



MENTOR Georgia Summit 2024 – Schedule Overview

June 28, 2024 | 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens, GA

*Full Session descriptions are provided starting on Page 3, followed by speaker & facilitator biographies.
Refer to the bottom of each page for a key of workshop audience indicators, provided via the colorized abbreviations.*

8:30-9 a.m. – Registration; coffee, tea, and juice available – Outside Masters Hall

9-9:55 a.m. – Welcome & Kickoff – Masters Hall

- Keynote – Hope, Resilience, & Self-Expression
- Session – The Arts’ Role in Self-Care

9:55-10:20 a.m. – Refreshment Break – Pecan Tree Galleria

10:20-11:35 a.m. – General Breakout Session I (for full session descriptions, jump to Page 3)

1. Room Q – Designing and Conducting a Simple Yet Meaningful Program Evaluation (OL, PM)
2. Room R – Amplifying Youth Voice: Moving Beyond Tokenism in Youth-Serving Organizations (PM, PS, Y)
3. Room F/G – Leaders Leading Leaders: Helping Others Grow through Mentor-based Leadership (PS, PS, M)

11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. – Breakout Session II

1. Room F/G – Developing Your Board, Amplifying Your Impact (OL, BM)
2. Room Q – Tend: Helping Clients Grow Through Relationship Building (PM, OL)
3. Room R – How Purpose Boosts Mentoring Success (PS, M, Y)

1:10-2:10 p.m. – Lunch & Excellence in Mentoring Celebration, sponsored by Georgia Power – Magnolia Ballroom

- Fireside Chat with Kitty Chaney Reed, *Chief Leadership, Culture, & Inclusion Officer, IBM*
- Excellence in Mentoring Awards Presentations, sponsored by Georgia Power

2:20-3:35 p.m. – Breakout Session III

1. Room F/G – Maximizing Professional Growth through the Laws of Expansion and Contribution (OL, PM)
2. Room Q – Chill Skills 101: Teen Mentorship in the Resilient Zone (OL, PS, Y)
3. Masters Hall – The BeatKNOCKS Professional (PS, M, Y)
4. Room R – Nurturing Healthy Mentor-Mentee Relationships Starts with Understanding Your Role as a Mentor (PS, M)

3:35-4:05 p.m. – Refreshment Break – Pecan Tree Galleria

4:05-5 p.m. – Roundtable Discussion – Making the Jump: Supporting Youth Transitions – Masters Hall

5-6 p.m. – Optional Happy Hour at the Bulldog Café

Audience Key for workshop sessions – Friday, June 28

Organization Leadership (OL)

Program Managers (PM)

Program Staff (PS)

Youth (Y)

Mentors (M)

Board Members (BM)



J.W. Fanning Institute
for Leadership Development
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



MENTOR
GEORGIA

MENTOR Georgia Youth Summit 2024 – Schedule Overview

June 29, 2024 | 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Georgia Center for Continuing Education, ATHENS, GA

Full Session descriptions are provided starting on Page 7 followed by speaker & facilitator biographies.

8:30-9 a.m. – Registration; coffee, tea, and juice available – Outside Masters Hall

9-9:50 a.m. – Welcome & Kickoff – Masters Hall

- **Kickoff session – Exploring Purpose and Connecting to Our Strengths** – *Facilitators: Ainjel ReNay Kearse & Suhailah Owuo-Hagood, Girls of Excellence, Inc.; Laura Garrison-Brook, Finding My Purpose, Inc.,*

10:00-10:45 a.m. – Breakout Session I (2 tracks)

1. Room R – Amplifying Youth Voice: Moving Beyond Tokenism in Youth-Serving Organizations
2. Room Q – Standing on Business: How to Use Effective Communication for Conflict Resolution

10:55-11:40 a.m. – Breakout Session II (2 tracks)

1. Room Q – Lock Into Mentorship
2. Room R – My Future, My Way: Making College Happen

11:40 a.m.-12:05 p.m. – Refreshment Break – Pecan Galleria

12:05-1p.m. – Closing session – Masters Hall

- **Living My Truth** – Nadia Thomas, *Founder, Nadia's Truth*
- **Chill Skills 101: Mentorship in the Resilient Zone** – *Facilitator: Meredith Lysaught, Resilient Northeast Georgia*

Full Session Descriptions: Friday, June 28

Welcome & Kickoff Keynote – Hope, Resilience, & Self-Expression – Masters Hall

Azaio Udoh, Teen Content Team Lead, introduced by Tamlin Hall, Director, Hope Givers USA

Azaio, a 17-year-old high school junior, will speak about her experiences as a youth in 2024, offering coping strategies, highlighting key community resources, and emphasizing the role of trusted adults. She will provide tips on supporting youth and maintaining one's own mental health. As a content lead for Hope Givers, an Emmy Award-winning PBS Series, Azaio will share valuable insights into youth mental health and community awareness.

