

MIDDLE GA PARTNERS FOR HIGHER

# EDUCATION TOGETHER!

Changing lives and  
Middle Georgia one  
student at a time.



Dream Makers:  
**Meet the 2017  
Education  
Together Partners**

MIDDLE GA PARTNERS FOR HIGHER

# EDUCATION TOGETHER!

Ask people in Middle Georgia about the greatest challenge facing our region, and inevitably, poverty will be among the top responses. Regardless of the socio-economic level, age, race, or gender of the respondents, poverty is top of mind because it spawns a host of other problems. Education Together was created to break the cycle of poverty for high school seniors in Bibb County and six contiguous counties who, poised to graduate, struggle to afford college or post-secondary training.

Education Together is Middle Georgia-centric – Middle Georgia based partners fund scholarships for Middle Georgia students to attend one of five designated Middle Georgia colleges. Education Together scholars who pursue bachelor's degrees may earn them at Wesleyan College, Middle Georgia State University, Mercer University or Fort Valley State University.

But Education Together has an added component – our scholars can pursue a diploma, certificate or a two-year associate's degree at Central Georgia Technical College. In practical terms, we scholarship potential plumbers, construction managers and cosmetologists as enthusiastically as potential doctors, teachers and accountants.

But for all of Education Together's practicality, it's aspirational too. Education Together doubles as a workforce development program that helps train the leaders of tomorrow. We offer our scholars support and guidance, and provide opportunities for them to learn about our region and make connections to increase the chances they'll stay here after graduation to "live, work and play."

In this special section, the first of two in 2017, you'll meet our generous partners and

read about the organizations that fund the scholarships. We recap The Telegraph's 40th annual Golden Eagle Awards that celebrate the scholastic achievement and community service of Middle Georgia's outstanding high school seniors, and you'll see Education Together's five Teacher Excellence Award winners.

My thanks to Education Together's founder, former Telegraph publisher Don Bailey, for his vision and leadership. Don saw a critical need to expand post-secondary educational opportunities in Middle Georgia for students needing financial assistance, rallied community leaders, and jointly, we launched Education Together in 2016. Everyone associated with the program owes him a debt of gratitude.

We move forward with our new publisher, Rodney Mahone, who joined us in May. Rodney is very enthusiastic about Education Together and is equally committed to our mission. You'll meet Rodney on page 19. He looks forward to spending time in Middle Georgia to meet people and learn about our region.

In closing, a few quick thanks, to our partners for their generosity and engagement with our scholars, to the Community Foundation of Central Georgia for administering our scholarship fund, and to the scholars themselves, who touch and inspire me with their dignity, work ethic, and gratitude. It's a joy to work with them and watch them grow.

Warm regards -



Jami Gaudet  
Program Manager



**JAMI GAUDET**  
Program Manager  
Education Together



# Table of Contents

Program Manager’s Letter .....2  
Scholarship Guidelines .....3

**PARTNERS**

Peyton Anderson Foundation..... 4  
Central Georgia Technical College.....5  
Community Foundation of Central Georgia...6  
Fort Valley State University..... 7  
GEICO..... 8  
Georgia Power ..... 9  
Knight Foundation..... 10  
Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority..... 11  
Mercer University ..... 12  
Middle Georgia Center for  
Academic Excellence ..... 13  
Middle Georgia State University..... 14  
Navicent Health..... 15  
Parrish Construction..... 16  
Robins Financial Credit Union..... 17  
State Bank & Trust Company ..... 18  
The Telegraph..... 19  
United Way of Central Georgia ..... 20  
Wesleyan College ..... 21  
  
2017 Golden Eagle Awards..... 22  
2017 Education Together Scholars ..... 24

**Education Together 2018  
Applications Accepted  
December 15, 2017 -  
March 15, 2018**

# Education Together Guidelines

**BACKGROUND & PURPOSE**

*Education Together* is a collaboration among community partners to provide needs-based educational scholarships to high school seniors in seven Middle Georgia counties (Bibb, Crawford, Houston, Jones, Monroe, Peach and Twiggs) to defray the cost of higher education or technical education at Central Georgia Technical College, Fort Valley State University, Mercer University, Middle Georgia State University, and Wesleyan College.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

- Must be a graduating senior at a public or private high school, or a home schooled student accepted to, and planning to enroll at one of our designated Middle Georgia colleges or universities.
- Must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to apply.
- Students who meet the above criteria and are planning to major in Nursing are eligible for the Education Together Navicent Health Nursing Scholarship.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Recipients will be selected based on the following:

- Preference is given to students with the greatest demonstrated financial need.
- Positive record in academics, community service, and service to others.
- Preference is given to first generation college students, defined as a student with neither parent having received a four-year college degree.
- Most recent high school transcript.
- A resume listing school and community activities, athletics, awards, offices held and other relevant experiences.
- A letter of recommendation from a teacher, coach, mentor, advisor or counselor.
- Current, submitted FAFSA Student Aid Report.

**AWARDS**

**Education Together**

Award: \$10,000 each (\$2,500 per year for up to four years). Must maintain 2.0 GPA. For students attending Central Georgia Technical College (CGTC), the award varies depending upon the program (diploma, certification, or two-year degree). If a CGTC student completes a program, maintains eligibility and pursues additional studies at another designated Middle Georgia college, the Education Together scholarship can continue until the \$10,000 maximum scholarship award is reached.

**Education Together Navicent Health Nursing Scholarship**

Awards: 2-\$7,500 each (\$1,875 per year, renewed annually for up to four years of undergraduate education at a designated college or university with a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0).

- Students may receive the Education Together Scholarship or Education Together Navicent Health Nursing Scholarship, not both.

**Education Together Mercer University Scholarship**

Award: 1-\$15,000 (\$3,750 per year, for up to four years. Chosen from the Golden Eagle nominees.

