The University of Georgia’s commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive campus environment has been recognized for the fourth consecutive year with the Insight Into Diversity Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award.

The HEED Award is the only national recognition honoring colleges and universities that exhibit outstanding efforts and success in the area of diversity and inclusion. UGA is one of 81 institutions nationwide to receive a 2017 HEED Award.

“The University of Georgia is honored to receive this significant recognition for the fourth consecutive year,” said President Jere W. Morehead. “Although work certainly remains ahead, the institution is making strides toward becoming an even more connected and welcoming academic community for all of its faculty, staff and students.”

The recruitment of a diverse student body is bolstered by a range of programs that introduce prospective students to the many learning opportunities that the university offers. High-achieving middle school students from across the state visit campus through Gear Up for College, which is funded by the Goizueta Foundation and administered through the university’s Fanning Institute for Leadership Development. Through a partnership known as Experience UGA, students from all grade levels in the Clarke County School District visit campus to participate in hands-on, curricular-based activities.

During spring break, UGA students visit high schools across Georgia to share their experiences and discuss college preparedness through a program known as Road Dawgs. In addition, programs such as Padres e Hijos Fin de Semana (Parents and Students Weekend) at the Fanning Institute, Movimiento Latino, the Georgia African American Male Experience and Georgia Daze bring prospective students to campus, where they interact with faculty members and current students.

Programs such as these, combined with the growing demand for a UGA education,
Alumni create scholarship fund

Johnny Sanders Jr. and Rubye Coleman-Sanders grew up in Alabama in large families with parents who valued education. After earning undergraduate degrees from Alabama State University, where they met, the couple took their parent’s advice to heart and earned advanced degrees from the University of Georgia. Because their educational pursuits elevated their careers, it is only natural that the award-winning educators would decide to help provide similar opportunities to future students who are pursuing teaching careers.

The University of Georgia was so great to provide financial assistance when we attended,” said Sanders, who spent 33 years in high school and college-level classrooms. He retired from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, South Carolina. As a professor of counseling and development in Winthrop’s College of Education, he was the first African-American man to become a tenured full professor, and the first counselor educator at Winthrop University to receive the South Carolina Counseling Association’s Counselor Educator of the Year award.

Coleman-Sanders spent 30 years teaching business and education courses in higher education. She retired from Lander University in Greenwood, South Carolina, where she was the first African-American woman to become a tenured full professor. As graduates of the UGA College of Education—Sanders in counseling and development and Coleman-Sanders in business and education—both recognize the need to support future educators. Recently, the Sanders established a generous bequest, a planned gift left through their will, to benefit the University of Georgia Foundation. The Dr. Johnny Sanders Jr. and Dr. Rubye Coleman-Sanders Teacher Education Scholarship Fund will assist students from underrepresented populations who plan to teach in underserved communities to obtain a degree from UGA. The scholarship fund will be created by the residual from the couple’s estate. The Sanders said this type of planned gift allows them to enjoy their retirement while also knowing that their love of education will continue in the form of financial assistance for qualified students.

The university’s commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion extends from its leadership to its faculty and staff. Earlier this year Vice President for Student Affairs Victor Wilson received the INSIGHT Into Diversity Giving Back Award, and Morehead received the award in 2016. Across campus, more than 5,500 faculty and staff members have participated in the voluntary Certificate in Diversity and Inclusion program since it was launched in 2012.

In 2015, UGA launched a campus-wide Women’s Leadership Initiative that has resulted in an expansion of career development programming, mentoring and work-life balance support for faculty and staff. In addition, the Office of Faculty Affairs has developed trainings for department heads and search committees on attracting a diverse hiring pool.

“Earning the HEED award for four consecutive years is a source of great pride for the university community,” said Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Pamela Whitten. “It’s also an opportunity for us to reaffirm that the diversity of our faculty, staff and students is one of the University of Georgia’s greatest strengths.”

The degrees Johnny and Rubye Sanders earned at UGA advanced their careers. Now, they want to help others experience similar success.

For more information, visit give.uga.edu.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

have helped increase the number of African-American students at UGA by 33 percent over the past five years. The number of Hispanic students at UGA increased by 21 percent over the same time period.

