



# Class of 2015/2016 Newsletter

Welcome to the October issue of the GRSP newsletter. If you have anything you would like to contribute in the future please let me know.

- Lauren Darge, [dargie94@hotmail.com](mailto:dargie94@hotmail.com), (678) 599-4716

## Lake Oconee

The students in District 6910 were invited to a student weekend hosted by the Rotary Club of Greene and Putnam Counties. Many outdoor events were planned for us, but the weather did not like that idea! However, we did get to go out on the lake.

On the Friday evening we all had a BBQ dinner together and Jeffrey Wells, a baritone with the New York Metropolitan Opera Company, followed this with a performance.

On Saturday we worked with Habitat for Humanity. This meant we were putting frames for houses together for those less fortunate. They have a program where people must apply for these homes and they have to help build it and pay back the cost of materials over a period of time. Their motto is "We provide a hand-up, not a hand-out." It was very overcast and rained a little.

That afternoon we went to the lake. The weather was not the best, but it did stop raining for us, and the weather never stopped me anyway! It was great to spend some time together. We played a bit of volleyball and Frisbee, and got dragged around behind a boat which is always fun!

That night we had burgers for dinner and then listened to a talk about the local area. We then did some karaoke, and found we were entertainers and not singers! It was great fun and by that point we were all exhausted and went back to stay with our weekend host families before we returned back to school the next morning.

-Lauren Darge, *Australia*

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## Savannah Hosts GRSP Weekend!

The Friday, all the GRSP students have been looking forward to, the GRSP weekend in Savannah. The GRSP students knew the agenda beforehand and were ready to meet everyone again. The reception was organized on Friday, October 9, at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront Hotel where all the students received their package with instructions, agenda and information about their host parents for the weekend. The



The calm and misty river of Savannah complimented the relaxing walk down River Street. We all had a lovely time with a stroll through the shops while inhaling the typical Savannah culture, the people and its habitat. Dinner was at the Marriott Hotel and we soon departed for the first weekend encounter; the Ghost Tour.

We were divided into two groups and were taken around downtown Savannah for the Ghost Tour. We had the opportunity to hear the tales of the past and some even from the present of paranormal activity that engulfs the city of Savannah. The pirates, the soldiers, lovers quarrels and war fronts have left a significant effect in the lives of the people that they never left, but hovered around their precious after life. Savannah is said to be one of the most haunted cities in the United States and the dark, shadowy streets stood proof for that statement. The ghost tour concluded at the Marriot Hotel and we were on our way to the comfortable beds in the reception of warm-welcoming Rotarians before midnight.



Saturday, October 10 started early at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Pooler. The weather didn't look like it was ready to cooperate with the agenda for the day; an afternoon at the Tybee beach. It was raining continuously and



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the sky was as gloomy as gloomy could be. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum depicted the World War II and the influence of the Mighty Eighth in the victory of the Allies. It stood as honour to all the civilians and veterans that were courageous enough to sacrifice their lives and loved ones for the victory of their country.



We arrived at the Tybee Island after lunch and the weather seemed to have pitied our journey and had calmed down. We got the chance to visit the historic Tybee Island Lighthouse and even climb all 178 steps of it to enjoy the breathtaking view of the Atlantic Ocean and Tybee Island. A lot of photos, including almost a hundred Selfies kept everyone occupied on top.

After enjoying the scenery and history of the lighthouse, we arrived at a beach house to settle in. The weather was quite elegant by now, with the sun dominating the dark and gloomy clouds, paving way for a perfect beach experience. Mr & Mrs Coleman were generous enough to provide us their beach house to make the Tybee Island experience a memorable and comfortable one. The Pirate

Parade crossed the streets right in front of the beach house, handing over candy and pirate accessories to the onlookers.

By evening we all settled down at the beach, bathed in the water and the sun, enjoyed a bit of beach football (soccer), chit-chatting – collecting and exchanging fond memories of the GRSP program. The weather decided to stay positive and the sun blazed through the soft sandy beach of the Tybee Island while we had one of the best moments of our lives in the beach. The low-country boil dinner was prepared and we got a taste of what “delicious” is like. We spent time chilling and chatting in the beach house enjoying the fireworks of the Pirate Parade lighting the sky and bid farewell to the lovely Tybee Island, heading back to Marriott Hotel to end the day.

Sunday arrived faster than we thought. We met up at the Marriott Hotel and exchanged warm hugs and good-byes to each other, till we meet next time at another GRSP weekend. It was a lovely weekend, thanks to Rtn. Jim Drake and his committee, all the host parents, Rotarians and Rotary Clubs in Savannah.

*-Nipuna Ambanpola, Sri Lanka*



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## GRSPs at Armstrong

Savannah is a hip, happening and historic city and just fifteen minutes from Downtown sits the ever- growing campus of Armstrong State University. The Campus as we know it today is pretty much brand new and sparkly. There are almost 8000 students studying at Armstrong,



among them are leading sports teams, traditional sororities and fraternities, ex-army and international students. This college is in huge contrast to the university I studied at back in Britain. It is only decades old compared to centuries old and holds a very small student body compared to what I'm used to. However, this means there is always a friendly face to walk by on the way to class and the setting of Savannah means the walks about campus are unbeatably beautiful. The palms trees intermingled with the oaks covered in Spanish moss are still breathtaking to me and the white pillar buildings are so wonderfully American. Teachers and professors here are to be addressed with their title, so either 'Professor' or 'Doctor', which I find difficult to do, since my professors at home would find it almost rude to address them in such a way- we use first names at home in most cases.

The classes at Armstrong are very small which means individual attention is always at hand which is fantastic for the students, but again took some getting used to for me- in contrast to huge lecture halls where I am just another sleepy head behind a laptop. The American education system is still a mystery to me, and there seems to be so many universities all over the place it is hard for me to recognize what is seen as a 'good' school and what is not, but all of the students at Armstrong are very proud to be here and have worked hard to be here.



