



*Photo by Kara Faulk*  
 The 2010 Founders Court from L-R: Kayla Carroll, Lauren Clark, KayLa Miller, Dr. Glenn, Brittany Johnson, and Maggie Thomas

## Athens State University Founders Court tradition continued

*Kara Faulk*  
 Assistant Editor

The crowning of Founders Queen is a reigning tradition at Athens State University. Receiving the crown is quite an honor as the tradition has been set in place for decades, since the University was a Female College. Every year, the University President crowns the queen at the annual ceremony beginning her yearlong term. The crowning takes place in the historic Founders Hall. Each member of the Athens State student body is given the opportunity to place a vote for the Queen's position. This year, Stanley Webster introduced the Court and announced the queen. Dr. Glenn crowned KayLaura Joyce Miller, of Guntersville, Alabama, the 2010-2011 Founders Queen on October 30, 2010.

KayLaura is the daughter of Jeff and Traci Miller. She attended Sneed State Community College where she achieved her Associate's degree. There, she was an Ambassador Officer and served on the Dean's Advisory Committee, the Student Government Association, the Rotary Club,

and Phi Theta Kappa. Miller is now a junior at Athens State University and is pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. Miller serves as the Student Government Association Secretary and is the recipient of a leadership scholarship.

The student body also elects four other girls that make up the long-established Founders Court. This year Miller was accompanied by Maggie Thomas, of Athens, Alabama; Lauren Clark of Elkmont, Alabama; Kayla Carroll, of Falkville, Alabama; and Brittany Johnson of Athens, Alabama. The group was a diverse and well-rounded representation of the Athens State student population. Thomas is a senior, majoring in English Secondary Education and is the editor of the student newspaper, President of Sigma Tau Delta, and a member of SGA, Live United, and the Quality Enhancement Plan leadership team. Clark is a junior at the University and served as 2009-2010 Head Athenian,

Junior Class President, and Founders Court Attendant. Clark currently serves as Ms. Athens State University and is pursuing a degree in Contract Management. Carroll achieved an Associates degree in Biology, Agricultural Science, and General Education at Calhoun Community College. She is a senior at Athens State, studying Biology and Chemistry and serves as secretary of the Health and Science Careers Club. Brittany Johnson achieved an Associate's degree in Pre-Law, General Education and Justice Studies at Calhoun. She is currently a junior majoring in Psychology and Justice Studies.

Friends and family members came to support the girls, as did many students, staff, and faculty members. KayLa wanted to thank all of the students for taking part. Miller said, "I am honored to have been chosen for the Court and as Queen. Thank you to everyone that took the time to vote. The support of my fellow students means so much to me."

## Student United Way: An update on the most active club on campus

*Erin Minor*  
 Assistant Editor

In the last issue of the *Athenian*, students read about an opportunity to become involved in Student United Way. In the article, students were challenged to step up and serve our campus and the Athens-Limestone area. Students responded well by contacting Dr. Durm and taking the first steps toward becoming an official campus organization. The first meeting was small; students gathered in Dr. Durm's office to assess the needs of our community and campus... the rest "is history."

At the next meeting, the A.S.S.I.S.T (Athens State Students Involved in Social Togetherness), Student United Way became the first Student United Way in the state of Alabama. That, in and of itself, is a huge accomplishment. During the meeting we elected officers: President, Erin Minor; Vice President, Carissa Behel; Secretary, April Laycock; and Treasurer, Tammi King. We also met Kaye McFarlan, the Executive Director of Athens-Limestone County United Way Chapter. Ms. McFarlan had an informal discussion with the members about the importance of this student led organization and informed us of the duties we would perform.

Our first mission: a weatherization project with CASA. We spent an entire Saturday and two half days weatherizing homes for the elderly. We raked leaves, washed windows, installed fire alarms, and made the homes more comfortable for the winter.



*Photo by Erin Minor*  
 Student United Way members working.

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# Editorials

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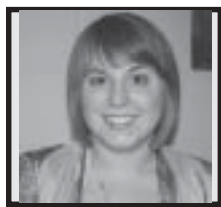
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Maggie Thomas  
Editor

## How *The Homework Myth* shaped this future teacher's philosophy on education

For those of you who don't know, I am Secondary Education English major. This semester I am enrolled in Assessment and Evaluation. In this class, we are required to read the book *The Homework Myth* by education and parenting expert Alfie Kohn. Usually, being an English major, I have no problems when it comes to reading a book. This one, however, was a little different.

After I bought the book, I began to skim through it, trying to get a feel for what it would be about. As the title suggested, it was all about the "downside of homework." At first I truly was excited to read the book. That excitement soon faded as I realized that I would have to write (the much dreaded) reader's response notes for each chapter.

Let me interrupt myself for a second—I like to consider myself to be a good student. I never complain (openly) about an assignment. I may fret over an assignment and vent to my classmates about my stress over an assignment, but I always overcome my worries and get the thing done.

Okay. As I was saying...My excitement quickly faded as I realized I would have to write reader's response notes on *The Homework Myth*. I hope you can understand my frustration! I

would have to read a book that was all about how terrible homework is and then complete homework assignments on that very book!

Remember: I am a good student. So, even though I thought this was a silly assignment, I sucked it up and did it, and hoped my feelings of resentment for the assignment would wane. As the semester continued, however, I discovered that my bitter feelings did not relent. Each week I found it harder and harder to take the assignment seriously.