In 2017, the Education Together Scholarship Fund of the Community Foundation awarded 18-\$10,000 scholarships, 2-\$7,500 Navicent Nursing Scholarships, 1-\$15,000 Mercer University Scholarship and 5-\$1,000 Teacher Excellence Awards for a total of \$215,000.

**Apply online: [www.CFCGA.ORG/WEBPORTAL](http://www.CFCGA.ORG/WEBPORTAL).  
For additional information, please visit:  
[CFCGA. ORG/EDUCATION TOGETHER](http://CFCGA.ORG/EDUCATION TOGETHER).**

**KAREN LAMBERT**  
President  
**Peyton Anderson  
Foundation**



Former Macon Telegraph owner Peyton Anderson created a local foundation to improve lives and enhance Macon and Middle Georgia. Since 1989 the foundation has awarded more than \$87 million to organizations and non-profits that have spearheaded other initiatives. For its 20th anniversary the Foundation launched the Peyton Anderson Scholars program, awarding more than \$1,200,000 to 104 deserving students with financial need – and among them, 16 have graduated.

**MISSION**

The Peyton Anderson Foundation is a place-based foundation investing in the good works of people in Central Georgia and improving their quality of life through health, education, economic and civic opportunity, the environment, human services, and arts and culture.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

We are a local foundation directed by our benefactor to “reward good-doers” in Macon, Georgia. Our most successful ventures include: NewTown Macon, Community Foundation of Central Georgia, Peyton Anderson Scholars program, Peyton Anderson Community Services Building, Ocmulgee Heritage Trail, Peyton Anderson Cancer Center, and financial support of our local institutions including colleges, universities, and hospitals, as well as other nonprofit organizations.

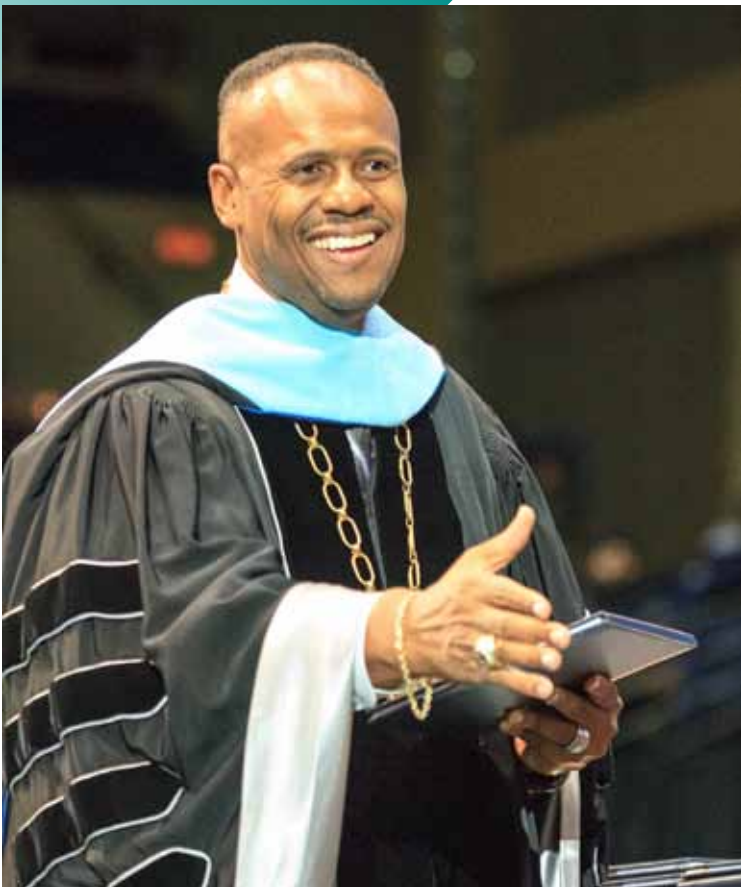
**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

The Peyton Anderson Foundation is a lasting memorial to a man whose goodwill lives on long

after his death in 1988. Peyton Anderson, owner of The Macon Telegraph and The Macon News in the 1950s and 60s, was a highly successful businessman, family man, civic leader and philanthropist. In his will, Peyton Anderson assigned the bulk of his estate for charitable purposes to benefit his hometown. He maintained that the people of Macon, Georgia had been good to him, and he, in turn, wanted to be good to them. The Peyton Anderson Foundation has granted over \$94,000,000 to “good-doing” causes in Central Georgia since 1989.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together recognizes and rewards deserving students in Central Georgia, publicizes their accomplishments and brings positive attention to educational success. Additionally, Education Together provides invaluable opportunities for its recipients to network with local professional and business leaders, which will be especially important after college graduation.



We exist for workforce development. CGTC delivers accessible and affordable educational opportunities to all middle Georgians. A unit of the Technical College System of Georgia, we offer regionally and industry-specific accredited academic programs, no-cost adult education, citizenship and literacy classes, and economic development programs to support local employers. We also provide a graduate guarantee. By employing in-field experts to educate our students, we produce quality, workforce-ready graduates. Combined, CGTC's programs and services enhance the region's workforce and bolster the local economy.

**MISSION**

The mission of Central Georgia Technical College is workforce development. Whether you are a student obtaining a credential in a credit program for a career; a Move on When Ready student earning dual credit for high school and college courses simultaneously; or a student enrolled in our no-cost preparatory classes to earn a GED®, we provide quality, affordable education options for all citizens in middle Georgia.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

CGTC provides great accessibility to a quality education with numerous programs on three campuses in Macon, Warner Robins and Milledgeville. Additionally, select courses and programs are available at five centers across the college's service area, as well as through day, evening, online, and BlendFlex courses. With a low credit hour cost and numerous financial aid options, earning a short-term certificate, diploma, or associate degree is convenient and affordable. CGTC is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) which makes classes transferable to public and private four-year institutions. In 2016,

CGTC partnered in launching the VECTR Center in Warner Robins to provide specialized services and education to military, veterans, and their families. In 2017, the first cohort began courses for the new Associate of Science Nursing program.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

More than 90 percent of our graduates find employment and remain in the region and contribute to the local tax base. For the past two fiscal years, CGTC boasts more than 3,000 unduplicated graduates – the first college in Georgia's Technical College System to do so. By graduating over 3,000 students each year, we help to provide a quality workforce that supports our local economy.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

The Education Together scholars are intelligent and capable young men and women who will make a difference in our communities, region, and state. By offering financial support to these students, we reaffirm the fact that investment in education is the best investment we can make. Education Together is a life-changing opportunity that opens many doors for area students.

