 percent more pleasure reading than a control group in his research.

Jairrels suggests that African-American students may need to read at least 8 hours a week — four for school and four for pleasure reading — to move their collective mean test scores closer to the overall mean scores for the SAT.

When writing her book, Jairrels witnessed some remarkable successes on the SATs and other tests.

One child showed a fondness for the Harry Potter series and tested in the 93rd percentile in her third-grade Iowa Test of Basic Skills examination. Another strong reader said he spent a great deal of time in his youth listening to stories from his grandmother, became an avid reader in grade school, and went on to score 44 points higher than the verbal mean score when he took the GRE.

A third student participated in summer library reading programs and shared her mother’s love of literature; she would go on to score 650 on the SAT’s Verbal section, 145 points higher than the overall mean score. Yet another student who was read to as an infant played sports and a lot of video games, but he also kept to a strict reading schedule of at least 100 books a year. His test score: a 780 on the SAT critical reading section, 36 percent higher than the overall mean score, and 45 percent higher than the mean score for African Americans that year.

Incidentally, all four children come from single-parent households.

Research has found that 30,000 may be the magic number in this effort: 30,000 words a day spoken to children by their mothers from birth to the age of three.

Higher scores open doors
Experts may disagree as to what the tests, in and of themselves, say about a student’s knowledge and capabilities, but the fact remains that higher scores open doors — not only for college and scholarships, but for entering the military or pursuing other trades.

Standardized testing is not going away soon, either as an assessment tool or as a point of controversy among professional educators. More than a few view it as a necessary evil at best. But Jairrels is comfortable in her role as an advocate for reading to boost scores. Regardless of testing success, she knows students are better served if their parents read to them, as it creates literacy habits that will serve young African Americans well throughout their lives.

“I am not one to accept excuses on this. It is up to us to save ourselves,” says Jairrels. “Let’s say I’m wrong, and everyone else is wrong in their research. So what? All I’m asking you to do is read to your child every day.”

David Lindsay is a senior writer with Atlanta-based PR agency Write2Market.
Shava Cureton campaigns to cure environmental injustice.

If School of Social Work grad Shava Cureton’s career were a movie, it might be a little less Mariah Carey — the social worker from Precious — and a little more Julia Roberts in Erin Brockovich. Cureton recently landed a new job as a social worker with the Georgia Department of Family and Child Services, but her new career follows three years of graduate school research to bring much-needed awareness of environmental issues to the social services field.

These are issues whose time has come: Where most people have vague ideas about the debate over global warming and mankind’s impact on the environment, precious little attention comes to everyday, real-world problems of environmental hazards and lax policy enforcement. Poor communities that rely heavily on social services often face problems related to industrial pollution and poor air quality. And, just as often in social work, those issues take a back seat to more traditional concerns, like economic opportunities and access to childcare.

“We live in a society where economic status, race and place affect how well you thrive,” says Cureton (BA, ’09, MSW, ’12). “Unfortunately, people don’t realize the connection between environmental issues and health problems.”

Surveying the polluted landscape

For her master’s thesis, the Queens, N.Y., native surveyed 90 licensed social workers from Southeastern states on their awareness of the challenges poor communities face from unhealthy environments. The responses, which participants could submit anonymously, showed how far the social services field has to go to: 48 percent of the social workers surveyed said they never screen clients to see if they are harmed by environmental exposure, and 53 percent said they were not fully aware of the ways environmental problems could harm their clients.

While the awareness is lacking, the threat is real, says Cureton. “Hazardous waste facilities follow the path of least resistance,” she adds, which means waste ends up near poor, politically disenfranchised communities.

In a 2011 article Cureton published in the Review of Environmental Health, she points to research from Duke University’s Dorothy Powell and Howard University’s Victor Stewart, who found that poor people are more likely to live near heavy polluting industries, hazardous waste dumping sites, incinerators and areas with contaminated waste and soil.

“Environmental justice is especially important for children. They’re the most vulnerable members of society and they don’t get to choose the circumstances they live in,” she says.

Even more troubling is that because children are smaller than adults, the amounts of environmentally hazardous
materials they are exposed to are proportionally more harmful to their growing bodies. Children are exposed to many chemicals known to cause cancer, and researchers have even shown how toxic chemicals can appear in the cord blood of unborn children. Asthma increasingly affects children because of environmental exposure, and infants’ and toddlers’ natural hand-to-mouth activities mean they are always in danger of ingesting lead paint chips. Add to that the high child obesity rates in poor communities linked to inadequate dietary options and a dearth of safe, outdoor recreational spaces, and Cureton knows she has her work cut out for her protecting children.