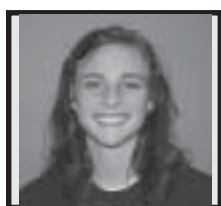
This is not to say that I did not find the book interesting. *The Homework Myth* is by far the most influential book I have read in an Education class. It was just extremely difficult for me to read passages such as, "As a rule, the point of homework isn't to learn, much less to derive real pleasure from learning. It's something to be finished. And until it is, it looms large in conversations, an unwelcome guest at the [dinner] table every night" (15) and then get pumped up about homework!

But each week I completed the assignment, and each week I got a little bit more fed up. The more I read of the book, the more I began to agree with Mr. Kohn. Then one day, I stumbled upon this gem:

[I]t's possible to discipline oneself too severely, to deny oneself pleasure and pursue one's obligations with an unhealthy urgency and a degree of organization that borders on compulsiveness. Some children who look like success stories...may in reality be anxious, driven, motivated by a perpetual need to feel better about themselves rather than by anything resembling curiosity. (62)

When I read that I thought, Ah! That sounds just like me! Indeed, more often than not, the only thing I get out of homework is stress. Very rarely do I complete a homework assignment and think, Wow, I really learned a lot from that.

So that was that. I finished the book, I completed every single reader's response note, and realized I actually had a homework assignment from which I benefited. Yes, even though Alfie Kohn says it is impossible to gain anything from homework, I did. I learned that homework is not simply a necessary evil. It is possible for students to learn new material without having to spend hours doing homework on that material. I plan to keep this in mind as I go into the classroom. I hope that by not assigning homework, my students will feel inspired, not obligated, to learn more.



Kara Faulk  
Assistant Editor

## Finding the happy medium between being paper thin and morbidly obese

Today, society equates beauty with success and declares, "The skinnier, the better." In a world where a size six is considered plus size, it is nearly impossible to feel beautiful in one's skin. Knowing a person that is satisfied with his or her body is a rare find, and I do not think that I have come upon this type of person yet. Dissatisfaction with the body is not always Obesity, but it is equally dangerous. While it is easier said than done, we would all benefit from ignoring the standard set by those that are hardly natural. We should not be losing weight to look like the models and actresses that have all day to do nothing more than achieve these flawless figures; we should be losing weight to take care of ourselves, to be healthy! I find myself addicted to television shows like "Project Runway" and "America's Next Top Model". Almost always, I find myself on the floor doing crunches by

the end of the show. While this is quite the comedic scene, it is also very sick in nature. These girls are paid to be thin and spend hours upon hours working on these bodies that end up airbrushed before publication anyway. Yet, while spending my time working a full-time job, keeping up with fifteen hours of college courses each semester, and writing for this paper, I somehow feel the need to compete with Jennifer Aniston who spends over seven hours a day on her appearance. It is impossible.

A recent poll found that the majority of American women would rather be blind, or even have an amputated limb than to be "fat." The poll also revealed that the majority of these women would rather be poor and skinny than rich and fat. This shocked me, but then again, it didn't. As I thought about this harsh truth, I found that many of the women that I know would probably have the same answer, if they were honest. While Obesity is a major health hazard in this country, anorexia

and bulimia are even more prevalent. Psychological issues often stem from the inadequacy that we feel from an inability to compete with the glamour of "the beautiful people" and the pain that comes from falling short of the unfair standard set by those people. Let me say it now...these robots are not the normal ones! I am going to say something extremely subversive: it is okay to lack self-confidence at times; it makes us human. These women that are envied by all usually pay a lot of money to look the way that they do. Self-confidence should come easily to those that have the local plastic surgeon on speed dial. We find that these robotic crash-dieters fall short every day, gaining back the weight that they so quickly lost. How would you feel if you found your five-pound weight gain made public on the cover of every magazine? I would not call that the glamorous life.

After venting my frustration of the standard that is so unreasonably set,

Please see *Medium* page 10

# Editorials



## Reconciling God's love with God's judgement: Why does God allow evil and suffering?

Erin Minor  
Assistant Editor

I have the wonderful privilege of working with my church's youth group. For the most part, these teens are passionate about Christ and have a yearning to learn more about Him. I have been working with youth in some capacity for over two years now and the question I most often get is: "Why would a loving God let this [bad thing] happen?" Let's face it—most people ask that question (I know that I have). We have a problem reconciling the God of love with the God of judgment. It is so easy to blame God for the bad things that happen in our lives. Why do good people suffer? Why do "bad" people prosper? Sadly, when people can't find the answers to these questions they come to one of several conclusions: (1) God is not all loving. If He truly loved us why would He allow these terrible things to happen? (2) God is not all powerful. If God is truly powerful, He would prevent this from happening. (3) There may be a God, but if there is He is detached from

our lives. (4) There simply is no God. I, for one, have fallen into at least one of these categories at some point in my life.

I'll be honest—humans will never be able to answer these questions completely. Theologians, however, offer some biblical answers to this problem. This is such a big issue that Dr. White, a professor of Religion at Athens State University, has offered a class entitled "Evil and Suffering." Christians can no longer ignore the problem. When people begin to question God, we need to be prepared to provide them with knowledge and support.