**IVAN ALLEN**  
President  
**Central Georgia  
Technical College**





KATHRYN DENNIS

President  
Community  
Foundation of  
Central Georgia



Over the past 23 years, the Community Foundation of Central Georgia has worked with donors to build charitable endowments. To date, these charitable funds have awarded \$75 million in grants and scholarships supporting nonprofits and students in the Foundation’s 21-county service area. The Community Foundation can help you find the best avenue for your personal philanthropy.

MISSION

CFCG’s mission is to enhance the quality of life for the people of Central Georgia. We do that by helping individuals and families with their philanthropy to help them make a difference in the community they love. Our goal is to increase philanthropy across the region and open citizens’ eyes to the ways they can give back. When people think of philanthropy, we hope they will think of CFCG.

STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

The Community Foundation has a remarkable group of donors, volunteers, and staff with a deep passion for making the region a better place. The governing Board of CFCG consists of proven leaders with a long-term vision to support the region. The Community Foundation of Central Georgia is known for outstanding personal service to donors, strong financial management, effective grantmaking, positive community leadership, and collaboration with donors, other grantmakers, and nonprofit organizations.

ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

In the 23 years since our founding, CFCG has awarded more than \$75 million in grants and scholarships that have enabled students to continue their education, fed the hungry, beautified our surroundings, protected children, assisted Veterans, supported the arts, to name a few. Our expertise is matching donors’ interests with community needs in creative ways while making it easy for dollars to be used for charitable purposes.

WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Over just two years, 40 local students will have financial assistance to attend local colleges. Many of these students are first generation college students. Their grades show that they take the scholarship seriously. Having well-educated citizens is crucial to a strong economy and democracy. These educated students will be prepared to make meaningful contributions as they continue to reside and participate in central Georgia.



PAUL JONES

President  
Fort Valley State  
University

A unit of the University System of Georgia, FVSU is an 1890 land-grant institution committed to excellence, innovation and discovery through research and community engagement locally, nationally and globally. The historically black college leads the nation in graduating African America students in mathematics and statistics, is 6th nationally for graduates in Agriculture, and sends more students to medical and dental school than any other state school in Georgia.

MISSION

FVSU's mission is to empower students from a range of backgrounds to use education as a bridge to meaningful careers. Our low student/faculty ratio means students learn from academicians who are experts in their fields.

STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Ranked #6 among best colleges in Georgia by College Choice, we've been the #1 producer of African Americans with mathematics degrees for two of the past three years and are #25 in producing African-American agriculturalists. FVSU manages tens of millions of dollars in basic research and public service programs, most from federal sources. We're #6 nationally in online psychology programs, and our online organizational leadership degree is ranked 9th. We're a global leader in agricultural-based research; for example, finding non-chemical methods to keep livestock healthy.

ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

FVSU is part of the fabric of Middle Georgia, and we take seriously our responsibilities as both a historically

black university and a land-grant institution which serves students from all races, cultures, and backgrounds. We provide opportunities for intellectual growth and skill development in a broad range of academic disciplines for communities that have been historically under served, and have developed unique capacities in a range of fields. The transformation of our students between arrival and graduation is extraordinary and is what makes an FVSU education uniquely impactful.

WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Our partnership is great way to promote the educational opportunities at FVSU where our scholars are enrolled in aggressive academic programs to become high-achieving students and professionals. Through Education Together, we connect with other organizations committed to enhancing our scholars' lives and explore additional collaborations for even greater effectiveness. The greatest achievement of Education Together is ensuring that deserving students from Middle Georgia are empowered to stay here for college, and hopefully, beyond.





# RHETT RAYBURN

Vice-President of  
Southeast Operations  
**GEICO**



We are the second largest private passenger automobile carrier in the United States. Here in Macon we handle two of our ten regions – Southeast and Midwest – and several national operations including Emergency Road Service, Salvage and Glass Claims. Housing over 5,400 associates, our Macon campus is the largest GEICO location in the country.

## MISSION

GEICO was founded over 80 years ago with the idea we could save customers money by delivering insurance products to them directly, and that's still our mission today.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Our strength will always be our associates. By providing over 5,400 local jobs, we have an enormous economic impact. I have the pleasure of spending my days with an amazing group of people who deliver outstanding service to the customers who need us.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

GEICO has had a presence in Middle Georgia for over 44 years. We value that relationship and view it as a privilege and a responsibility. But we're more than just an employer. Our associates live here. Their spouses work here and their children attend our schools. We have an obligation to them and to the community to

do everything in our power to make our community a better place to live. In addition to jobs and salaries in the local economy, we support local colleges and universities through our tuition reimbursement program that allows our associates to pursue their education. Our associates contribute either by volunteering their time, raising money or contributing their own hard earned money. We're proud that GEICO associates have been the largest contributor to the United Way of Central Georgia for over 10 years. Countless volunteer hours provide an immeasurable benefit to the community.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Education Together is doing a tremendous job. Providing funds to make college possible for students is no-brainer. When given an opportunity, driven and talented students accomplish amazing things that both they and the community benefit from, so we can never do too much.







Georgia Power is the largest electric subsidiary of Southern Company (NYSE: SO), America’s premier energy company. Value, Reliability, Customer Service and Stewardship are the cornerstones of the company’s promise to 2.5 million customers in all but four of Georgia’s 159 counties. Georgia Power is committed to delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy at rates below the national average.