General Session – The Arts' Role in Self-Care – Masters Hall

Chris & Ty Woods, Co-Founders, Artportunity Knocks

The Art's Role in Self-Care" is a workshop tailored for youth development professionals facing the challenges of burnout and seeking sustainable strategies for emotional and mental well-being. This session invites participants to discover the power of the arts as a pivotal component of self-care, offering a practical exploration of how creative expression can serve as a sanctuary for stress relief, rejuvenation, and personal growth. Through engaging in various artistic disciplines, attendees will learn to harness the therapeutic benefits of the Arts, fostering a culture of wellness in both their personal lives and professional environments.

Breakout Session I – 10:20-11:35 a.m., Friday, June 28

1. Designing and Conducting a Simple Yet Meaningful Program Evaluation – Room Q

Facilitators: Katie Hale & Scot Heitz, Lumen Guidance (OL, PM)

This workshop focuses on foundational information about conducting a brief outcome evaluation for your program. We will focus on identifying key program outcomes, developing a simple data collection tool, and analyzing the data. Resources will be provided and relevant skills will be practiced during the session to help prepare you for implementing a basic outcome evaluation.

2. Amplifying Youth Voice: Moving Beyond Tokenism in Youth-Serving Organizations – Room R

Facilitators: Kyleigh Conley & Aynslee Cooper, Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential Youth Advisory Council (PM, PS, Y)

Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, attendees will discover methods to establish inclusive spaces where youth are esteemed, respected, and actively listened to. This session tackles prevalent obstacles and offers concrete strategies to cultivate authentic youth involvement, as well as to advocate for youth-adult collaborations and shared leadership within organizational settings.

Audience Key for workshop sessions – Friday, June 28

Organization Leadership (OL)

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3. Leaders Leading Leaders: Helping Others Grow through Mentor-based Leadership – Room F/G

Facilitator: Charlotte Dudley, the University of Georgia (PS, M, PM, Y)

This workshop delves into the evolving dynamics of leadership in modern workplaces. Through engaging discussions and interactive activities, this workshop will explore the reconceptualization of mentoring and its profound societal importance in fostering leadership growth. Whether you currently serve as a mentor or find yourself in a mentee role, this workshop welcomes leaders from all levels of organizational environments.

Breakout Session II – 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m., Friday, June 28

1. Developing Your Board, Amplifying Your Impact – Room F/G

Facilitator: Julie Meehan, J.W. Fanning Institute (OL, BM)

Board members might be your most important volunteers. At the same time, growing a board and supporting their success can be a delicate balance alongside growing programming. This session will start with an understanding of organization life cycles and how your stage of development drives what you need from your board, while examining how board members contribute to the governance and growth of an organization. All of this takes careful, thoughtful planning on your part – in coordination with your board. This session will help you examine where your organization sits in the life cycle and give you actionable steps for how to get your board to the next level.

2. Tend: Helping Clients Grow Through Relationship Building – Room Q

Facilitators: Anna Blount & Aydee Bailey, Team Up Mentoring (PM, OL, M)

Come garden with us! As a gardener, you work to help the plants in your care thrive, creating a beautiful garden. As a mentor, you work to help both students and their caregivers thrive. Working with living things, whether plants or people, can be challenging. Client relationships can trend towards corporate attitudes or personalized attitudes, each with their pitfalls. An overly corporate approach can stunt growth, whereas relationships without boundaries overwork the gardener, leading to neglect. This training shows you the middle ground, giving you the materials and strategies you need to harness the power of relationship building while remaining committed to healthy boundaries.

3. How Purpose Boosts Mentoring Success – Room R

Facilitator: Laura Garrison-Brook, Finding My Purpose, Inc. (PS, M, Y)

Mentoring relationships focused on skills acquisition have been found to have greater impact. Life purpose has been shown to boost academic engagement, resilience, life satisfaction, and persistence to graduation. Learn more about how mentors can hold powerful conversations with their matches to explore this powerful topic together.