First, I believe we have to acknowledge certain "facts of life" before we can truly understand the problem of suffering. We know, for a fact, that we live in a world of cause and effect: fire burns, water drowns, and diseases kill. These physical facts have moral implications. A world without suffering would mean a world without death. So, we can conclude that it would be unfair and unreasonable for us to want God to suspend the laws of nature.

Another "fact of life" is the actuality that we misuse our own lives bringing the evil that we hate so much into the world. Once again, if God changed this, man would be left with absolutely no free will. What are we really doing when we require God to remove suffering? Are we asking that God should (1) suspend the laws of nature, (2) divert the consequences of heredity, and (3) turn aside the effects of man's inhumanity to man? Should we really expect God to save us from ourselves? And finally, would we live in a proper universe if He did?

In his article, "Why God Allows Suffering," Paul Kroll gives an interesting perspective. He says, "God is fair, but sometime life isn't. God is good, but people often do bad things. God is perfect, but we make mistakes that sometimes cost us dearly. As long as people do bad or evil things, other people will be hurt. If a robber shot you, you and your family would suffer." Kroll goes on to talk about God's perspective of evil and suffering and he concludes with

scripture from Romans 9:20, "Who are, you, O man, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to Him who formed it, 'Why did you make me like this?'" In this passage of scripture, Paul insists that despite our anguish, we must recognize that God is wise, merciful, and just. Paul was saying that God permits human suffering because he is God. God is so great and his judgment is so much higher than ours that inferior human reason does not affect his actions.

This is truly a brief explanation of some of the pain and suffering you may be experiencing right now. I'll be the first to admit that when we are in the midst of suffering we don't care why God allows it. We just want Him to intervene. Nevertheless, we must hang on to the hope that God knows us a lot better than we know ourselves. If we belong to Him, His plan is to prosper us, not to harm us. He plans to give us hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11). We have to take comfort in the fact that God's thoughts and ways are higher than ours and pray that we may find comfort in that fact.

## Homophobia runs amok: What this staff writer has to say on the dangers of being intolerant

Grady Anderson  
Staff Writer

Some people in society today think they have all the right answers. In a world plagued by war, disease, famine, social and political unrest, you'd think these "Know it alls" would have more to worry about than someone's sexual orientation. Indeed, people's sexual orientation is up for constant debate among Politicians, Church leaders and even School administrators, airing their negative views on homosexuality and gay marriage. And with the recent suicides of several gay teens in cities across the country, some as a direct result of bullying and invasion of privacy issues, when are we going to say enough is enough? What human in their right mind thinks that they have the right to video tape someone else in the act of sex and then broadcast it over the web to the entire world? It is beyond my comprehension. This just confirms my belief that some people are just plain cruel and need to get a life or be put in jail.

Gay rights groups say Tyler Clementi's suicide makes him a national example of a problem they are increasingly working to combat: young people who kill themselves after being tormented over their sexuality. As many as five teenagers committed suicide in September alone. Clementi was a Rutgers University freshman who jumped off the George Washington Bridge after a video of him in a sexual encounter with another man was

broadcast over the web. All the teens who committed suicide were taunted relentlessly by peers. And if being taunted by your peers isn't enough, try being discriminated against by school administrators. Remember reading about Constance McMillen, the young lady from rural Mississippi, who sued her school on the grounds of sex and gender discrimination. McMillen sued for the right to be able to wear tuxedos to the prom. Ceara Sturgis, another young lady from rural Mississippi, sued for not being able to wear a tux for her senior yearbook pictures. Sturgis, who has worn masculine clothing since ninth grade and began classes at Mississippi State University in August, said she felt as if she was being punished "just for being who I am."

Then there is the case of a school board member in Arkansas accused of posting anti-gay remarks on a Facebook page. More than two dozen protesters rallied outside of a high school Thursday to call for the resignation of a school board member who posted on Facebook that he thinks gay youths should kill themselves. They were calling for the resignation of board member Clint McCance, who in a Facebook posting scoffed at a campaign asking supporters to wear purple October 20 to show solidarity after several gay and lesbian youths killed themselves, reportedly because of bullying. "Seriously they want me to wear purple because five queers killed themselves," McCance wrote. "The only way im wearin it for

them is if they all commit suicide. I cant believe the people of this world have gotten this stupid. We are honoring the fact that they sinned and killed thereselves because of their sin."

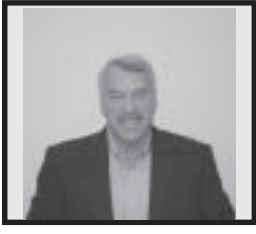
But the homophobia doesn't end there. It has been an ongoing issue with the Church since the invention of religion. From the Christian Church to Islam, Catholicism and Judaism; they all seem to present their own reasons to try to convince someone the way they are born is wrong. From the inquisition to the fight against California's Proposition 9 to legalize gay marriage, religion never seems to fail to deliver its own opinions about someone else's sex life. Not that there are ever any sex scandals involving the church... but I'm just saying.