**MISSION**

The tenets of Georgia Power focus on reliability, customer satisfaction, value and stewardship. That’s what we strive to uphold for our 2.5 million customers. In Central Georgia, that’s 26 counties and more than 165,000 customers. We work to deliver safe, clean, reliable, affordable power.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

The reliability of what we do and what we deliver allow our customers to depend and count on us. We like to think we’re such an innate part of life, that people don’t even think of us – they’re just assured we’re there for them. We understand that as time goes on, people will have more and more things to plug into walls. We don’t want usage to go down, we want power to be utilized more efficiently. And with our acquisition of Atlanta Gas Light Resources, we now have a gas and electric energy footprint.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

Georgia Power has worked to be a major player in

economic development for 80-plus years. We believe if we grow the state, everybody benefits. We have more than 1,200 employees in Central Georgia and more than 32,000 Southern Company employees in our Atlanta-based corporation. Georgia Power’s motto is, “A Citizen Wherever We Serve.” Coined by the company’s first president in 1929, our employees work to make Georgia a great state in which to do business. We don’t simply phone in participation. We live in the communities in which we serve and strive to have positive impacts where we live.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education continues to be a focus of Georgia Power. We must have a viable workforce to attract businesses to Central Georgia, and that starts with education. A trained workforce makes achieving goals for the business and the state better. Education Together works to ensure deserving Central Georgia students continue and complete their formal educational goals.

**RON SHIPMAN**  
Vice-President  
Central Region  
**Georgia Power**



# LYNN MURPHEY

Macon Program Director

Knight Foundation



**MACONITE BEVERLY KNIGHT OLSON ON HER FAMILY'S LEGACY:** The growth and depth of Knight Foundation grants and trustees have dramatically changed over the 30 years I've served on the Knight Foundation Board. The impact of Macon's grants is for the benefit of the whole community and it's a privilege to be a part of that change.

## MISSION

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation is a national foundation with strong local roots. We invest in journalism, in the arts, and in the success of cities where brothers John S. and James L. Knight once published newspapers. Our goal is to foster informed and engaged communities, which we believe are essential for a healthy democracy.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Today, Knight Foundation, with an endowment of \$2.4 billion, is a leading funder of journalism and arts in the United States. We support the success of our 26 diverse communities through ideas that help cities attract and nurture talent, promote economic opportunity and foster civic engagement.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

Knight is a national foundation with significant ties

to and investments in the Macon community. Since Knight made a \$2 million investment to establish the College Hill Alliance in 2009, another \$25 million in residential and commercial development in the Corridor has been leveraged from public and private sources, according to a 2012 independent evaluation commissioned by the foundation. Continued revitalization of the Beall's Hill neighborhood, improvements to Tattnall Square Park, the development of Mercer Village and Mercer's Center for Collaborative Journalism are among the most visible outcomes of the initiative. These efforts have resulted in nearly \$100 million in private and public investment since 2009.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Knight Foundation originated with the Knight family's belief in the value of education.



**KNIGHT  
FOUNDATION**





As Macon-Bibb’s lead economic development authority, we have adopted a new, more hands-on model that seeks to attract new industry to our community and engage existing industry and community stakeholders. Through strategic property redevelopment and acquisition, optimizing infrastructure and helping to expand the capacity of existing businesses, we promote our mission of job creation and workforce retention in Macon-Bibb. Much of our recent success has come from challenging old norms, broadening partnerships and utilizing new technologies. We are always mindful that who we are today as a community is but a stepping-stone to the community we want to be tomorrow.

**MISSION**

The mission of Macon-Bibb County Industrial Authority is to promote the economic well-being of Macon-Bibb County by creating and saving jobs and increasing the tax base.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

The MBCIA has the constitutional authority to act on behalf of the citizens of Macon-Bibb County. Our staff has more than 75 years of combined experience in economic development with a nationally acclaimed legal firm to guide us. In the past five years, 1,843 jobs were created and/or retained in Macon-Bibb, with \$15 million expended on land purchases, development and upgrades to industrial parks, sites and facilities. In addition to \$1.6 billion in new investment committed by 10+ industrial projects, we have 26 years of unmodified audits.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

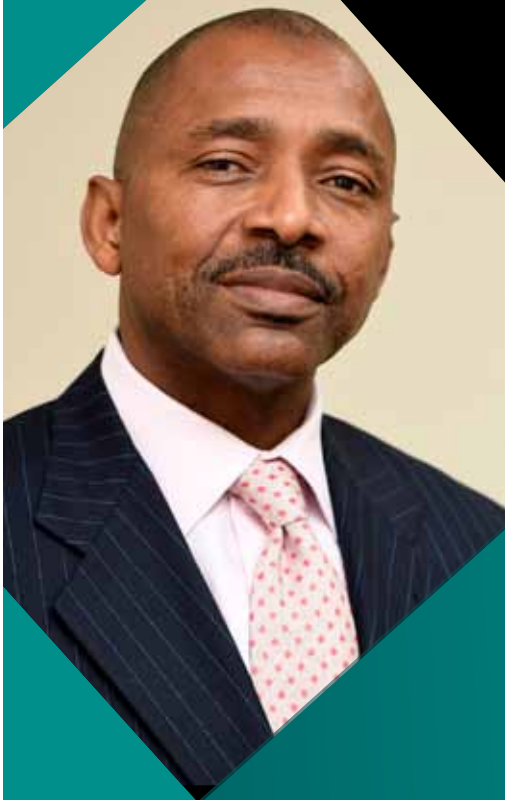
The MBCIA was created for public good and welfare to promote and expand industry and trade within Macon-Bibb County, and to reduce unemployment. We provide a strong and sustainable economic foundation for Macon-Bibb, building hope, creating and retaining jobs, and growing business to improve quality of life. With more than \$1.5 billion in new investment in 10 industrial projects, we have demonstrated our ability to deliver tax revenue and employment opportunities to Middle Georgia.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together honors students from diverse backgrounds and provides scholarships for local students to achieve their dream of attending a local college. Our inaugural class was a great group of students, and the MBCIA is proud to provide needs-based scholarship opportunities for students, especially for first generation college students.