In her survey, social workers who did have knowledge of environmental issues listed a host of problems their clients face. As might be expected, air pollution and exposure to chemicals were top concerns. Sadly, other hazards – asbestos and lead paint in very old apartments – are generations-old challenges that society has never had the political will to fully solve. Newer homes present a newer challenge, with survey respondents expressing client concerns about toxic materials used in cheap, foreign-made wallboard.

Social workers responding from the Gulf Coast detailed how their clients faced an even greater set of issues, such as respiratory ailments and other health problems in the wake of the BP oil spill and Hurricane Katrina.

The social workers also talked of clients who after military service returned home suffering from the chemical exposure they faced in the battlefield. And, the survey showed growing awareness of a related nutrition and obesity issue: limited healthy food options for the many poor neighborhoods that don’t have supermarkets. Social scientists call it the “food desert” problem, and it is something communities can start to address if they are granted the space to create community gardens or farmer’s markets.

Making the case for environmental justice training
Confronting this or any other environmental problem, however, is hard to do when social workers have limited exposure to the facts. Considering that so many of Cureton’s survey respondents were not fully aware of the problems, there’s a risk of environmental issues becoming a growing, and little-noticed, plague on poor people’s health and well-being.

Fortunately, there may be nearly as much hope in the data as there is cause for concern. Sixty-eight percent of respondents felt environmental issues should be included in social work curriculum, and 64 percent agreed that there is a need for training on environmental issues at their jobs.

Cureton is not content to wait for those promising opinions to translate into a trend. She has inserted herself into a growing environmental justice movement that calls for equitable treatment in the enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. While at Clark Atlanta, she took an environmental justice course offered by the Environmental Protection Agency and, before long, she was part of the public policy conversation, giving presentations at the Centers for Disease Control and Emory University.

While the awareness is lacking, the threat is real, says Cureton. “Hazardous waste facilities follow the path of least resistance.”

Last year, she was the only representative of the social work field selected to present at the National Environmental Health Association’s annual conference.

For many of the people Cureton speaks with, the conversation starts with learning what the issues are, and them finding out where to get more information. For hazardous waste and pollution concerns, the EPA is often the first stop. The agency has published documents, available online, that allow citizens to determine whether they live near “Superfund” sites — the more than 1,200 contaminated locations that U.S. government has determined are in need of a long-term clean-up solution.

Monitoring local government activity is important as well to determine what types of industrial businesses are being built near a community and assess what steps being made to avoid pollution and contamination in nearby residential areas.

From research to teamwork
Cureton believes that “in some ways, social workers can serve as the moral compass in society,” but is quick to add the best approaches to success are interdisciplinary in nature.

And, while Cureton herself has had a starring role in raising awareness, change often requires an ensemble cast. Once a social worker is able to bring issues to light, she says, one of the best approaches to change involves bringing in others — politicians, scientists, physicians, urban planners and private industry — for a collaborative effort.

“Social workers can do quite a few things once they are knowledgeable about an issue,” says Cureton. “From there, the power to create change comes from working with partners in the community.”
One of the hottest classes on campus for the last several years has been Psychology 358, “Human Sexuality,” taught by Dr. Christopher Bass. Its historic popularity means it is always full to capacity with a diverse group of about 150 students, including some from nearby Morehouse and Spelman, and there is usually a waiting list. The class is not new but has had various permutations since it was first taught by Dr. Jean Chandler as a lecture course in the early 1980s. Bass took the class in 1989 and began teaching it himself in 2005, continuing in the same vein. But the following year, he “noticed a gap” in what was taught and what students wanted to talk about. Bass stopped lecturing at various points and listened, ultimately deciding to allow more time for students to share their opinions, beliefs, and feelings.

One of the course’s aims, along with providing students a psychological, historical, sociological, and religious context in which to examine sexual behavior, is to uncover what the current attitudes and behaviors are as well as whether, how, and where the twain meet. To discern this, Bass, with input from his students, developed an anonymous questionnaire in 2008 that has students pinpoint which sexual behaviors they consider normal and abnormal. Each student also is asked to have five friends take the survey, which allows for an enormous amount of evidence to be compiled. The survey does not judge but it does ask very specific and graphic questions. There are then breakout sessions, with 10-15 students each, in which they tally up the answers and draw conclusions about what the data suggests.