And certainly not last or least: The Don't ask, Don't tell policy issues involving gay people being able to serve openly in the military. Consequentially: On October 20 The Los Angeles Times reported: acting on a request from the Obama administration, a federal appeals court in San Francisco on Wednesday lifted a judge's order that had halted enforcement of the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy on gays, leaving the much-disputed law in legal limbo. President Obama has said the ban on gays in the military is wrong and must be repealed. But he wants the law repealed by Congress. In September, Senate Republicans blocked a floor vote on a bill that would have repealed the policy. Still, Obama has said he has a

duty as president to defend the laws on the books. The Servicemembers Legal Defense Network said the order means the "don't ask" policy is back in effect. "Gay and lesbian service members deserve better treatment than they are getting with this ruling," said Aubrey Sarvis, the group's executive director. "We now must look to the Senate next month in the lame-duck session to bring about the swift certainty needed here and to repeal this unjust law that serves no useful purpose."

The truth is we are not a tolerant people. We taunt and bash people for things that they can no more help than the color of their skin. People are ridiculed relentlessly for being different but no less equal, just because it may not sit well with some deity or personal belief; that for all we know may be as wrong as anything else you can believe. Tolerance starts in the home. It starts with teaching it to children when they are small. If children are raised to believe that people may be different but are still equal, then we as a society might be able to boast tolerance. Remember opinions are like certain body orifices; everybody has one and most of them stink. Instances of bullying and intolerance, especially if it involves violence of any kind, should be punished to the fullest extent of the law. And if there are no laws to combat bullying, there ought to be. Homophobia and homophobic bullying is something society would definitely be better off without.

# Columnists



## Comforting the afflicted, afflicting the comforted

Dr. Mark Durm  
Professor of Psychology

### Does reading this column use your 'whole' brain?

Psychomythology is that shady area of my discipline that is believed by many people, but is simply not true. The myths are numerous and have been soundly disproven by solid scientific research, but sadly, continue to hang around to mislead people. People spend good money on bad self-help gurus who convince the unknowing what they need to know.

If time permits, I may write about several of these in the coming months. Today I would like to discuss one of the most pervasive myths, simply that "human beings use only 10 percent of their brains."

Ladies and gentlemen, we use 100 percent of our brain and we always have. It is uncertain when and where this myth started. Some argue it may have its origin with William James and his 1890 publication entitled "The

principles of psychology."

He wrote that he doubted if the average human achieved more than 10 percent of their intellectual potential. "Intellectual potential" is not the same as the brain and moreover, and more importantly, James' statement 120 years ago was based on conjecture and assumption and not scientific research. Furthermore, in the widely popular and best selling 1936 book by Dale Carnegie entitled "How to Win Friends and Influence People," Lowell Thomas wrote in the preface to this book that William James did say that humans use only 10 percent of their brain.

Another possible explanation for the 10 percent belief is that for every nerve cell there are approximately 9 to 10 glial cells. Nueroglial (nerve glue) have very important functions in the brain such as keeping it clean, creating insulation for the nerve cell, among other functions.

Glial cells are very active, alert and ambitious when it comes to making the brain work efficiently. Glial cells are, however, much smaller than nerve cells and even though they out number nerve cells 10 to 1; the brain, volume wise, is 50 percent neurons and 50 percent glial. Regardless of how the myth started, it is still widely believed to the present day.

How is it known we use 100 percent of our brain and not 10 percent? It is simply from direct scientific research on the healthy brain and indirectly from an unhealthy brain. Direct scientific research on the healthy brain is accomplished through various sophisticated brain imaging technologies. For instance, medicine has the functional magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) instrument, the positron emission tomography (PET) scanner, the electroencephalograms (EEGs), and others. Trust me; these various

procedures reveal, without question that the entire brain is used as we go about our daily life.

As for indirect evidence, think for just a moment. When a human has a stroke or other traumatization to the brain and effects only a small portion of the brain, say 5 percent, there can be significant behavior and cognitive deficits. If we had a 90 percent reserve in the brain, a 5 percent reduction should not cause significant impairment.

Finally, evolution speaks strong against having something and never having used it. Our body parts that have evolved over millennia were used and found to be very useful.

The "10 percent use of the brain" belongs to the shady area known as pschomythology, the "100 percent use of the brain" belongs to the psychological and physiological reality. Let us walk in the light and not the shade.

*Suggestions? Email them to [the.athenian@athens.edu](mailto:the.athenian@athens.edu)*



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# Columnists



*Mr. Larry Keenum  
Career Counseling Center*

## Career Counseling Corner

Great rewards await everyone that willingly, sacrificially and heartily sets his hands to complete every task with excellence. If you wait for the perfect boss before you put forth your best effort, you will wait forever. If you need a top salary before you will work harder than

the person above you, your need will always remain. If you demand a bigger home before you clean the one you are in, your children will not learn the value of work. (Uncle Sam's Plantation, Star Parker, p.218)

If you want to scream GPA or major doesn't matter, racism, prejudice, quotas, affirmative action, I deserve a government job, no one told me, etc., then the train has just left you at the

station. You'll never catch it. Your career is over before it ever got started. But if you scream, "I'm prepared, my major had rigor, my GPA is at the top of the class, I can make a profit for your company. Hire me." They will.

We've all heard America's three biggest lies – sure I'll respect you in the morning, the check is in the mail, I'm from the government and I want to help. Now we can add #4 — That's not my

job. How terrible is that comment? Another example of "someone else owes me a living". Who would want to hire you? When all of the people with that attitude become extinct, America will be a wonderful place again. It is your job. It is your job to prepare to get a job. It is your job to search for a job. It is your job to be a productive employee. And, whether it is in your job description or not, it is your job.