**CLIFFARD  
WHITBY**

Chairman  
**Macon-Bibb County  
Industrial Authority**



# BILL UNDERWOOD

President  
Mercer University



Since 1871, when Mercer moved to Macon from Penfield, Georgia, it has been a significant contributor to the educational, cultural and economic life of the region. Thousands of Middle Georgians have earned undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees from Mercer. More than 900 faculty and staff work on the Macon campus and at its Engineering Research Center in Warner Robins, and over 4,000 students are enrolled on the Macon campus. Our nearly 5,000 employees and students make important contributions to our area through their service to numerous non-profit organizations.

## MISSION

Mercer University's mission is to teach, to learn, to create, to discover, to inspire, to empower and to serve.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Mercer University is one of America's oldest and most distinctive institutions of higher learning, offering rigorous programs spanning the undergraduate liberal arts to doctoral-level degrees. Founded by early 19th century Baptists, Mercer – while no longer formally denominationally affiliated – remains committed to an educational environment embracing the historic Baptist principles of religious and intellectual freedom. We are particularly effective at integrating research and service to solve real-world problems, in our own community and in countries worldwide.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

Mercer is one of only three universities in Georgia

holding membership in the Georgia Research Alliance and sheltering a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation's oldest and most prestigious academic honor society. In 2016, U.S. News & World Report ranked Mercer as one of only four Georgia institutions – along with Georgia, Georgia Tech and Emory – in its top tier of national research universities and ranked Mercer as #24 best value in the nation. We are one of only 361 institutions nationally to hold the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in recognition of Mercer's commitment to community well-being.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Keeping talented Middle Georgia students at our local higher education institutions is a priority. Education Together scholars are an impressive group of young people, who we hope to keep in Middle Georgia after they earn their degrees.





Established in 2002, we are a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding college and post-secondary education opportunities for low-income and potential first generation college students. We provide assistance to 1,250 middle and high school students annually through Federal TRIO Programs (Talent Search and Upward Bound) designed to help students overcome class, social, academic and cultural barriers to higher education.

**MISSION**

The Middle Georgia Center for Academic Excellence is a nonprofit dedicated to expanding college and post-secondary opportunities for low-income and potential first-generation college students.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

We serve more than 1,250 middle and high school students annually through federal TRIO Programs, Talent Search and Upward Bound, which help students overcome class, social, academic and cultural barriers to higher education. We help students choose a college, and offer tutoring, personal and financial counseling, career exploration, college visits, instruction in study skills and assistance with college and financial aid applications.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

We partner with Bibb County schools to increase college enrollment among low-income and first generation college students. Our intervention activities and programs have helped more than 2,600 students develop the motivation and skills to

succeed in college or in technical school. We provide an array of services to help get them into college or post-secondary training – so spending their senior year in high school in our program is crucial. We pride ourselves on finding “a fit” for our students, boosting their retention rate at post-secondary institutions, and ensuring they graduate.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together promotes post-secondary education for low-income and first generation college students, squarely aimed at the same type of students we serve. It’s a perfect opportunity to partner with other community leaders to level the playing field and help students escape the limitations imposed by poverty. Although our students might not be recipients of an Education Together scholarship, the students selected typify the kids we serve. Groups like Education Together give me hope that individual partners might develop other initiatives that will continue to impact young people and change their lives.

**SAM HART**  
President  
**Middle Georgia  
Center For  
Academic Excellence**



**Middle Georgia Center  
For Academic Excellence**

**DR. CHRISTOPHER  
BLAKE**  
President  
**Middle Georgia  
State University**



Middle Georgia State is a regionally focused university serving 7,700 traditional and adult students, the majority of whom live and work in the heart of the state. Along with numerous online and hybrid learning opportunities, our five campuses Macon, Cochran, Eastman, Dublin, Warner Robins are strategically located with broad reach. We offer graduate and undergraduate programs leading to in-demand careers in IT, health, education, aviation, business and new media. Our students will find small classes, dedicated professors, campus organizations, Greek Life and NAIA athletics. We remain one of the state’s best values in public higher education.

**MISSION**

Middle Georgia State University is a public institution and state university where we say, “Find Your Greatness.” Our core values include stewardship, engagement, adaptability and learning. Our students use their education to do amazing things professionally and give back to our area. Our job is to make sure that excellence is fostered through the degrees earned at MGA.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

The diversity and excellence of our programs rooted in the needs of Middle Georgia. Our task is individual and collective transformation led by faculty who students consider wonderful. MGA students can earn a bachelor’s degree for roughly \$20,000. We have a range of success stories – the growth of our aviation program and Knowledge@Work, a superb internship program that’s beginning to touch the community. We’re strengthening our athletics and recently began volleyball and cross-country. Our Information Technology department is doing pioneering work in robotics and cyber security, and we have a strong tradition of nursing and graduate programs. Throughout the community I hear, “We love your students.”

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

Two years ago, we were promoted from a state college to a state university and that means being a leader and a partner in the public square. We shape the potential for this region and invest in its long-term strategy. 88 percent of our graduates get jobs within a year of graduation within 30 miles of the university. In 2015, MGA had an economic impact of more than \$227 million dollars in Middle Georgia. For people in our area with elementary school age grandchildren, there’s a good chance a Middle Georgia State graduate will teach him or her.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together raises awareness that there’s a regional strength in education connecting the providers of higher education and the consumers. We’re contributing to the scholarships and promoting our institution. It’s getting traction and reinforces what we should be doing – engaging with the public regionally.