The course text is *Sexuality Now* by Janell Carroll, a comprehensive volume that covers every sexual topic one can think of and then some. Imaginative student presentations on the various chapters have been created and many posted on YouTube. The course, in keeping with the text, explores an expansive array of material from how various religions define love to fertility and contraception to sexual/psychological theorists, such as Freud and Watson, to sexual orientation and sexually transmitted diseases and much in between.

According to Bass, some disputable research, as well as stereotyped media images, suggest that adolescents, particularly African-American males, are hypersexual, but his survey and experience teaching the class provide evidence to the contrary. Behavior and attitudes are not so “black and white but more complexly shaped by religion, age, gender, geographic location etc.,” he says. There is an excitement about learning about sex but it doesn’t necessarily translate to behavior. As one might surmise, students from the North, for example, tend to be more liberal and relaxed in their thinking about sexual topics.

“Females from the South in particular are more conservative, but the longer they spend in an environment such as college, the more liberal their views become regardless of religion,” Bass adds.

The class creates a safe space in which to discuss sexual observations and concerns. Santiya Shakur, who took it in 2010 as a sophomore and then returned his senior year as a teaching assistant, calls it the best class he ever had and says that the most controversial topic was homosexuality. Shakur’s views were changed on this very point because he left the class no longer believing that gayness is a choice. Students had been discussing it as “an option on the spectrum or situational,” says Bass. By virtue of the “safe space” created in the class, questions arise like, “If I have sex with one [same gender] person does that mean I am gay?” In this class, the answer is no. The religious aspect of the equation is tackled right away with assignments that include examining particular sections from the Bible and often confounding and sorting out their spiritual beliefs.
There is a no-tolerance policy for ignorance or disrespect and some discussions understandably have to be refereed. Although Bass steers clear of sharing his own personal opinions, he is compelled to speak up when he hears about disturbing or unhealthy behavior such as “unprotected, violent, dangerous or aggressive sex; violating of personal ethics or morals to impress a partner; and personality deception.”

So, what do students in Psych 358 ultimately learn and what is learned about them?

One of the most profound revelations has come as a result of many students buying into the sexual stereotypes about African Americans that are promulgated through the media, be it via music videos or the evening news. The course redirects their thinking and asserts that they can control and redefine black manhood or womanhood in America.

The course also has shown that sexual attitudes and behavior are affected by whatever happens to be “the political and cultural zeitgeist” because that determines whether students feel empowered or disempowered. For instance, in 2008, when then-Senator Barack Obama was elected president, there was more unity among black men, among black women and the black male and female dynamic was much stronger and more positive. During Jena 6, on the other hand, “women seemed to want to protect men and men felt under attack;” after Trayvon Martin, students “felt anger and confusion about what it all meant, particularly the Floridians,” Bass recalls. Young men “traveled outside the stereotyped gender role and were free to hug in class and be affectionate in a [platonic] way that hadn’t been seen previously.”

Whether there is in fact a new sexual revolution is uncertain but this course demonstrates that while students are free to talk about all kinds of sexual issues, their behavior is more conservative than their attitudes. Additionally, African Americans are not as “rigid about communication as society would have us believe,” Bass reports.

Although some students like Shakur changed their minds about previously held beliefs, not everyone does. The hope, though, is that much like traveling to another country with preconceived notions but later being able to appreciate different ideas and values, students will “create a spark for discussion and a thought process to grow beyond the course,” offers Bass.

It is not unusual months, sometimes, years after the class, for students to write and indicate that now they understand why it was important to wait to have sex, or that after they become parents they appreciate the section about childbirth. A seed has been planted that requires time to germinate and sprout – solid evidence of a successful class.
Dynamic duo RaShonda and RaLonda Brown

Dynamic duo RaShonda and RaLonda Brown, CAU School of Business seniors, went it alone for the first time this summer. Previously they worked at the same internships or were at least in the same city. But this year, RaShonda interned at General Electric Company in Connecticut, while RaLonda worked for the Federal Deposit Insurance Company in Atlanta.

Both young ladies have carefully nurtured solid relationships with the CAU faculty and are known for vigorously applying for internships, scholarships and other opportunities they seek out or that come their way.

"Sometimes," says RaLonda, "we apply for the same thing. We both interviewed to be fall 2012 campus ambassadors but she got it; I didn’t. We are always supportive of each other, though.”