## Emails, Lies & Forward Buttons: Staff writer encourages research before clicking 'Forward'

*Melissa Dutton  
Staff Writer*

If you have an email account, you've probably gotten a forwarded email or two. Some are jokes; some claim to grant your wildest wishes; and some promise cash or prizes. Fortunately, most people realize that there's no email fairy and that Bill Gates isn't sending out big checks. But the most disturbing emails are the unverified ones that masquerade as factual emails.

For instance, one day I received an email about the National World War

II Memorial that is engraved with a speech by President Roosevelt. The writer was upset that the words 'so help us God', which they claimed were at the end of the quote, were left off the memorial. Being a skeptic, I did some research. It took about five minutes to locate several independent sources of the speech and photos of the monument online. I was able to confirm that these words were indeed left off the engraving, but it was not due to conspiracy or an attempt at separation of church and state. They were left off

because those words were in a completely different portion of Roosevelt's speech! The writer of the email failed to mention this piece of information.

At another time, an email came to me about President Obama's failure to salute during the memorial service for the victims of the Fort Hood massacre. Photos were attached that showed Obama standing with his hands folded in front of him while everyone else saluted. Although I do not agree with his politics or policies, I gave him the

benefit of the doubt and looked into it. The photos were not from the Fort Hood service; they were from a Memorial Day service in 2009. Obama had just walked on to the stage and "Hail to the Chief" was still playing. The President, regardless of who it is, doesn't typically salute during this song because he would essentially be saluting himself! Again, pertinent facts were omitted.

Gossip is no longer reserved for

*Please see Emails page 9*

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# Campus News

## Athens State University establishing a women's athletic team as a student club

Guy McClure  
Guest Writer

On an experimental basis, Athens State announced that the university would develop a women's fast-pitch softball program as a club sport beginning with the fall semester of 2011. Student and community interest, as well as suggested areas of focus from the development of the Vision2020 report, the precursor to the university's master plan, led to the creation of the club.

Former softball coach Larry Keenum and alumnus Robin Carter Clem will serve as the club advisors.

Club organizations at Athens State are managed and run by the involved students who are responsible for funding their activities. Other clubs offered at Athens State include areas of interest such as bass fishing, departmental academic societies, social fellowship, and honorary fraternities.

"The majority of our games will be against teams within the Alabama Community College System," explains Keenum. "Robin and I will begin to

schedule playing dates immediately for next fall. Most colleges with softball programs will play club teams in the fall but are unable to in the spring semesters

due to the set rosters within their leagues."

The club team will have 12 players and Keenum and Clem are looking for experienced softball players to try-out. Athens State students interested in trying-out for the team should contact Keenum in the Career Services office at Athens State.

"This is an experimental approach to test the waters for interest in athletic programs going forward," says Athens State Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services Jim Hutto. "One of the Vision2020 findings was to increase student activities in areas such as athletic clubs. We feel a softball club will be an effective barometer for these organizations and how they will be supported by our campus and the community."



Photo courtesy of Larry Keenum

ASU's first softball commitment, Whitney Mooney. L-R: Volunteer Coach Robin Carter, Whitney Mooney, Jack Clem, Coach Larry Keenum

## Congratulations to the newly elected Junior/Senior class Presidents!



Tandra Oliver, Junior Class President



Photos by Maggie Thomas

Chase Cantrell, Senior Class President

## Athens State University graduate to be featured in a PBS documentary series

Guy McClure  
Guest Writer

2002 Athens State University graduate Matthew Nolan, author of *Crumpled Paper Dolls: A New Orleans Poet* and *Exhuming Juliet: A New Orleans Poet*, is featured on the Seventh Season of the nationwide PBS television documentary series *Roadtrip Nation*. Also featured in Nolan's episode are actor Malcolm McDowell, star of Stanley Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange* and Glenna Goodacre, a renowned sculptor.

*Roadtrip Nation* is a youth-based movement with the goal to encourage students to define their own road in life. In addition to the series, <http://RoadTripNation.org> has developed an interactive and project-based curriculum for middle school, high school, and college students to facilitate self-discovery and give students direction in exploring different passions in their lives.

Episode Seven chronicles Nolan's journey as a top college student, with all the potential to start a conventional career path, but instead pursuing the road less traveled. In 2003, Nolan moved to New Orleans to live the life of a bohemian artist. He struggled to survive in order to achieve his dream of writing his first book. Members of the *Roadtrip Nation* team traveled to New Orleans to spend the afternoon with Nolan and to hear his inspirational story. The visit had a significant impact on one team member, Autumn, a recent college graduate, who wants to be a writer.

Nolan attended Athens State on an academic scholarship and was the recipient of the Hudson Memorial Scholarship. He was a member of the Behavioral Science Club and captain of the Debate Team. When 9/11 struck the nation, Nolan created a crisis-counseling group called American Tragedy Forum for students and faculty to discuss their feelings and cope with the tragedy.

Nolan's writing was published in the Athens State's Literary Magazine, *Gyre*. The late English Professor Jenita Smith encouraged Matthew from the very beginning to pursue his dreams as a writer. Susan Owen, Social Psychology Professor, was a close mentor who helped him along the way. He has many fond memories hanging out in Naylor Hall with psychology students and professors. Matthew is grateful to the professors and faculty at Athens State University who helped and influenced him on his journey.

