



# Strictly Business

**Bachelor of Science  
with Majors in:**

- Accounting
- Acquisition & Contract Management
- Advanced Manufacturing Management
- Aerospace Systems Management
- Health Care Management
- Human Resource Management
- Logistics & Supply Chain Management
- Management
- Management of Cybersecurity Operations
- Management of Technology
- Marketing
- Occupational Health and Safety Management

**Master of Accountancy**

**Master of Science  
with Majors in:**

- Acquisition and Contract Management
- Global Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- Strategic Healthcare Management & Administration
- Strategic Human Resource Management
- Strategic Leadership and Business Analytics

**Inside this issue:**

<i>New Certificate Program</i>	2
<i>COB Faculty Spotlights</i>	2
<i>Lean Six Sigma Earned Certificates</i>	3
<i>COB Hosts Guest Lecturer</i>	3
<i>Accounting Student Makes History</i>	4
<i>In Memoriam</i>	5
<i>Service Awards and Faculty Recognitions</i>	5
<i>Back to the Basics</i>	6

## A Word from Our Dean, Dr. Troy Adair



It is my pleasure to be able to update you on the current state of the College of Business and some upcoming changes. Since coming to Athens State University a little over a year ago, we have added new faculty, new programs, and appointed fresh faces to our Board of Visitors. Some

faculty have continued their education by earning terminal degrees.

New faculty include Dr. Mary Ellen Dennis, Health Care Management; Dr. Kendra Lee, Acquisition and Contract Management; Dr. Vicky Knerly, Acquisition and Contract Management; and Mr. Michael Phillips, Accounting. New programs are the Master of Science in Acquisition and Contract Management (Spring 2023), the Bachelor of Science in Marketing and Analytics (Spring 2024), and the undergraduate certificate in Space Systems Management (Spring 2024). Over the coming year, we plan on further refining our existing programs as well as adding new programs

that will best serve the communities we support.

Drs. John Moore and Debra Vaughn completed their Doctors of Business Administration. Other faculty are continuing to pursue more educational opportunities and trainings.

The College of Business is committing itself to improve the quality of our programs, our faculty, our technologies, and our services. We have always held ourselves to a high standard and plan to continue this tradition for many years to come. As always, thank you for your continuing support. We take great pride in our graduates, and want you to have the same pride in us.

## Dr. Catherine Wehlburg Named 39th President

In just over the 200 years Athens State University has been in existence, Dr. Catherine Wehlburg is only the third woman to serve as President. The Athens State University Board of Trustees made the official appointment at the May 2024 meeting.



Dr. Wehlburg had been serving as the Interim President since Dr. Philip Way stepped down in January 2023. She was first

hired by Athens State to serve as the University's Provost.

Board Chair, Senator Arthur Orr, expressed great

confidence in Dr. Wehlburg's abilities to take on her new role. He states, "The Board believes Dr. Wehlburg has the willingness to make any needed changes and adjustments in the months ahead to take Athens State to heightened levels not previously seen."

This is an apropos assessment, since Dr. Wehlburg's motto has been "Onward ever!"

## College of Business Introduces a New Certificate Program

In Spring 2024, the College of Business launched a new undergraduate certificate program in Space Systems Management.

This certificate allows students to choose five courses in aviation and/or space systems management. Space systems courses cover topics such as rocket and spacecraft propulsion systems, spacecraft environments, and aerospace flight risk management. Aviation courses include aviation safety and security management, aviation law, and federal aviation regulations management.

“We live in a highly technical, aerospace-oriented community,” said Dr. Wayne McCain, Professor of

Management of Technology. “The certificates are a good introduction to the topic and allow a student to start immediately and get a credential that they can add to their resume that might help them get employment at one of those prime contractors or even with the government—the Army or NASA, for instance.”

Certificate programs are aimed at students who have a gap in their educational learning. Dr. McCain claims about 75% of students enrolled in the certification program are already in the field of aviation or space systems. They are working toward additional academic credentials that can pair with their current jobs. “It gives them the

chance to really learn a lot of the background and academic aspects of what they’re already doing at work,” stated Dr. McCain.

Athens State is committed to making the program a hands-on experience. Students are working on several projects that include building a small satellite, working on an experimental aircraft, a Mars life support backpack and a scuba diving breathable mechanism.

To learn more about this certificate and others in the College of Business, go to <https://www.athens.edu/departments/cob-cert/>. You can contact Dr. McCain directly at [Wayne.McCain@athens.edu](mailto:Wayne.McCain@athens.edu).