We are a nonprofit corporation whose primary purpose is to provide a comprehensive continuum of high quality, reasonably priced healthcare services to the region. Navicent Health has 830 beds for medical, surgical, rehabilitation and hospice purposes, and also offers urgent care, diagnostic and home care services, a continuing care retirement community, a philanthropic foundation benefiting local healthcare projects, and a robust community wellness program.

**MISSION**

Navicent Health is a nonprofit corporation consisting of a tertiary teaching hospital and community hospitals providing high quality, reasonably priced healthcare services. We are here whenever illness or injury occur and are deeply committed to improving the health of our communities through innovation, research and outreach so people can navigate the path to health and wellness.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

Navicent Health has 830 beds for medical, surgical, rehabilitation and hospice purposes, as well as urgent care, diagnostic, home care and retail service offerings. We cover the continuum of care and pride ourselves on providing compassionate care at the right time, at the right cost, close to home. Our Level 1 Trauma Center recently obtained national verification through the American College of Surgeons - the only nationally-verified Level 1 Trauma Center in Georgia.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

We care for the ill and injured, and focus on the health and well-being of the community. As a nationally recognized healthcare provider and one of the area’s chief employers, Navicent Health plays a vital role in Central Georgia’s economic growth. Our hospitals in Bibb and Peach County generate over \$1.5 billion in revenue for the local and state economy, while providing almost \$70 million in uncompensated care and sustaining 12,000 full time jobs in Central Georgia and statewide. Our award-winning, specialized healthcare services draw people to Central Georgia and assist in securing new businesses and industries.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together is a wonderful initiative that unites local businesses in support of the next generation of Central Georgia leaders – a win-win for everyone. Essentially, local businesses assist in training the workforce of tomorrow, while high school students receive tangible community support, encouraging them toward higher learning.

**DR. NINFA SAUNDERS**  
FACHE, President and CEO  
**Navicent Health**



# RODNEY SMITH

President

Parrish

Construction Group



We are a professional, commercial construction firm that specializes in educational and healthcare construction throughout Georgia. We build K-12 educational facilities and do a lot of work with Georgia's technical colleges and the Board of Regents' college campuses. We do other projects too, like churches, fuel stations and car dealerships, but our primary focus is education and healthcare facilities.

## MISSION

Our mission is to be Georgia's premier construction manager.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Without question, our strength is our people. The team with the best players wins, and that's true in business. We're diligent in vetting potential team members before hiring them. We protect our company's work environment and culture, and it's this culture that people enjoy most at Parrish. The construction industry can be tough, but we make work fun. Our people have a passion, and it shows in our projects and customer service. We have grown into a large business, but continue to value a work/family balance. In fact, we demand it. We're proud that the majority of our business is repeat clients, which assures that our hard work, commitment to customer service, and focus on continuous improvement is appreciated.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

Our buildings serve the educational and healthcare needs of our neighbors. At Parrish, we pay it forward for the next generation. We honor and glorify God by becoming an integral part of and giving back to the communities in which we work. Simultaneously exciting and a heavy responsibility, as contractors we're fortunate to see the impact of the buildings we construct – and we construct today to make tomorrow's dreams a reality.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Education Together recognizes and rewards deserving students in Central Georgia and publicizes their accomplishments. It also brings positive attention to educational success in Central Georgia. Education Together is providing invaluable opportunities for its recipients to network with local professional and business leaders, which will be especially important after college graduation.





We are a financial cooperative owned by our members – not a bank, but a not-for-profit organization. We’ve been in business since 1954, providing financial service to over 185,000 members in 21 Middle Georgia counties. We have nearly 400 employees organization-wide, 20 branch offices and assets of about \$2.3 billion.

**MISSION**

Our mission is to be the financial institution of choice for Central Georgians, offering the best products and services while providing world class customer service and outreach to the communities we serve.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

We’ve been here 63 years, so our stability is a real strength to the community. Whether it’s buying a car or a house, or opening a first savings or checking account, we offer our members the products and services they need as they grow, plus great rates and outstanding service every time they walk in the door, pick up the phone, or go online to do business with us. We’re the second largest credit union in Georgia. That’s saying a lot for an organization headquartered in Middle Georgia. We’re proud of that growth – attributable to people wanting to do business with us.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

We started as a Robins Air Force Base-focused credit union and now serve 21 counties in Middle Georgia.

We’ve gone from one branch to 21 by the end of 2017 with 185,000 members and nearly 400 employees. We help our members afford life and achieve financial security through our products and services, and through the financial education we provide. We pride ourselves on being a good community partner through our volunteerism and financial support of local organizations.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together provides opportunities for students who might not otherwise be able to afford college. This is a tremendous opportunity to identify those young people and provide financial assistance. Education Together is unique in that the students must attend local colleges. It’s important to support the colleges within our Middle Georgia footprint, and hopefully, the scholarship recipients will stay here after graduation.

**JOHN RHEA**  
President and CEO  
**Robins Financial  
Credit Union**



# BRUCE LEICHT

Bibb Market President  
State Bank



There are many banking options in Middle Georgia, so we have to differentiate ourselves from our competition in order to earn the right to do business with our clients. We do that by treating our clients as people, not numbers. By providing excellent service. By offering real solutions to meet real needs. And by doing what we say we're going to do. At its very core, banking is about relationships – and we're proud of the many relationships we have here in Middle Georgia.