Nolan wrote his first book *Crumpled Paper Dolls: A New Orleans Poet*, a book of poetry, prose, and journals. With perseverance, Nolan achieved his dream when he printed up one hundred books to sell out of his bicycle basket in the French Quarter. Soon thereafter, Nolan got an unexpected break from a major bookstore chain, placing his first book

between Pablo Neruda and Sylvia Plath on bookstore shelves across the country. His second book, *Exhuming Juliet: A New Orleans Poet*, a book of poetry, love letters, and journals, is Nolan's latest contribution to the literary world.



Photo courtesy of Guy McClure

2002 ASU grad Matthew Nolan to be featured in PBS documentary

# Campus News

## Students ready to lead: Athens State University hosts its annual Leadership Retreat

Erin Minor  
Assistant Editor

Tena Bullington, Director of Student Activities at ASU, held the campus' annual leadership retreat on October 15, 2010. Invitations were extended to students on campus who are involved in extra-curricular activities. The Student Government Association members, The Athenian newspaper staff, Wesley Foundation members, Student United Way officers, Athens State Ambassadors, and representatives from many other organizations were in attendance. Altogether there were twenty five in attendance.

Student Body President, Brittany Johnson welcomed all the attendees to begin the retreat. The participants then spent time getting to know one another by talking and playing ice breakers. The Chapel in Founder's Hall was filled with

laughter when grown adults were humming and acting out the songs: "If You're Happy and You Know It" and "The Hokey Pokey." Individuals who walked into a room full of strangers, left with a few new friends.

After the fun and games, Brittany introduced the guest speaker, Andy John King, a twenty-eight year old pastor at Lindsay Lane Baptist Church. King was the perfect candidate to speak with college students about the importance of leadership. At Lindsay Lane he serves as the high school, college, and single adult's pastor. Mr. King is also an Athens State University alumnus.

The students listened attentively as Mr. King laid out the "Eight Characteristics of an Effective Leader." He kept the attention of the audience by encouraging and

challenging them to become good and fair leaders within their community.

The afternoon was a complete success! Each student left with lunch, a "goody bag", and a new attitude about

leadership. All who attended were happy they took time out of their day to make friends and learn about the importance of leadership on this campus and in their communities.



Photo by Stanley Webster

Students from various clubs gathered on October 15th for the annual Leadership Retreat.

## 2010 SGA Halloween Carnival



Photo by Maggie Thomas



Photo by Maggie Thomas

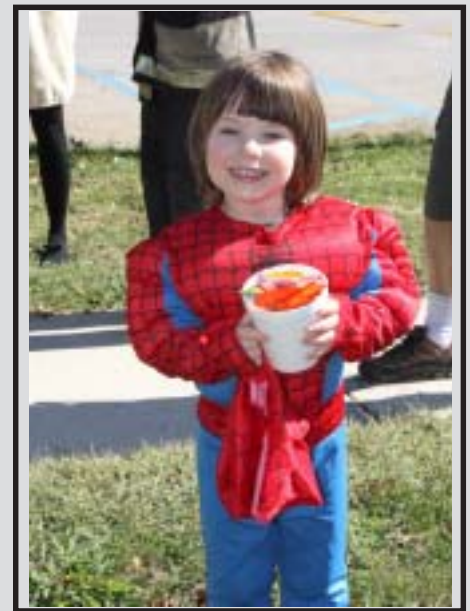


Photo by Maggie Thomas



Photo by Stanley Webster



Photo by Stanley Webster



Photo by Maggie Thomas



Photo by Stanley Webster

Top Left: April Laycock poses with her daughter who participated in the costume contest. Top Center: Dr. White provided comic relief as Professor Keller took a potty break. Top Right: Sherri Bassham's grandson, Grey, dressed as Spiderman for the contest. Center Left: ASU Alumni Association participated by setting up a booth. Center Right: MACS Club joined other organizations to participate. Bottom Left: ASU students competed in the Costume Contest. Bottom Right: Winners of the Pumpkin Decorating Contest provided by Wesley Fellowship.

# Campus News

## United

*Continued from page 1*

The biggest need we became aware of is the necessity of canned food for the LCCI (Limestone County Churches Incorporated) food bank. So we took action. The members, along with Dr. Durm, went to Wal-Mart and purchased almost two hundred cans of food for those in need. LCCI reported two years ago that they were serving around seven hundred families; however, due to the hard times Americans have faced, LCCI is now serving over four thousand families. It was at this point that we decided that our main

and long term goal would be to continue contributing to the LCCI. Dr. Durm has been faithful to update the faculty and staff about our projects, and they have been generous by donating canned goods. To date, we have collected well over two hundred cans and we are still counting!

I would personally like to thank Ms. McFarlan for giving Athens State University the chance to serve our community, Dr. Durm for investing his time and resources to the organization, and the members of Student United Way. We truly are beginning to make a difference and we are becoming the most active club on campus. All ASU students are encouraged to join to serve alongside us. If you are

interested in joining please contact me by e-mail: [eminor@my.athens.edu](mailto:eminor@my.athens.edu). There are many more activities planned!

Meetings are held in the Classroom Building, room 201, on the first and third Thursdays of every month at 10:30.