## Dr. Kim LaFevor Speaks at O-NET Event

On October 17, 2023, Dr. Kim LaFevor spoke at the O-NET Online Student Chapter Meeting. The event was promoted as an opportunity to discover how O-NET can revolutionize the job search process by helping attendees pinpoint their skills and interests, master the art of job market analysis, craft optimal resumes, and learn valuable

tips and resources for continuous learning and professional growth.

Dr. LaFevor is a professor of Human Resource Management at Athens State University with over 32 years in higher education. She also had a 21-year career in advanced manufacturing with General Motors, holding progressively respon-

sible managerial and executive roles in human resources and labor relations. She earned a B.S. in both Psychology and Personnel Psychology, a M.S. in Human Resource Management, and a DBA with dual majors in Management and Education. In addition, she holds multiple HR-related certifications.

## COB FACULTY GRADUATE FROM EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING ACADEMY



Left to right: Dr. Katia Maxwell (College of Arts and Sciences), Dr. Kim Roberts, and Ms. Kim Bell (College of Business)

Experiential Learning is a process through which students develop knowledge, skills, and values by applying theory and academic content to real-world experiences within the classroom, community, or workplace. It encompasses internships, undergraduate research, hands-on activities, community service, among other creative and professional work experiences.

In 2023, two COB professors

completed the Experiential Education Academy (EEA) offered by the Society for Experiential Education (SEE). The curriculum provides participants with knowledge, skills, and competence to strengthen experiential education within their classrooms. Graduates must complete 6 workshops within the curriculum. Ms. Kim Bell and Dr. Kim Roberts graduated from the academy in 2023. They teach statistics and leadership/management courses, respectively.

## Students Earn Lean Six Sigma Certifications

The Operations Management minor and the Advanced Manufacturing Management programs in the College of Business include courses in Lean Six Sigma. In Fall 2023, ten students earned their Lean Six Sigma White Belt certification. A Council for Six Sigma Certification (CSSC) Certified Lean Six Sigma White Belt designation reflects knowledge by the individual of the basic definition, history, and structure of the discipline. Students who achieved this designation are Javian Conley, David Craft, Jennifer Daugherty, Kc Englebert, Carletta Han-

nan, Candace Sanchez-Harper, Jeremy Hughey, Reanna Johnson, Jamie Kelly, and Rebecca Malone Williams.

In Spring 2024, four students earned their Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt Certification. A Yellow Belt participates as a core team member or subject matter expert (SME) on a project or projects and may be responsible for running smaller process improvement projects. Students earning the Yellow Belt certification are Brandon Bennett, Javian Conley, David Craft, and Rebecca Malone Wil-

liams. In addition, David Craft displayed his Lean Manufacturing project “Application of 5S to Operations Utility Boxes at a Chemical Manufacturing Facility” at the Honors Program Scholarly and Creative Work Showcase in April.

In addition to MG 421 Lean Six Sigma White Belt and MG 422 Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt, students may also take MG 423 Intro to Lean Six Sigma Green Belt. For more information, contact Dr. Kim Roberts at [kim.roberts@athens.edu](mailto:kim.roberts@athens.edu) or 256-216-5362.

## COB Programs Receive Recognition

Athens State’s M.S. in Strategic Leadership and Business Analytics has been ranked as high as #3 in the country on AnalyticsDegrees.org’s list of the Most Affordable Online Masters in Business Analytics Degree Programs. Their ranking is based on tuition and fees, residency, program inclusion, and accreditation information.

Perhaps the most consistently awarded program in the College of Business is our B.S. Logistics and Supply Chain Management. Over the past year, the program was named one of the most affordable in the country, ranked #10 by SupplyChainGuide.org. TechGuide ranked it #3 Most Affordable Online Bachelor’s in Supply Chain Management Programs

and #6 The Best Online Bachelor’s in Supply Chain Management Degree Programs.

In all College of Business programs, faculty are able to utilize their own first-hand industry experience from successful careers in their discipline to further provide a hands-on learning approach for students.

## COB Hosts International Lecturer

On Thursday, June 6, Dr. Chao-Chang Arthur Chen delivered a presentation on “Trend of Semiconductor Manufacturing Technology and Future AI Integration.” His presentation covered advanced manufacturing technologies for semiconductor production and the emerging trend of integrating advanced chips into artificial intelligence systems.