Originally from Baldwin, Louisiana, 30 miles from Lafayette where they attended the Academy of Business and Finance high school, the identical twins say they don’t look alike because RaShonda has a birthmark on her eye and RaLonda one on her cheek. They were consistently good students, and encouraged to do their best by their grandparents and their mother who inspires them. Both are double Business/Finance majors, but RaShonda has a supply chain management concentration and RaLonda’s focus is marketing. It is frustrating when they are not seen as individuals, such as when they registered to vote but two applications resulted in only one registration.

Destiny nudged them early, RaLonda recalls, while visiting their mother’s office as children, sitting at her desk and pretending to be businesswomen. While working full-time, their mom recently earned a master’s degree from Louisiana State University and is working on her internal auditing certification. The games in their mother’s office as prelude, both knew before high school that they wanted to pursue business degrees. They were simultaneously smitten by CAU after visiting a few times and especially after meeting a particularly pride-filled tour guide and hearing Dr. Kimbro speak. They also wanted to be in Atlanta for “more plentiful opportunities than back home.”

Both love CAU with a fierce protectionism. Once RaShonda was in a multiple college competition sponsored by PNC Bank and did such a thorough job that another student assumed she attended Spelman.

“When people come down on CAU, it hurts. A group of us in the School of Business try to represent the CAU brand so that we can attract more recruiting and internships to the school. We think about the students coming after us,” she says.

The twins are enrolled in honors classes and earning GPAs of 3.6 and above. After graduation, graduate school is a given, though they are not sure when. Long-term goals include working in the business field, ideally corporate, ideally in the same or nearby city, although they have talked about how to cope if the best opportunity for either means different locations. Their ultimate goal is to create a franchise monogram company.

Course by course, internship by internship, the Brown twins are forging solid paths to distinct yet similarly spectacular futures.
First-year CAU doctoral student Louis Negron is a man on a mission. That mission, which he has emphatically chosen to accept, is to “effect and influence change in higher education for diverse students” by working on the administrative side of the academic equation. Negron’s drive to help others was shaped by his undergraduate years at Morehouse; volunteer work at the Children’s Defense Fund; a stint with the Oakland Freedom Schools and the Ella Baker Institute; his father, a hard-working teamster for 47 years; an all-male program in his Oakland high school; and the Omega Psi Phi fraternity.

From 1999-2001, Negron, of Puerto Rican descent, was an adjunct Spanish professor at CAU but soon learned that teaching wasn’t the most effective route for him to help get under-served students in college. He moved to Gainesville State College and became the coordinator of Hispanic Outreach. There he came in contact with undocumented students who were discouraged from applying to and attending college.

“They had no idea there were Hispanics in leadership positions in the corporate world and did not feel empowered,” he says.

This observation set Negron onto the first leg of his mission. He won a grant on behalf of the Hispanic Outreach office from the Roberto Goizueta Foundation and developed a scholarship program for documented and undocumented students. More than $500 million was awarded, establishing an endowment for Hispanic and Latino students and enabling six students to receive full scholarships through the new program. Negron says the application process was vigorous and competitive, but he believes his program was selected because it insisted that leadership qualities be among the determining criteria for awardees. Recipients have gone on to be both professionally “successful and community advocates,” Negron says proudly.

Being instrumental in these young people’s life-altering achievements motivated Negron to enroll in CAU’s Department of Education Leadership for his Ed.D., the next leg route to his mission. He returned to CAU because he “didn’t want to feel like a token” and “because it is at the cutting edge of urbanization.” The program also was praised by some of his mentors. Additionally the caliber of those leaders on the top rungs, such as President Brown and Dr. Moses Norman, was impressive. CAU has surpassed what Negron imagined and has enhanced his own leadership repertoire so much that he formed a consultancy, Negron Educational Service, in 2005. NES services Pre-K-12, college level and for-profit and nonprofit entities, helping to raise the diversity levels and awareness about how to work with a multicultural clientele.

“If you are trying to do business with a Hispanic person, you must first talk about your families so they can get to know you. And when people complain about Hispanic parents not attending PTA meetings, they don’t realize many are working two or more jobs. The mindset has to be changed,” says Negron, who plans to incorporate these diversity themes in his doctoral thesis.