*Photo by Erin Minor*

## Calling All Future Attorneys: An invitation to join Athens State University's Pre-Law Society

*Melissa Dutton  
Staff Writer*

Did you know that Athens State has an active Pre-Law Society? This campus club is in place to provide support to ASU students who are considering attending law school in the future. From what I've witnessed, the Pre-Law Society does a good job fulfilling its mission.

Dr. Dupre, the faculty advisor who helps manage our group, receives a

plethora of information from law schools all across the country and gladly passes it along to interested students. The Society has generously provided scholarships to some of its officers in the past. Any club that is willing (and able) to give scholarships is sure to be worthwhile!

Last November, a few members made the trip to the Law School Admission Council's (or LSAC's)

Recruitment Forum in Atlanta, GA; the Pre-Law Society was able to cover their hotel and travel charges.

The Society also publishes a pamphlet that shares pertinent information about various area law schools, what those colleges want, and which Athens State courses would be most beneficial to prospective law students. I can't tell you how many times I have referred to this great

resource when registering for classes.

As of now, the Pre-Law Society is a relatively small group, but we would love to grow with your help. Membership is open to any ASU student in any major, and club fees are a very low \$10 – what a bargain! Please feel free to contact Dr. Dupre at [joseph.dupre@athens.edu](mailto:joseph.dupre@athens.edu) or 256-233-6528, for further information or upcoming scheduled meetings.

## Textbooks for Rent: An update on Athens State University's Rent-a-Text program

*Kara Faulk  
Assistant Editor*

Julie Swinson, manager of the Athens State University bookstore, is excited to introduce the Rent-A-Text program to the students of Athens State University. This fall, Athens State began to offer 110 rentable titles of the 373 titles that the bookstore carries. So far, 908 books have been rented for the fall semester. The bookstore is able to rent the books for a mere forty-five percent of the retail price. Students will not be required to return the book until after the final exam; however, if books are not returned, the student will be required

to pay the remaining fifty-five percent of the book price. After the student begins studying from the text, he or she will be given the opportunity to upgrade the rental to a purchase if desired. Highlighting and notes are accepted in rental books, but the bookstore can only accept rental books in a usable condition.

The staff and faculty of Athens State understand that many students are distance learners, and it is much simpler to do everything online in that situation. The bookstore offers online check-in and check-out for rental purchases. In this case, books are shipped to a home address and Fed-ex return labels are sent out at the end of each semester.

This amenity makes rent-a-text a convenience for all students, on or off campus. The bookstore also offers in-store rental and return.

Rent-A-Text is a nation-wide program that has been implemented in 793 stores, so far. For books to be accepted into the rental program, the life of the current edition and book type will be considered. Swinson noted, "Books with one-time use access codes or loose-leaf pages will not be accepted into the rental bookstore. The program will not accept books with a short edition life." She also explained that the faculty of Athens State University will have the chance to get involved with the program.

To request the rental availability of a desired book, the educator must simply commit to a four-semester use of the text and submit a request form. This semester, Athens State requested seven books to be added to the local list. Only three were added, but Swinson is confident that the program will grow and accept many helpful texts. Swinson says, "The program has been a huge success. There have been no complaints, thus far, and we look forward to the growth of this program." A link has been added to the Athens State website offering information and preregistration forms. This link will also allow students to check the "rentability" of each required text.

## Sigma Tau Delta Halloween Party



*Photo courtesy of Jessica Aguirre*

*The members of Sigma Tau Delta posed for a group shot at this year's Halloween party at Dr. Elmore's house.*



*Photo courtesy of Kara Faulk*

*President Maggie Thomas, Brittany Moon, Cate Hamilton, Jessica Aguirre, and Kara Faulk at the Halloween party.*

# Campus News

## “Different Books, Common Word:” A table talk discussion with Robert Parham

Erin Minor  
Assistant Editor

Thursday, November 4th, the Religious Studies Program hosted a table talk discussion with Robert Parham in the chapel. The discussion focused on “Different Books, Common Word,” a documentary about the relationship between Baptists and Muslims. Parham, the founder and executive director of [ethicsdaily.com](http://ethicsdaily.com), was reared in Nigeria as the child of missionaries. He has a doctorate from Baylor University, a master’s of divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and a bachelor’s in foreign service from Georgetown University. He is the author of *Walk Right: A Christian Guide for Proactive Discipleship*, *Loving Neighbors Across Time: A Christian Guide to Protecting the Earth*, and *What Shall We Do in a Hungry World?* He is a regular contributor to the Washington Post’s “On Faith” web page. His columns have appeared in daily newspapers such as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Dallas Morning News, Orlando Sentinel, and Tennessean. In addition to appearing on Fox News, CNN Talk Back Live, MSNBC News Chat, ABC World News Tonight, and NPR’s Morning Edition, he is frequently called by reporters across the country. He is the co-producer/director of several [ethicsdaily.com](http://ethicsdaily.com) documentaries, including the award-winning “Beneath the Skin.” Needless to say, Athens State was happy

and humbled to have Dr. Parham on campus.