Dr. Chen is a globally recognized scholar in the chemical mechanical polishing (CMP) process for precision engineering in advanced manufacturing. He serves as the CEO of

the CMP Innovation Center at the National Taiwan University of Science and Technology. Dr. Chen holds a PhD in mechanical engineering from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He previously held the position of deputy CEO at the National Measurement Laboratory of Taiwan. Recently, he founded OmniMeasure, a semiconductor testing service company in Taiwan. Dr. Steve Wang, College of Business Associate Professor of Advanced Manufacturing Management, hosted the event.



**Dr. Chao-Chang Arthur Chen**

## Teaching with AI

During the 2024 academic year, ATLIS, the Writing Center, Client Services, and Kares Library collaborated with the faculty of the Learning Resources Committee to explore innovative approaches to teaching with Artificial Intelligence (AI). The Learning Resources Committee facilitated two pilot groups of faculty through a “Teaching with AI” course developed by the Auburn University Biggio Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning that has been featured in *The*

*Chronicle of Higher Education*, *Inside Higher Ed* and was awarded the 2024 Outstanding Program: Noncredit Award by the UCPEA. Additionally, both the SEC and the Alabama Community College System have adopted the course, empowering instructors to “demystify the AI landscape and harness its abilities within the classroom and beyond” ([Auburn.edu](http://Auburn.edu)).

Several of the College of Business faculty completed the course during the past year. They are Ms.

Emily Corzine, Dr. Alana Daniel, Dr. Diann Hammon, Dr. Stacie Hughes, Dr. Jim Kerner, Dr. Lawrence Reeves, and Dr. Kim Roberts.



## Accounting Student Makes History



Kaitlyn Johnson, accounting major from Jasper, Alabama, graduated in Fall 2023. She joined numerous other accounting majors graduating from Athens State University during the College of Business ceremony. What sets Kaitlyn apart from her classmates is her age. Kaitlyn was only 19 years old. She became the youngest graduate in the past 30 years to receive a Bachelor of Science in Accounting.

Kaitlyn fast-tracked her way to

Athens State through her homeschool education and completion of college-level credit hours at Beville State Community College. She transferred to Athens State in 2020 with an interest in business.

“I have always been organized and good with numbers, so accounting was the perfect fit for me,” said Kaitlyn. “You can do so many things with an accounting degree.”

During her time at Athens State, Kaitlyn served as the Treasurer of the Accounting Club and as a member in Delta Mu Delta and the National Society of Leadership and Success. By her involvement in student organizations, Kaitlyn was able to be placed in front of future employers through industry tours and career fairs.

Kaitlyn said the Accounting Program at Athens State prepared her for the workforce by

teaching the importance of creating a streamlined workflow in order to meet deadlines. She credits her professor, Emily Corzine, with guiding her to choose which avenue of accounting she wants to pursue professionally.

“Kaitlyn Johnson is an excellent student and has a great attitude. We earnestly appreciate her leadership in service to the Accounting Club, and we are so proud of her!” states Emily Corzine.

Kaitlyn hopes to begin graduate school at Athens State to earn her Master of Accountancy degree. After that, she is interested in becoming a financial advisor and one day serving as the Chief Financial Officer of a company. Kaitlyn wants to use her knowledge and skills to help businesses succeed and create accounting systems that will keep projects on time and on budget.

## In Memoriam

The College of Business lost two prominent Emeriti Faculty in 2024.



**Dr. Robert Bryan Kennedy** passed away on January 15, 2024, at the age of 85. Dr. Kennedy started as an adjunct at Athens State before retiring

from his job at Redstone Arsenal. Upon his retirement from RSA, he began teaching management and human resource management

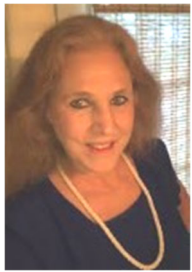
courses full time and retired at the age of 81! Dr. Kennedy loved his family and basketball. In 2009, he was inducted into the TSSAA Hall of Fame for refereeing basketball in the state of Tennessee for more than 50 years.



**Dr. Thomas Pieplow** passed away on February 2, 2024, at the age of 70. Dr. Pieplow served as Professor in the Graduate School of Busi-

ness for Alabama A&M, Florida Institute of Technology and Embry Riddle Aeronautical Universities. He retired from his position as the Director for Foreign Military Sales at the US Army Aviation and Missile Command where he was responsible for the sale and transfer of all aviation and missile systems to over 70 foreign nations. Dr. Pieplow taught Logistics and Supply Chain Management courses at Athens State University from 2010 until his retirement in 2021. In addition, he served as a department chair and interim dean.