## MISSION

State Bank's mission is three-fold: to help improve the financial well-being of our clients, to earn a superior return for our shareholders, and to create exceptional career opportunities for our team members. That's what we seek to do every day. And when we're successful in these three areas, it means we've made a difference in people's lives. And at the end of the day, that's what it's all about.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

We have the largest deposit market share in Middle Georgia. We have more branches and employees than any other bank in the area. The operations center for our entire banking network is located right here in Macon. While all of these things are important, ultimately, we're here to help people and make a difference in their lives. And we derive a tremendous amount of satisfaction from that.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

Our team members live, work and play right here

in Middle Georgia, and we believe it's extremely important to give back to our community. We've been the top bank supporter of the United Way of Central Georgia for the last several years. In 2016, we were the top supporter of the local American Heart Association's Heart Walk. And our team members volunteer hundreds of hours each year to help local nonprofits serve our community. It all goes back to helping others and making a difference in people's lives.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

Education gives hope to our young people and is the key to removing barriers and breaking the cycle of poverty. Education Together gives deserving students an opportunity to succeed, and it's exciting to think of the potential of our scholars. We're proud to be a part of a network of business and community leaders that shows students that the community cares and is providing scholarships that will change their lives.





The Telegraph has recorded Middle Georgia’s history since 1826. Nearly 200 years later, our mission remains the same – to be the pre-eminent source of news, information and advertising in the region. But just as the news business has changed, so too has our delivery system. Today, in addition to the print version of the newspaper, The Telegraph is available on mobile phones, tablets, social media, and online at [macon.com](http://macon.com). Catching up on the day’s news has never been easier or more convenient.

**MISSION**

A free press is critical to our democracy. The Telegraph provides the local news and information the community needs to be informed and connected, which is honorable work. We’re responsible for shining a bright light in dark corners, holding the powerful accountable, and giving a voice to those in the community who consider themselves voiceless.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

Audiences today get news so differently than a couple of decades ago. The Telegraph now delivers the news on multiple platforms: in the paper, on mobile, tablets, social media and on our website – which allows us to deliver the news to people wherever they are. That’s given us access to a much larger audience. Although the print product is smaller today, we now have more types of content, including videos, photo galleries, real-time engagement with our audience, and unlimited digital space in which to produce it. Today our news and information reaches more people in our community on a daily basis than at any other time in history.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

As the new publisher of The Telegraph, I want our readers to perceive us as fair and balanced, and as their primary provider of local news and information in the Middle Georgia area. It’s important that we’re engaged in the community as conversation starters, and hopefully, those conversations will lead to solutions that improve the quality of life in our region. The Telegraph staff must be a part of community improvement and engagement through participation in community events and volunteerism. And I want businesses to look to our media consultants for guidance in helping them grow their business through our digital and print offerings.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education is the great equalizer. Giving students access to education gives them the ability to dream a bigger dream and work toward a better future. It doesn’t matter where you come from, what your background or pedigree is. If you cling to education and grow, it improves the trajectory of your life.

**RODNEY  
MAHONE**  
Publisher  
**The Telegraph**





# GEORGE MCCANLESS

President & CEO  
United Way of  
Central Georgia



Every day in Central Georgia, we're working to ensure each child has access to high-quality education, every family has the tools to be financially stable, and health and human services are readily available for all. United Way has been a critical part of the fabric of Central Georgia since 1922. The needs of the community have shifted over the 95 years we've been here; and we have continued to respond to those changes by relying on national and local research to ensure our work achieves the greatest good.

## MISSION

Our mission is to increase the organized capacity of people in Central Georgia to care for one another. By harnessing the power of human and financial resources in our communities, we actively lead and collaborate with community stakeholders to maximize the impact of donors' funds in order to have the greatest impact on the key human service needs.

## STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Our ability to convene and build partnerships and collaborations. United Way is one of the most recognized philanthropic brands in the world, and this is the 95th year of the United Way of Central Georgia. Our initiative "Read United," brings more than 200 volunteers to the school system to actively tutor more than 500 children from kindergarten through third grade. The improvements we see are a testament to the power of volunteerism.

## ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA

United Way's role has changed dramatically in recent

years. While United Way has historically been a solely fundraising entity, we have evolved to a place where we are in a truly unique position to recruit, convene, and collaborate with the right people and organizations who bring the passion, expertise, and resources needed to get things done. Few if any, organizations are able to span private business, nonprofits, government, and school systems the way United Way can to create a network of donors, advocates, and volunteers focused on specific goals.

## WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS

We continue to participate in Education Together because of our interest in collaborations. Education Together gives us the opportunity to work with a great group of partners, most of whom are United Way supporters, to help deserving students further their education. A benefit of our participation in Education Together is our partner ads in The Telegraph. We believe they are an effective way to get our message out and promote our work.





As the first college in the world chartered to grant degrees to women, we take our role as a pioneer in women’s education seriously. Today, we continue to educate women to do the extraordinary in their professions and in service to their communities. Wesleyan draws a wonderfully eclectic mix of women from across America and around the world. Affiliated with the United Methodist Church, we are striving for excellence, grounded in faith, and engaged with the world.

**MISSION**

Founded in 1836, Wesleyan College was the first college in the world chartered to grant degrees to women that were equal to men’s degrees. Built on four cornerstones: academics, women, faith and community, Wesleyan offers women an education that leads to lifelong intellectual, personal and professional growth.

**STRENGTHS & ACHIEVEMENTS**

Our strengths lie in our diverse student body and in an excellent faculty committed to transformative student learning. We teach students to think critically and communicate effectively through creative disciplinary and interdisciplinary academic programs that often include internships and study abroad. With classes almost exclusively taught by full-time professors – no graduate assistants – with the highest degrees available in their disciplines, our greatest achievements are preparing students for graduate study and professional advancement, equipping students for community service, and inspiring

students for leadership in communities of faith. Our signature program, From Here to Career, allows each student to tailor her college experience to best prepare for her next step following graduation.

**ROLE & IMPACT IN MIDDLE GEORGIA**

At Wesleyan, we serve as an incubator for women’s leadership, encouraging our students to think about and speak out on behalf of issues affecting women. In the Middle Georgia community we repeatedly hear that our 180-year-old reputation for excellence precedes and follows our alumnae everywhere they go to teach, learn, work, lead and serve.