“The University of Georgia is proud of its many programs and initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion,” said Michelle Garfield Cook, vice provost for diversity and inclusion and strategic university initiatives. “We have been successful because every sector of the institution is committed to providing access and promoting the success of our students, faculty and staff.

Funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF) has played a key role in promoting diversity in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math, where student interest has risen dramatically in recent years. The NSF-funded Peach State Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation program has helped triple minority undergraduate enrollment in STEM fields at UGA over the past decade, and a new NSF-funded program known as Bridges to the Doctorate will build on that success by boosting the enrollment of underrepresented minorities in Ph.D. programs.

The video presentation kicked off Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October and served as a reminder to the world about the contributions and milestones of people with Down syndrome.

This wasn’t the first time Huffman has been in the spotlight. Last fall, his reaction to receiving his acceptance letter to the Destination Dawgs program went viral. It was actually on the Today Show, and it was broadcast several times across the nation. It kind of went crazy,” said Kathryn Junod, Huffman’s mother.

Jordan enrolled in January to be part of the first cohort of Destination Dawgs. Students in the program take academic courses, take part in work-based experiential learning, build independent living skills and participate in social and extracurricular activities.

“I’m kinda really, really happy, and I love being part of the Destination Dawgs,” said Jordan. “I love it a lot; it’s a great school to go to.

“Jordan’s become so independent,” Junod said. “We dropped him off one day last week when it was raining and he just went on to class like ‘I don’t need a peer,’ and that’s what you want them to do. He feels like he can do anything. We couldn’t be more pleased with Destination Dawgs. It’s so great to have opportunities—opportunities that didn’t exist before.

Destination Dawgs’ photo featured on billboard in heart of Times Square

Robert “Jordan” Huffman III, a freshman in UGA’s Destination Dawgs Postsecondary College Program, is one of hundreds of individuals whose photo appeared in Times Square in New York City. Huffman’s photo was selected by the National Down Syndrome Society from over 2,000 entries and was a part of a video presentation highlighting children, teens and adults with Down syndrome.

The video presentation kicked off Down Syndrome Awareness Month in October and served as a reminder to the world about the contributions and milestones of people with Down syndrome.

I chose to attend UGA because... of the amount of opportunities and resources available. During my junior year of high school, I participated in the Young Scholars Program through the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences. The program was designed to provide a hands-on research experience for high school students in preparation for college through seminars. Through the program, I gained many mentors and was a co-author in our publication.

AMAZING STUDENTS: Nettie Brown

Nettie Brown, a senior majoring in biochemical engineering, has been selected as a FUSEmaxx youth ambassador, which allows her to share her success story with others and see similar success. For more information, visit give.uga.edu.

AMAZING STUDENTS: Akash Shah

Akash Shah, a senior majoring in cell biology and biology with a neuroscience emphasis, has a hectic academic schedule but still finds time to take on leadership roles around campus. He’s passionate about having an impact on at least one life in a positive manner every day to help change the world, one step at a time.

The one UGA experience I will always remember will be... my time as an Orientation Leader with New Student Orientation. Every single day is a new adventure, and you meet new people to have different stories; they all impact you and help you grow in so many different ways. My time serving as an Orientation Leader has been such an honor and a privilege, and it has truly changed my life.

Read more at uga.edu/amazing/profile/shah-akash/.
Above: Members of the Filipino Student Association perform traditional Filipino dances at International Coffee Hour.

Above: Members of the Vietnamese Student Association volunteer and interact with patients at the University Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Left: LGBT Resource Center staff celebrate at the Athens Pride Street Festival.

Above: Indian Cultural Exchange students celebrate the Hindu festival of lights at the annual Diwali Dinner.

Right: Members of the Turkish Student Association celebrate Eid al-Adha with a potluck.

Below: Student Veterans pose with Google representatives after learning about job opportunities for veterans within the company.

Above: UGA’s 2017 World Leaders pose for a group photo. World Leaders help new international students get to know Athens and acclimate to life at UGA.

Right: Students celebrate the 25th annual Noche Latina, an event hosted by the Hispanic Student Association to celebrate and share Latino culture and heritage.