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Lunchtime Programming – Fireside Chat with Kitty Chaney Reed – Magnolia Ballroom, Salons 3-5

Ahead of our Georgia Power Excellence in Mentoring Awards Presentation, we’ll sit down for an intimate chat with Kitty Chaney Reed about her journey to becoming the chief leadership, culture, and inclusion officer at IBM. Her geographic journey may have been a short one – from growing up in Monroe to her professional life in Atlanta – but her journey through the technology sector as a woman of color has been colorful, varied, and deeply impacted by her experience both being mentored and advocating for mentorship of others.

Breakout Session III – 2:20-3:35 p.m., Friday, June 28

1. Maximizing Professional Growth through the Laws of Expansion and Contribution – Room F/G

Facilitator: Najiva Timothee, Girls Dig Deeper Initiative (OL, PM)

This session teaches mentoring professionals The Law of Expansion and the Law of Contribution as conceptualized by leadership expert John Maxwell. Both laws will help mentoring professionals and practitioners gain an understanding of the potential they have to keep increasing their capacity in the mentoring field and the importance of developing themselves thus enabling them to develop others.

2. Chill Skills 101: Teen Mentorship in the Resilient Zone – Room Q

Facilitator: Meredith Lysaught, Resilient Northeast Georgia (OL, PS, Y)

The Community Resiliency Model is a set of six wellness skills based in the biology of the nervous system that focus on nervous system regulation in times of stress. These skills focus on what happens when an individual is pushed beyond their “Resilient Zone” of functioning, providing tangible approaches to re-balancing the nervous system that can be used by mentors with their mentees and themselves. This workshop provides opportunities to practice the skills for self-care.

3. The BeatKNOCKS Professional – Masters Hall

Facilitators: Chris & Ty Woods, Artportunity Knocks (PS, M, Y)

Youth development professionals will learn how to use music as a tool to enhance engagement (especially for teens), creativity, and emotional intelligence among youth, with practical demonstrations, resource sharing, and success stories from Artportunity Knocks’ own programs. This workshop offers a unique approach to fostering connections and developing skills through the universal language of music.

Audience Key for workshop sessions – Friday, June 28

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4. Nurturing Healthy Mentor-Mentee Relationships Starts w/ Understanding Your Role as Mentor – Room R
Facilitators: Kimberly Bennett & Cassandra Stephens, Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy (PS, M)

In this workshop, we'll delve into the pivotal role mentors play in fostering supportive relationships with youth, helping mentors and programs alike build the foundation for long-lasting matches between mentor and mentee. While mentors provide essential support, it's crucial to acknowledge that they aren't expected to have all the answers or to act as superheroes. Instead, mentors offer encouragement, lend a listening ear, and when necessary, guide mentees to professional assistance. Through this session, participants will gain valuable insights into their responsibilities as mentors.

Closing Plenary session – Roundtable Discussion – Making the Jump: Supporting Youth Transitions – Masters Hall

We invite you to join us back at the main stage for a roundtable discussion about how mentoring can effectively facilitate transitions for young people. We're discussing ALL kinds of transitions: from middle school to high school, from college to career – and everything in between. Sometimes transitions take people back to school, or in directions they didn't anticipate, such as the decision to pursue paths alternative to four-year college after graduation. These are often moments that mentors are most needed, and our panel will provide insight and tips into how to do it effectively. We'll be joined by program directors, mentoring coordinators, and young people to talk about the key role that mentors play in helping mentees navigate the uncertainty that comes with making the jump from to a new situation – especially when there are multiple paths a young person might take. Our discussion members are:

- Jason Bedgood, Program Coordinator, Embark Center, J.W. Fanning Institute
- Monty Green, Program Manager, Elevance Health IT Registered Apprenticeship Program
- Litzzy Perez, Fellow, Robert W. Woodruff, Joseph B. Whitehead, Lettie Pate Whitehead, & Lettie Pate Evans Foundations
- Rolandria Tolbert, Director, REACH Program, Central Georgia Technical College
- Nicole Tomlinson, Assistant Director of Community-Based Mentoring, Gwinnett County Public Schools
- Ma'Than Wideman, Student, Central Georgia Technical College

Audience Key for workshop sessions – Friday, June 28

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Full Session Descriptions: Saturday, June 29 - Youth Summit

Welcome & Opening – Exploring Purpose and Connecting to Our Strengths – *Masters Hall*

Facilitators: Corina Clark, Ainjel ReNay Kearsse & Suhailah Owuo-Hagood, Girls of Excellence, Inc.; Laura Garrison-Brook, Finding My Purpose, Inc.