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Our accommodation on campus is great. For freshmen they have a block of shared rooms (no thank you) and lots of facilities in there, but for the upperclassmen, sports teams, and international students, there are huge apartment buildings right in the center of campus with a beach volleyball court, clubhouse, games room, wash room and plenty of outside eating areas to soak up the Savannah sun. I live in an apartment of 4; 2 Americans, 2 international students, and this set up works quite well.

Armstrong has fantastic facilities in general; the sports and recreation center is fantastic with free and varied classes, a great gym (which I should go to more, thank you fried chicken) and there are some cool societies to get involved with.



There are choirs, bands, plays, musicals, sports teams, sports clubs, international clubs, so all in all plenty to get involved with. This school is full of friendly and open people and they sure do love an accent, lucky for us GRSPs. I feel very blessed to have been stationed in Savannah for a year and I look forward to what the remaining months hold for me at Armstrong.

*-Lizzie McGhee, Scotland*

## University of North Georgia

Even though the Georgia Rotary Student Program is not primarily a scholastic scholarship the students spend most of their time on campus experiencing the American



college life. One of these schools is the University of North Georgia, which is special in the way that it is one of six Senior Military Colleges in the US. The cadets add a lot of traditions to the school. Every day at 7 pm and 5 am the cannon goes off and everything: students, professors, cars, stop and face the flag. There is also a drill field in the middle of the campus,



which cannot be used as a short cut. If someone crosses over the drill field it is said that a cadet will come and tackle the person walking.

University of North Georgia was formed in 2013 by the merge of North Georgia College and State University, and Gainesville State College. UNG has four campuses: Blue Ridge, Cumming, Dahlonega, Gainesville, and Oconee. About sixteen thousand students are enrolled, three of these are the GRSP students Nicolle Monroy Galeotti from Guatemala, Johan Groensvold from Denmark, and Michaela Hörnfeltdt from Sweden. The scholars attend the campus in Dahlonega, which has a beautiful environment among the mountains. UNG has a great international program with unity among the international students, which all three scholars appreciate.

- *Michaela Hörnfeltdt, Sweden*

### **Wesleyan College**

Wesleyan College is the oldest member of the seven sisters of the south colleges. Feminism has a strong presence on campus and is embedded into Wesleyans history in that it was the first college in the world chartered to grant degrees to woman. The majority of the 700 undergraduate students live on campus creating a close-knit community where sisterhood is emphasized across all four years. The four classes each have their own colours, chants and traditions which so far has given me the full all American experience!



-*Caitlin Warren, Scotland*

### **Colombia**

Colombia is located at the northern tip of South America, and has access to both the Atlantic and the Pacific Ocean. It has great biodiversity thanks to the many tropical forests such as the Amazon rainforest and the tropical savanna.



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Since this country is very close to the equatorial line it doesn't have seasons. Zones divide the climate: hot temperatures can be found in the coastal lines, and warm and cold temperatures are found in the mountains. In this country you can find places with permanent snow to beautiful beaches to deserts.



Colombia is well known for its flower exportation, and coffee production which is considered among the best in the world, coffee growing is the largest source of rural employment in the country and has been a major factor in the Colombian economy.



Colombia is a multiethnic country with a population of 47 million people, made up of indigenous, mestizos, African-Colombians, and European Colombians. In each city you can find people with different ways of living, foods and traditions.



*-Melissa Echandia, Colombia*



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## Australia

Australia has a population of 23.13 million, which is less than the population of Texas, but Texas can fit into Australia 11 times. It would take you 44 hours to drive from Perth to Sydney. The longest stretch of straight railway line in the world is the Indian Pacific which runs from Perth to Sydney, and its windows are protected from the sun by a film of gold.



I am from Perth which is the capital of Western Australia and Perth is the third most isolated city in the world with a population over 1 million. Dutch explorers did not know black swans existed until they came to Western Australia.

Over 80 per cent of Australia's animals are unique to Australia and are not found anywhere else in the world. This is why our border security is so strict; you can't even take plant or animal materials between states.

Australia is known for the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Vegemite, Uggs, ACDC, Heath Ledger, Kylie Minogue, the Great Barrier Reef, koalas, kangaroos, Steve Irwin, animals that can kill you, beer, wine, barbies (BBQ), Tim Tams, and cricket. Also, the first person to use the term 'selfie' was in 2002 by an Aussie. The best thing to come out of Australia is probably fairy bread (seriously no childhood birthday party is complete without it).



The picture of the kangaroos fighting was taken at a golf course near my house, and the crocodile one is on a Jumpin' Crocs' Tour on the Adelaide River, which I went on as a kid.

My favourite place to visit would be Coral Bay. It is



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located in Australia's North West, and when I was a kid we used to go camping there every other year. It was a good 13 hour drive from home. It is known for the Ningaloo reef, beaches and whale sharks. I will always remember how cold the water is!

Another one of my favourites is Yallingup, which we normally go to every year after Christmas. The area around Yallingup is known for surfing, caves, wineries and beaches. We always have fun here being outdoors, and this sort of sums up what it is like to live in Australia.



*-Lauren Darge, Australia*

## Student Blogs

[dizzylizzietheparttimehippie.wordpress.com/](http://dizzylizzietheparttimehippie.wordpress.com/)

[laurendarge.blogspot.com](http://laurendarge.blogspot.com)

[nillinilli.wordpress.com/](http://nillinilli.wordpress.com/)

[nouw.com/mydreamcometrue](http://nouw.com/mydreamcometrue)

[nouw.com/myyearinthestates](http://nouw.com/myyearinthestates)