As if he weren’t doing enough, he performs similar diversity tasks for Year Up Atlanta, an intensive training program for low-income young people. In the past year, the program went from 10% diversity to 30%. As he purposefully creates trust in, acceptance of and demand for his brand, Negron thrives on his tightly packed daily schedule. Evidenced by the adrenalin rush tingeing his voice, this man on a mission wouldn’t have it any other way.
If girls are going to “run the world,” as Beyoncé proclaims, many will first need what second-year CAU social work doctoral student Kiana Battle prescribes: mentoring, group workshops and participation in her eight-week curriculum. Battle and psychologist Jessica Taylor are the co-authors of Real Girls: Shifting Perceptions on Identity, Relationships and the Media and an accompanying journal, Real Girls Reflections.

The authors met in 2008 and connected on many levels. They were conducting group counseling sessions with girls in Georgia’s Lamar County schools, they were both strong Christians and they saw a need they felt passionately about and equipped to address. The writing took four months and incorporates a facilitator’s guidebook, and background on why and how to run a group and information about issues girls aged 13-17 are facing. They self-published through the website, Create Space in December 2010. Since then, the pair has seized opportunities to travel and spread their timely message at conferences hosted by several national organizations, including The Association for the Advancement of Social Work, the American Council of Social Workers, National Youth at Risk and the National Association of Social Workers. The response to their curriculum has been overwhelmingly positive as Battle and her partner share their ideas with and offer training to counselors, social workers, psychologists and others who mentor and counsel young girls.

The “Real Girls” program stands out because of its straightforward gaze into the onslaught of realities young women confront as a result of the media’s permeating influence.

“We want to reach the young ladies on their level,” Battle says, “which is the basic premise of social work.”

For example, the curriculum looks at musical messages through film, video and audio clips, and magazine analysis that examine the topics, ideas and products popular magazines sell.

“We don’t try to censor,” she adds, “but we teach them to have a critical view about the messages and how to listen to things that affect them and their destiny.”

Additionally, the curriculum includes biblical scriptures, although not in a “heavy-handed way,” and the program can be used in a secular fashion.

Battle, originally from New York, received her undergraduate and master’s degrees from SUNY Stony Brook and has been a social worker since 2003. Through this work she realized that a disturbing number of girls were struggling with body image, self-esteem and related concerns and began conducting group sessions focusing on these issues. Along with what she learned hands-on, she incorporated research for the book from entities such as the Dove self-esteem fund/Real Beauty campaign.

Battle accomplished all of the above before deciding to enroll at CAU for her Ph.D. She attended a workshop in 2010 and was impressed by how passionate the attendees and CAU’s community were about social work. The African-American perspective attracted her as well as “the history, legacy and the location.” She has been more than pleased with the small classes and the faculty’s availability.

“I appreciate the hands-on approach. It is family-like, nurturing and intimate.”
Man of the Year: Tyler Joshua Green

When George Bernard Shaw coined the phrase, “Youth is wasted on the young,” he obviously hadn’t encountered Tyler Joshua Green. A 19-year old junior religion major, Green is the youngest-ever CAU Student Government Affairs president, in both age and classification. He established his credentials freshman year when he joined Building a Foundation for the Leader in You (BFLY), a campus mentoring organization for Atlanta public school students, and was appointed “Mr. BFLY” by the organization’s president. That same year, Green also became the youngest winner of the “Mr. Man of the Year” pageant, all while maintaining a 3.6 GPA. Sophomore year he won the inaugural James P. Brawley speaking contest.

Green’s duties as SGA president began immediately after he won the election last semester.

“Someone — administration, staff, faculty or the student body — always has a task or assignment for me,” he says, undaunted.

A priority as SGA president is to help CAU attract and cultivate strong black men. Though the quantity is few right now, the “quality is outstanding. We will add quantity. I will be a beacon of light, a liaison and ambassador for the campus,” Green says, showing that black men can be both intellectual and cool.

Who or what put such a fierce fire under this young man?

“My pastor back home is brilliant and well-rounded in his teaching and lifestyle. I pick apart everything he says and does,” he says.

Green also “absorbed what ministers around the country were saying and tried to apply it.” And above all, there is the relationship he “cultivated with Christ.” He believes that is what helped him most in winning SGA’s top spot.

“The student body knew I was serious and sincere about the word of God and that I try to live according to the scripture,” Green explains.

Already a minister, Green writes a biweekly column for CAU’s Panther newspaper that focuses on a selected scripture accompanied by an anecdote or parable. One of his recent topics was how people concern themselves with financial stability, but too often neglect the spiritual parallel.