Do you know what mark you would like to make on the world? Are you connected to your strengths? Join peer leaders to explore what life purpose looks like, its benefits and how our strengths help us connect to it.

Breakout Session I – 10:00-10:45 a.m., Saturday, June 29 (2 workshop tracks to choose from)

1. Amplifying Youth Voice: Moving Beyond Tokenism in Youth-Serving Organizations – *Room R*

Facilitators: Kyleigh Conley & Aynslee Cooper, Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential Youth Advisory Council, with support from GCAPP staff

Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, attendees will discover methods to establish inclusive spaces where youth are esteemed, respected, and actively listened to. This session tackles prevalent obstacles and offers concrete strategies to cultivate authentic youth involvement, as well as to advocate for youth-adult collaborations and shared leadership within organizational settings.

2. Standing on Business: How to Use Effective Communication for Conflict Resolution – *Room Q*

Facilitators: Chanel Gathers & Sanyi Hollie, with support from Nicole Rankine, Healthy Young People Excel (HYPE)

"Standing On Business" equips 14-24-year-olds with effective communication tools to resolve conflicts. Through interactive sessions, participants learn to navigate disputes constructively in personal and professional spheres.

Breakout Session II – 10:55-11:40 a.m., Saturday, June 29 (2 workshop tracks to choose from)

1. Lock Into Mentorship – *Room Q*

Facilitators: Camryn Chiu & Zaire Morgan, UGA Mentor Program with panelists from the UMP Ambassador Program

This session intends to highlight the mentee experience. We will discuss the process of identifying what you need from a mentor, how to effectively plan for mentorship, how to effectively communicate what you need from a mentor, along with the importance of understanding the mutual benefits from mentorship. You'll hear the story of UMP Ambassador, Zaire Morgan, who has had many mentorships through UMP and has incredible stories and insight from his various mentorships. They will lead an interactive session followed by a Q&A with additional UMP Ambassadors



2. **My Future, May Way: Making College Happen – Room R**

Facilitator: Kimberly Bennett, Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy

This workshop will encourage participants to take ownership of their educational futures by exploring the opportunities and resources available to them, utilizing the First Steps Toward College workbook produced by the U.S. Department of Education. It will provide valuable insights into the importance of defining what college is, how to plan, and practical steps to kickstart the journey – with charts, checklists, and other activities to help you create your roadmap. This workshop will help answer key questions like when to start planning (spoiler: it's never too early!), what's the return on investment of various career paths, and who to turn to for advice and support.

Closing Plenary Session – Masters Hall

- **Livin' My Truth – Nadia Thomas, *Founder, Nadia's Truth***
- **Chill Skills 101: Mentorship in the Resilient Zone – Meredith Lysaught, Resilient Northeast Georgia**

What happens when you're pushed beyond your "Resilient Zone"? It's the place where we can cope with stress – from the everyday to the out-of-the-ordinary events that pop up and challenge us. To do this, we have to build a wellness toolkit. This session provides opportunities to learn and practice the skills for self-care, based on the Community Resiliency Model, a set of six wellness skills based in the biology of the nervous system.

Biographies of Facilitators and Speakers

Michael Armstrong, *The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential*

Michael Armstrong, PhD, serves as the Chief Operating Officer for the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential (GCAPP) where he leads a remarkable team of public health, program evaluation, health communications, and youth development leaders. A community psychologist with 25 years of nonprofit leadership experience, Dr. Armstrong has led program improvements and systems change in the Out of School Time Field, Georgia's Public Health System, and various nonprofits. Before joining GCAPP, he spent 10 years with Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta, where he improved program quality, youth outcomes, and developed inclusive strategic planning practices. He serves on multiple boards, councils, and communities supporting youth development in Georgia.

Aydee Bailey, *Team Up Mentoring*

Aydee Bailey, the Family Life Director at Team Up Mentoring, is a former foster youth from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. With an associate's degree in social work and a bachelor's degree in psychology, she is dedicated to empowering disadvantaged youth and caregivers. As she pursues a master's degree in clinical social work, Aydee's personal experiences and unwavering commitment drive her to create positive change. As a proud mother and wife, she continues to uplift lives, foster hope, and build brighter futures for all.