## COB Welcomes New Faculty



**Dr. Vicky Knerly**, an Instructor in Acquisition and Contract Management, earned her DBA in Business Administration, M.S. in Acquisition and Contract Man-

agement and MBA degrees from Florida Institute of Technology (FIT). She was an Assistant Professor, Director, and Curriculum Manager for contract programs at the Huntsville-Redstone Arsenal Education Center for FIT. Dr. Knerly served as an adjunct professor for Athens State before being hired for a full-time contract beginning in Fall 2024.



**Dr. Kendra Lee**, an Assistant Professor of Acquisition and Contract Management, has a PhD in Management from Walden University and

a M.S. in Management from Southern Wesleyan University. Before coming to Athens State, she was a Contract Management Specialist with Missile Defense Agency at Redstone Arsenal. She is Level II DAWIA Contracting Management certified and started as a contract specialist in 2015. Dr. Lee lives in Athens, Alabama.



**Mr. Michael Phillips**, an Assistant Professor of Accounting, received both his B.S. in Accounting and Master of Accountancy from Athens

State University. He is a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and has served in various accounting positions since 2015. His most recent employment prior to teaching was as the Director-Chase Accounting for Protective Life Corporation. He is studying and preparing to sit for the CMA exam. Mr. Phillips resides in Bessemer, Alabama.

## 2024 Service Awards and Faculty Accomplishments

At this year's fall convocation, the following COB faculty received service awards:

20 Years—**Mr. Jeff Johnson**

30 Years—**Dr. LaDoris Baugh**

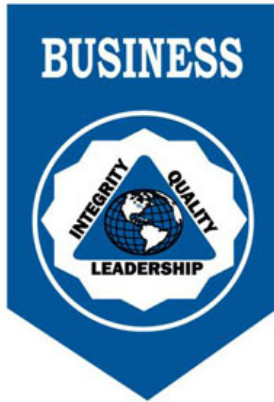
Strictly Business is a publication of:

**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

Athens State University  
Sanders Hall  
300 North Beaty Street  
Athens, AL 35611

256-216-5352  
FAX: 256-216-5356  
www.athens.edu/college\_business/

Editor: Molly Pepper, CAP



Sanders Hall, College of Business

*Invest in the future...*

*With the challenges facing higher education, your help is very much needed and greatly appreciated. We solicit your assistance in ensuring the continued progress of our institution through course offerings, programs, and progress in the College of Business. We urge you to make your tax-deductible contribution to the ASU Foundation in support of the College of Business.*

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the College of Business.

(Make checks payable to the ASU Foundation/College of Business.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your contribution to: College of Business, ATTN: Molly Pepper, Executive Assistant to the Dean, College of Business, Athens State University, 300 North Beaty Street, Athens, Alabama 35611

## Back to the Basics

It is all too easy, at times, to get away from our "roots" or humble beginnings. We achieve a little, or a lot, of success, and then we are tempted to rest on our laurels. When that starts to happen, we often need to hit a reset button to get ourselves refocused on doing the basic job we are to do. As educators, our primary responsibility is to our students. As staff, we are responsible for helping each individual student navigate through all of the many stages of their academic journey, helping to smooth the way however we can. We are to do this for many students, while treating each as the unique individuals they are. It can be frustrating answering the same questions numerous times, but the rewards of helping others are great.

As faculty, our primary responsibilities are to transfer as much as possible of our knowledge and ex-

perience to our students. That involves providing the proper teaching format and tools for the subject matter, providing the best technology available, and providing personal attention and engagement to each student in our classroom, be it in person or online. We must remember who we are here to serve. The best instructors rarely lose sight of this role.

We also need to give our students good advice regarding their current educational path and their future careers. We cannot expect students to automatically know everything about Athens State University or their chosen major simply from being a student here; just as one can't be expected to know everything about a new city without someone to show them some of the lesser known, but equally important, spots to be found and explored.

It is our responsibility, as members of academia, to share our world with each and every person who sets foot into it. We should be excited about where we work and what we do. After all, any educator worth his or her salt will tell you that teaching others is not about the money. It is about helping people find themselves; seeing the light of learning shine in their eyes; and setting them on a pathway they may or may not have known they wanted to follow. Remember who you are and why you wanted to become an educator! Get back to the basics!

Athens State University, as an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding nondiscrimination and affirmative action. Athens State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, religion, genetic information, or veteran status in employment, or admissions to or participation in educational programs and activities. Inquiries or concerns may be addressed to the Office of the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Support Services, 300 N. Beaty Street, Athens, AL 35611, 256-233-8175.