Above: Members of the Pakistani Student Association celebrate Pakistan Independence Day.

Right: Members of the African Student Union volunteer at the Athens Area Homeless Shelter.

Above: The Brazilian Student Association hosts International Coffee Hour, a weekly event that encourages cultural exchange over coffee and international cuisine.

Right: New students explore Athens during International Student Orientation.

Below: Students gather at the first Persian Student Union meeting of the fall semester.

Above: Two students in the Destination Dawgs program celebrate the first day of classes by posing for a picture with President Morehead.

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**FOCUS ON FACULTY**

**Puliyur S. MohanKumar**

Puliyur S. MohanKumar, a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine, has forged research collaborations related to stem cells, nanoparticles and imaging with the goal of improving human and animal health.

**Y. Joon Choi**

Y. Joon Choi, an associate professor in the School of Social Work, conducts research on stigma issues such as substance abuse and intimate partner violence while also educating future social work professionals and researchers.

**Proudest Moment at UGA?**

Puliyur MohanKumar: "The most proud moment of my life is when I was able to go back to my native country and affect change. It feels as if the UGA community is asking ‘what more can we do’ at every turn and every semester. The fall semester feels familiar, but it is unique. We as an institution are better than we were last fall. We are making incredible progress in building community, finding common ground and expressing shared values. We work hard toward these goals, sometimes stumbling along the way. Sometimes we don’t get it right, but that is okay as well. We learn, we dust ourselves off, and we move forward. I encourage everyone to recognize this determination in our peers, friends, colleagues and neighbors. I also encourage you to recognize it in yourself. Mahatma Gandhi was quoted as saying, ‘Be the change you want to see in the world.’ So often we are experts on what needs to change and what needs to be done and how someone else should do it. But when you do it yourself, you can’t help but feel it internally. With this practice, it tends not to lead us to real solutions, but rather a retweet of existing problems. Perhaps this is why I am always encouraged and inspired by our students, faculty and staff. They naturally consider themselves to be problem solvers, solution makers and those who will see the potential, where others only see the limit. Every day they are engaged in the work of being the change that they want they see. UGA is a community of special people who have a range of unique qualities. Let us continue to be good stewards of our own positive attributes, as we help cultivate the positive attributes of others."

**BEST – Black Educational Support Team**

The Black Educational Support Team (B.E.S.T.) is a student-run organization aimed at promoting the retention, progression and graduation of minority students at UGA. Founded in 1990, the organization was created to provide a friendly environment to incoming African-Americans in order to increase the minority population and retention rate at the University of Georgia.

“The one UGA experience I will always remember...”

Y. Joon Choi, an associate professor in the School of Social Work, conducted research on stigma issues such as substance abuse and intimate partner violence while also educating future social work professionals and researchers. The one UGA experience I will always remember... I will never forget the Commencement ceremony of my first students. I was so proud of their accomplishments and felt so emotional being their teacher and sending them out to the world to advocate for those who are the least fortunate in our society.

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

Cook: "The best way to combat these problems is to promote women's health research at UGA and provide strong infrastructure support for young women. This includes providing opportunities for research, mentoring, career development, and networking. It's also important to include women as leaders in all aspects of STEM fields. By doing so, we can create a culture that values diversity and empowers women to succeed.

"Be the change you want to see in the world."

- Mahatma Gandhi
Giving to the Office of Institutional Diversity

A contribution to the Office of Institutional Diversity (OID) will help support a variety of initiatives that foster diversity at UGA.

OID provides and supports programming, such as recruitment and retention efforts, diversity scholarship funding, pre-collegiate learning opportunities, and faculty and student mentoring events.

Please contact us at (706) 583–8195 or at diverse@uga.edu to discuss ways to give and we will work to ensure your charitable giving needs are met.

To donate online, go to diversity.uga.edu/index.php/about/giving.

Checks should be made payable to the UGA Foundation and designated for OID on the memo line.

Please mail checks to:
UGA Office of Institutional Diversity
C/O Business Manager
210 Holmes/Hunter Academic Building
Athens, GA 30602–6119