Kimberly Bennett, *Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy, Inc.*

Kimberly actively engages in her community, participating in various initiatives. She passionately mentors numerous youths from diverse social, economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds through Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy, which she founded. However, her most cherished role is that of a dedicated mother to Nya and Jayln Bennett.

Anna Blount, *Team Up Mentoring*

In 2006, Anna Blount completed her degree from UGA in Biological Sciences. Though she had planned to attend veterinary school, Anna recognized her own passion for working with youth through volunteerism. She felt called to serve vulnerable youth and recognized that in order to help these children succeed, they would need more than just one person helping them – they would need a team – thus Team Up Mentoring began. Over 18 years later, Anna continues to dream, research and contemplate ways to best serve vulnerable children and their families. From making school lunches to strategic planning meetings and everything in between, Anna lives out Team Up's mantra of "Doing whatever it takes to help a child succeed."

Kitty Chaney Reed, *IBM Corporation*

Kitty Chaney Reed is IBM's Chief Leadership, Culture & Inclusion Officer and Senior State Executive for Georgia. She oversees executive development and succession, fostering a culture of growth and inclusion to support IBM's strategic goals. Kitty is a member of the IBM AI Ethics Board and previously served on IBM's Black Executive Council, supporting the 2020 Anti-Hate Crime Legislation. She joined IBM in 2017 as VP of Quote-to-Cash, transforming the operating model for IBM Americas. Kitty is also the recipient of several business awards, including multiple Gold Stevie Awards, the 2022 Globe Business Award, the 2023 'Women of Influence' Award by the Atlanta Business

League, and Savoy's 2024 Most Influential Executives in Corporate America. Kitty mentors and coaches aspiring female leaders in business and tech. She holds a BA in Business Administration and Finance from Clark-Atlanta University.

Camryn Chiu, *University of Georgia Mentor Program*

Camryn Chiu graduated from the University of Georgia in 2021 with her Bachelors degree in Social Work. Since then, Camryn has worked for the UGA Mentor Program as Lead Mentor Coordinator. In her role, Camryn supports the day-to-day functionality of the UGA Mentor Program, meets with mentors, mentees, and other constituents, advises the UGA Mentor Program Ambassadors, plans events, and much more. In her free time, Camryn enjoys playing soccer, watching football, baseball and soccer, going on walks, and spending time with her friends and family.

Corina Clark, *Girls of Excellence*

Corina Clark is a sophomore at New Manchester High School, where she has consistently achieved honor roll status, actively engaged in various volunteering initiatives, and participated in cheerleading. Her aspiration is to pursue a career in the medical field, with a focus on compassionate patient care, alongside pursuing higher education. Noteworthy nonprofit organizations that have significantly contributed to her personal and academic growth include “When Purpose meets Destiny” and Girls of Excellence, Inc.

Kyleigh Conley, *The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential*

Kyleigh Conley, an 11th grader, is a passionate student with a love for science. She aspires to save lives by becoming a general surgeon after attending college. Kyleigh has been active in a variety of leadership roles including Senior Beta Club President, a Ben Carson Scholar, a teaching assistant for the inaugural Spelman College Math Corp summer program, and a Jr. Ambassador for the Young Black Leadership Alliance. Additionally Kyleigh is a Gold Award Girl Scout and has served as a delegate at the national convention for Girl Scouts of USA. She currently serves on the Youth Advisory Council (YAC) for the Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power and Potential (GCAPP), advocating for issues facing youth today.

Aynslee Cooper, *The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential*

Aynslee Cooper is a motivated and goal-driven student with a deep passion for reproductive medicine. She is pursuing a degree in Health Promotion from the University of Georgia and actively seeking opportunities to contribute to the field. She demonstrates commitment to academic excellence, leadership, and community engagement while on GCAPP's Youth Advisory Council (YAC). She is eager to apply her knowledge in real-world settings and make a positive impact in reproductive healthcare.

Charlotte Dudley, *The University of Georgia*

Charlotte Dudley EdD, a researcher in leadership mentoring, has over two decades of expertise in higher education instruction and administration. As a fervent advocate for mentoring, she spearheads initiatives aimed at fostering growth and development, including her current endeavor to assist in the establishment of a mentoring badge program at a major university.