**WHY EDUCATION TOGETHER MATTERS**

Education Together helps Wesleyan connect with excellent student prospects who can benefit from all that Wesleyan has to offer. It also demonstrates the strength of higher education in Middle Georgia, connecting providers and consumers of higher education.

**VIVIA FOWLER**  
Incoming President  
Wesleyan  
College



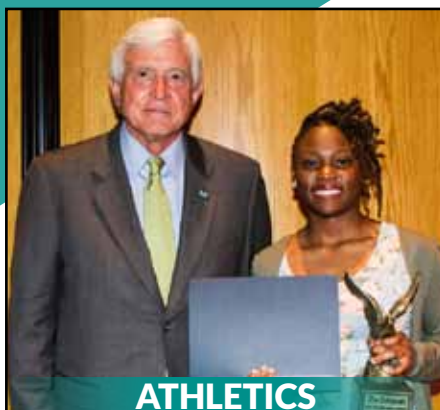


# 40th Annual Golden Eagle Awards



## ART

Meghan Chamlee (FPD)  
& Susan Harris  
**Navicent Health**



## ATHLETICS

Breanna Ivey (Central)  
& Dan Forrester  
**State Bank & Trust Company**



## CITIZENSHIP

William McKay (Westside)  
& Sam Hart  
**Middle Georgia Center  
for Academic Excellence**



## DRAMA

Emily Bodony (Veterans)  
& Michael Engel  
**Central Georgia  
Technical College**



## ENGLISH LITERATURE

Zainab Siddqui (Stratford)  
& Cheryl Carty  
**Middle Georgia State University**



## FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Evan Kelley (Mount DeSales)  
& Sylvia McGee  
**United Way of Central Georgia**



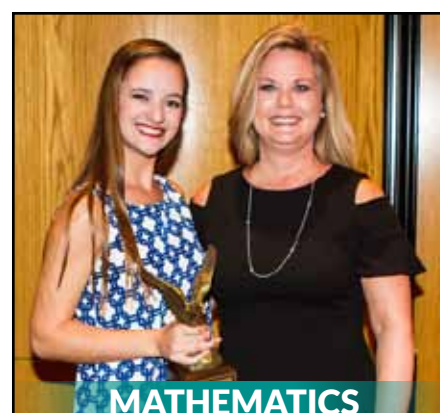
## INDUSTRIAL VOCATIONAL

Safe'u-el Franklin (Westside)  
& Dave Cyr  
**Parrish Construction Group**



## JOURNALISM

Meagan Ayers (Northside)  
& Cedric Mobley  
**Fort Valley State University**



## MATHEMATICS

Kenzie Dingmore (Tattnall)  
& Dee Dee Cote  
**Robins Financial Credit Union**



## MUSIC

Memorie Renfro (First Presbyterian)  
& Dawn Nash  
**Wesleyan College**



## SCIENCE

Nivedha Soundappan  
(Houston County)  
& Frank Pickering  
**GEICO**



## TECHNOLOGY

Walter Kopacz (Westfield)  
& Dan Penney  
**21st Century Partnership**



# Grand Opera House - April 12, 2017

Established by The Telegraph in 1977, the Golden Eagle Awards celebrate scholarship and service. We congratulate this year's Golden Eagle Award winners, seen here with our Education Together partners who presented their awards. We also salute our Education Together Teacher Excellence Award winners.



## MERCER SCHOLARSHIP

Anita Gustafson, Mercer University;  
Zaynab Siddiqui (Stratford)  
& Miss America 2016 Betty Cantrell



## TEACHER EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS

(l-r) Cyndy Roberts (First Presbyterian), Candace Bridges (Tattnall), Michael Scott (Central),  
Sylvia Haynie (Stratford) and Dinah Redding (Howard).



## EDUCATION TOGETHER PARTNERS/PRESENTERS

(l-r sitting): Anita Gustafson, Sylvia McGee, Susan Harris, Cheryl Carty, Dee Dee Cote, Dawn Nash.  
(l-r standing): Jami Gaudet, Sam Hart, Cedric Mobley, Frank Pickering, Dan Penney, Dave Cyr, Dan Forrester, Don Bailey (emcee).

# 2017 Education Together SCHOLARS



**2016 Education Together Scholars**  
at Mardi Gras Jambalaya  
Party, February 2017.

**Nancy Abarca**  
Rutland High School  
Wesleyan College

**Ranha Beak**  
Howard High School  
Mercer University

**Sarai Daniels**  
Howard High School  
Mercer University

**Andrea Felix**  
Southwest High School  
Wesleyan College

**Madison Giddings**  
Rutland High School  
Wesleyan College

**KiAundra Glenn**  
Northeast High School  
Central Georgia Technical College

**Noah Grant**  
Peach High School  
Mercer University

**Brianna Harker**  
Westside High School  
Mercer University

**Zykerria Hill**  
Northeast  
Middle Georgia State University

**Reylene Kates**  
Howard High School  
Mercer University

**Shasheen Kher**  
Central High School  
Mercer University

**Zakia Moore**  
Northeast High School  
Fort Valley State University

**Riddhi Nirmal**  
Howard High School  
Mercer University

**Wendell Pitts**  
Rutland High School  
Middle Georgia State University

**Nemiah Plant**  
Peach County High School  
Middle Georgia State University

**Stephanie Rivera**  
Peach County High School  
Middle Georgia State University

**Jaceyona Santos**  
Crawford County High School  
Central Georgia Technical College

**Mariz Valenzuela**  
Howard High School  
Middle Georgia State University

**Naomi Neria**  
Westside High School  
Middle Georgia State University  
(Navicent Nursing Scholar)

**Faith Siror**  
Mount DeSales Academy  
Wesleyan College  
(Navicent Nursing Scholar)

**Zainab Siddiqui**  
Emory University  
(Mercer University Scholar -  
Emory University)

This tab was published before the public announcement of 2017 scholars. Our 2017 scholars will be featured in their own tab: **Meet the 2017 Education Together Scholars** later this year.