CAU attracted Green from Indianapolis because of the abundance of churches in Atlanta and the school’s strong reputation. He has not been disappointed. CAU “gives you room to make a name for yourself and the institution rather than the individual being overshadowed by the institution. Students shine brighter than CAU, which is the sole job of an institution.”

The university also “teaches more than book smarts.” Outside the classroom, he raves about the various seminars that dorm halls and fraternities sponsor. Through his Man of the Year position, he organized two such functions: “There’s a King in You” on manhood and “Common Cents” on money management.

Campus mentors are President Brown, Dr. Dunston, Dr. Kimbro and Dr. Jenkins who “give it to you straight.”

After graduation Green is confident he will attend a seminary and then go “straight to pastoring.” The SGA presidency, he surmises, will give him “a foundation on how to run a church.”
Lots of people look up to the beautiful Tiffany Lauren Mason. She’s Miss Clark Atlanta University 2012-13. As a senior mass media arts major, she can tell you the importance of speaking up for your beliefs. But as a proud student of Clark Atlanta University, she also will tell you that speaking up isn’t always enough.

Tiffany understands that by standing up for CAU and sharing your financial contributions, you support the young men and women who, just like her, comprise America’s next generation of global leadership!

Help Miss CAU Tiffany Lauren Mason and her classmates stand strong by standing up for CAU!

Text 50555 to give now, make your secure contribution online at www.cau.edu, or call Ms. Nicole Blount at 404-880-8710. Stand Up for CAU today!
Mark your calendar now for these important CAU dates!

**Founders Week**  
March 18-22, 2013

**Founders Day Convocation**  
March 21, 2013

**Baccalaureate Service**  
May 19, 2013

**Commencement Convocation**  
May 20, 2013

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2011-2012 Athletics at a Glance
SIAC Conference Championship, NCAA DII & SIAC All-Academic Team Honors, and Regional Competition/Tournament Appearances
  • Women’s Cross-Country

Coach of the Year and Coach of the Tournament Honors
  • Women’s Cross-Country

East Division Runner of the Year Honors Women’s Cross-Country
  • SIAC All-Conference Honorees – 16
  • SIAC All-Academic Honorees – 4
  • NCAA All-Region Honorees – 1

National NCAA Rankings
Football: Defense
  • Tackles for Losses (TFL) – 2nd
  • Scoring Defense – 12th
  • Total Defense – 26th
  • Passing Defense – 27th

IN MEMORIAM
W. Oliver “Kip” McClendon Jr.
Clark Atlanta University’s
Championship Women’s Tennis Coach

W. Oliver “Kip” McClendon was born October 22, 1950, in Atlanta, Ga to W. Oliver McClendon Sr. and Ruby Durden-McClendon. He developed a love of tennis early on and played on the Washington Park and McGhee Tennis Center courts during his youth. He played competitively in high school and during his service in the U.S. Navy. He also was a member of the renowned men’s tennis team at Hampton University. McClendon was an inspiring coach who brought the best out of his players. He coached the Clark Atlanta University Women’s Tennis Team from 2002 to 2008. Under his leadership, the team won two SIAC Women’s Championships.

McClendon and his wife, Denise Smith McClendon had four children, the late Keisha Toi McClendon, Jai McClendon Jones, Kari Patrice McClendon and W. Oliver McClendon, III. He had one grandson, and was anticipating the birth of his first granddaughter in January. The McClendons also gave birth to a creative legacy, The McClendon School of Dance, in 1977. McClendon himself served as executive director and, during the school’s early years, served as technical director, sound and lighting engineer and program emcee simultaneously. Today, the institution is known as the McClendon Performing Arts Institute.

His memory and legacy will live on through the professionalism, competitive excellence and passion for life he instilled in his athletes and all he encountered.
Wade Ford Salutes Clark Atlanta University & Wishes Its Alumni, Faculty & Students Much Continued Success

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A Son of CAU Returns to Serve

James A. Hefner, Ph.D., was relishing retirement when he answered call to serve as Clark Atlanta University’s interim provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. He began in the role this September, bringing more than two decades of stellar experience as a university president to the office. He led both Tennessee State and Jackson State universities, and also served as provost of Tuskegee University.

The prolific scholar and author earned the bachelor’s degree from North Carolina A&T State University, the master’s degree in economics from Atlanta University (now Clark Atlanta University) and the Ph.D. from the University of Colorado at Boulder. He will serve in the interim role until the completion of a national search.