Laura Garrison-Brook, *Discovering My Purpose*

Laura Garrison-Brook is passionate about helping young people flourish. To address this goal, she began studying positive psychology, the science of how we thrive in 2015. Inspired by what she learned, she established a nonprofit organization called Discovering My Purpose in 2016, and went on to complete a master's degree in Applied Positive Psychology from the University of Pennsylvania under positive psychology's founder, Dr. Martin Seligman. Her program blends evidence-based concepts, self-directed neuroplasticity training, mindfulness, and strengths-based self-exploration. Through her work over the past seven years she has witnessed the transformational power of purpose and has also seen how students can struggle with this type of personal discovery when they are grappling with life challenges.

Chanel Gathers, *Healthy Young People Excel (HYPE)*

Chanel Gathers is a senior scholar at Southwest DeKalb High School and also a dual enrollment student at Georgia Piedmont Technical College. Chanel plans to major in nursing at Albany State University, aspiring to become a Labor and Delivery (L&D) travel nurse. Chanel is a youth leader in the Emerging Young Leaders Program hosted by Healthy Young People Excel, Inc.

Katie Hale & Scot Seitz, *Lumen Guidance & Consultation*

Drs. Katie Hale and Scot Seitz are co-owners of Lumen Guidance & Consultation, a program development and evaluation firm that specializes in mentoring and youth development programs, community-based organizations, and mental health. They received their doctoral degrees in clinical and community psychology at Georgia State University, and they completed their postdoctoral residency programs at the Emory University School of Medicine. They enjoy partnering with organizations to develop culturally-relevant and evidence-based programs and evaluation strategies.

Tamlin Hall, *Hope Givers*

Tamlin Hall is an Emmy® Award-winning producer and the Founder of Hope Givers. His work can be seen on PBS, Apple TV, Tubi TV, and Amazon. His projects have won top prizes at the Dances With Films, Atlanta Film Festival, Breck Film Festival, Orlando Film Festival, and garnered a Georgia Film Critics Association Nomination. Tamlin received his MFA from UCLA, and is a faculty member at the University of Georgia.

Sanyi Hollie, *Healthy Young People Excel (HYPE)*

Sanyi Hollie is currently attending Southwest Dekalb High School as a Senior and will be graduating in May 2024. She is active in groups such as NJROTC, Beta Club, Girl Scouts, HOSA, and the Emerging Young Leaders Program. After graduation, Sanyi plans to attend Xavier University of Louisiana, where she seeks to obtain a pre-med degree in pursuit of becoming a pediatrician in the military. Sanyi is a youth leader in the Emerging Young Leaders Program hosted by Healthy Young People Excel, Inc.

Ainjel ReNay Kearsse, *Girls of Excellence*

Ainjel ReNay Kearsse, a rising junior at Promise Career Institution, is embarking on an academic journey focused on healthcare, aiming to follow her mother's footsteps in pediatric medicine. Her commitment is shown through full-time dual enrollment and aspirations to attend institutions like Florida A&M University or Howard University. Ainjel's passion for medicine and desire to make a meaningful impact drive her toward future success, embodying resilience, determination, and excellence.

Meredith Lysaught, *Athens Area Community Foundation – Resilient Northeast Georgia Fund*

Meredith Lysaught is the program manager at the Athens Area Community Foundation and coordinates the Resilient Northeast Georgia fund. In this role, she manages the implementation of the Foundation's trauma-informed communities initiative and supports the research, development, and communication of key strategic philanthropic initiatives within the region. A graduate of the University of Georgia's College of Public Health, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Health Promotion, with an emphasis on prevention and community-based public health. Meredith has lived in Athens since 2017 and loves to find new ways to connect with the community.

Julie Meehan, *J.W. Fanning Institute*

At the Fanning Institute, Julie focuses on working to build leadership capacity in nonprofit and community organizations through strategic planning processes, board and executive development, system mapping and evaluation. She brings twenty years of experience in nonprofits, most recently serving as the executive director of Community Connection of Northeast Georgia from 2004 to 2013. In this role, she managed collaborative processes of nonprofits in the region and provided incubation services to developing nonprofits. Meehan also served as the program director for The TreeHouse, Inc., and development coordinator for Hands-on Atlanta.

Zaire Morgan, *University of Georgia Mentor Program*

Zaire Morgan is a native of Macon and a rising fourth year student at UGA, majoring in Biological Science on the Pre-Dental track. Zaire is involved across campus as a Resident Assistant, a member of the Arch Society, a UGA Mentor Program Ambassador, and more. When asked about mentorship, Zaire advised students that, "Your mentor could end up being your boss in the future, the person who reads your application, or even your coworker, so make sure that you enjoy it and get everything out of it that you can and build a strong relationship with your mentor."

Suhailah Owuo-Hagood, *Girls of Excellence*

Suhailah Owuo-Hagood, a rising sophomore at Campbell High School, maintains a rigorous schedule of AP and honors classes. Rooted in a family with a rich entrepreneurial legacy, Suhailah is determined to pursue her own path in business, supported by her family and community. Active in Girls of Excellence, she has recently been elevated to program ambassador, reflecting her dedication to empowerment. With aspirations to attend Howard University, Suhailah aims to continue her academic journey and entrepreneurial endeavors.

Quashavis Ross, *The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential*

Quashavis Ross is a public health professional with a clinical background in Mental Health Counseling. She currently works as the Program Manager of School Based Initiatives with Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential, Inc. Quashavis holds a Master's in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. She uses all opportunities to fulfill her passion in steering the development and wellness of young people and supporting adults in creating an inclusive and healthy space for all youth.

Cassandra Stephens, *Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy*

Cassandra Stephens, a native of Athens, Georgia, has dedicated her life to empowering others and making a positive impact in her community. During her preteen years, Cassandra was personally empowered by mentoring and because of this she continues to advocate for mentoring. Cassandra began volunteering with Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy to support at-risk youth in Athens and the surrounding area. She holds a degree in psychology from Albany State University, which equips her with the skills to continue helping others. While working with Cultivating a Lifetime of Legacy, Cassandra has served in many roles including Mentor, Executive Assistant, Case Manager, and is currently serving as the Outreach Coordinator. Cassandra also serves as an Internet Sales Coordinator at Heyward Allen Toyota in Athens, Georgia.

Nadia Thomas, *Nadia's Truth, LLC*

Nadia Thomas is a 17-year-old Macon native on a journey to spread positivity and embracing her mental health on a healing journey. Nadia has survived challenges and turned her pain into power by sharing her truth. Nadia's Truth, LLC offers a unique and vital service focusing on building confidence in teens who may be struggling with issues and challenges. Nadia attends VIP Academy and will graduate in May 2025. She is a Sergeant First Class in JROTC and a manager for Northeast Red Machine Marching Band. She volunteers in the community and is currently an Ambassador with the R.I.S.E. program by Macon DA Anita Howard. She plans to attend Albany State in the Fall of 2025 as a student dedicated to making a difference in healthcare.

Najiva Timothee, *Girls Dig Deeper Initiative*

Najiva Timothee is the Founder and Executive Director of Girls Dig Deeper Initiative in Macon. Girls Dig Deeper Initiative is a girls group mentoring and youth development program serving girls ages 13-17 in school, after-school, and in community-based settings, as well as serving justice-involved and incarcerated youth in detention centers and correctional facilities. Previously Najiva was an Executive Lead for Walgreens Corporation from 2005 to 2019 leading management and non-management teams. She is a certified leadership coach, trainer, and mentor with Maxwell Leadership led by leadership expert John C. Maxwell.

Azaio Udoh, *Hope Givers*

Azaio Udoh is a junior attending Saint Mary's School as a boarding student in Raleigh, North Carolina. Azaio strongly advocates for social justice, equity, and mental health, and bases her advocacy on her upbringing with Nigerian immigrant parents. Growing up in Georgia with parents who couldn't always understand her struggles, Azaio learned different coping mechanisms and strategies for managing her mental wellness and building community outside of her

family. Using poetry as an outlet, Azaio is a proud author in the Scholastic National Arts and Writing Awards 2021 "Best Teen Writing" collection, and her writing success has helped her recognize the undeniable impact her friends, teachers, and mentors have had on her life.

Chris and Ty Woods, *Artportunity Knocks*

Artportunity Knocks is a nonprofit organization founded in 2008 by Ty and Chris Woods, dedicated to empowering youth through arts and education. Based in Atlanta, Georgia, it offers a wide range of programs, including after school initiatives and summer camps, focused on disciplines such as music technology, dance, digital animation, and more, all infused with social emotional learning (SEL). Through its mission, Artportunity Knocks aims to provide young people with opportunities to make positive choices and bridge cultural gaps, thereby fostering a generation of informed, creative, and socially aware individuals. As leaders in the community, Ty and Chris also share their journey and insights on balancing entrepreneurship and family life through their podcast, Love & Entrepreneurship.