Dr. Parham visited our campus to present his most recent documentary, “Different Books, Common Word,” which aired on more than 130 ABC-TV stations in early 2010. Parham mentioned that he was happy with the times the documentary aired, except one. In Los Angeles, the documentary aired at 2:00 am, which obviously disappointed Parham. It wasn’t until months later that Parham saw an interview with Denzel Washington. In the interview Washington told a story about being awake at 2:00 am and seeing the documentary. Washington was filming “The Book of Eli” at the time and commented that the documentary “awakened” him. Parham told the audience that “God really does work in mysterious ways.”

The message of the documentary is that both the Bible (Christianity) and the Koran (Islam) command that we love our neighbors. It calls for the different faiths to focus on the common message: love one another. Parham said, “In our culture, Christians and Muslims are at war with one another and the goal of the documentary is meant to start an inter-faith dialogue of love, instead of hate between the two religions.” The hour long documentary follows five different relationships between Muslims and Christians. In each of the stories documented, Baptist and Muslims

learned to live as neighbors by respecting, supporting, and loving one another.

After viewing the documentary, those in attendance openly discussed the content of the film. Dr. Moyers, a professor at ASU stated, “The documentary’s message was positive in that love for your neighbor brings the two faiths together.” Everyone had something interesting to say on the topic and the message seemed to resonate

with all who attended. We were honored to have Dr. Parham visit Athens State and were grateful for the message he brought.

The Religious Studies department often hosts different guest for table talks in the chapel. If you are interested in receiving notifications on these table talks, please feel free to e-mail Dr. Moyers at [tony.moyers@athens.edu](mailto:tony.moyers@athens.edu). All are welcome and encouraged to attend.



Photo from Internet  
Robert Parham, founder and executive director of [ethicsdaily.com](http://ethicsdaily.com)

### Emails

Continued from page 5

little old ladies standing by a fencepost. Both of these “informative” emails were proven false by me within ten minutes. It was not difficult at all to find the truth. So why is it that these

emails continue to circulate? Is it because it’s faster to click “Forward” than to do research? Is it because we’re too lazy to verify things for ourselves? Or is it because we tend to believe the propaganda that fits our agenda (no matter which side of an issue we’re on) and are willing to dispense lies as truths to further a cause?

M - F 7:30am - 7:00pm • Sat 8:00am - 5:00pm • Sun 9:00am - 5:00pm

# Campus News

## Medium

*Continued from page 2*

I must say that I am a “health nut.” There is a major difference in the obsession to be skinny and the decision to be healthy. While I sometimes despise the women so infatuated with their appearance, I often fear for those that care nothing for it. I love the saying, “I care for my body because it’s the only one I’ve got.” Because

300,000 deaths, annually, are attributed to Obesity, it is crucial that we get active. Being overweight increases the risk of heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, cancer, gallbladder disease, and blood pressure. It also creates complications in pregnancy and childbirth. For these reasons, it is so important that we be aware. Now, being self-conscious and health-conscious are two totally different things. While I know the calorie count of everything that goes in my

mouth, and I exercise daily, I also splurge for a block of peanut butter fudge or a hamburger every once in a while. I am not fixated on my body image, but I know feeling healthy is irreplaceable. This does not mean that my body looks like Cameron Diaz’s; it never will. It simply means that I make health conscious decisions every day because it makes me feel good. It is imperative that we be aware of healthy alternatives and the benefits of daily

exercise. It is no fault of ours that women allow themselves to be ideals of perfection, knowing better. It is, however, our fault if we do not break this mold. Everyone has to find what is right for them, steering away from the “I have to be thin to fit in” attitude. We do, however, have to make decisions about the way that we treat our bodies, decisions that we can stand to live, or die, with. It’s all about finding that happy medium.

## Local educators travel to Atlanta to present bullying research to international audience

*Dr. Yvette Bolen and  
Dr. Lisa Hyde  
Guest Writers*

While bullying is no new topic, Dr. Bruce Thomas, Dr. Yvette Bolen, and Dr. Lisa Hyde of Athens State University and Dr. Jackie Hester, Assistant Principal at Buckhorn Middle School, conducted research to view this negative student behavior in a different light. Their paper, “Perceptions of Bullying in a Dated Over-Crowded School Setting” was accepted for presentation at the October 14-16, 2010 Intellectbase International Consortium Academic Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. Dr. Hyde and Dr. Hester attended the conference, discussing this research with professionals from across the globe. Dr. Lisa Hyde served as both a presenter and session chair during the conference.

Their paper was published in the Intellectbase International Consortium – Intellectual Perspectives & Multi-Disciplinary Foundations Journal. The following abstract provides an overview of the presentation material.

Bullying has become a problem of pandemic size and degree. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, almost one in three students ages 12-18 have reported being bullied in school (Holland, 2010). Bullying can be defined as “unprovoked conscious and aggressive action by one or more students intended to achieve physical or psychological dominance over others through intimidation or threat” (Hoy, n.d., para. 1). According to the American Psychological Association (1993) students that are repeatedly exposed to aggressive behaviors, are “victimized by the chronic presence of violence” (p. 42). With the presence of bullying existing in

schools, popular public gathering places, and even the virtual environment where students can be “cyberbullied,” preventative and intervention measures must be explored to contain the societal problem. The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a significant difference in how students attending a dated, crowded middle-school viewed bullying. Specifically, this study was designed to investigate if students of different gender (M vs. F), grade level (7th vs. 8th) and class type (collaborative, regular or advanced) perceive bullying differently. There were 688 students total enrolled in this middle school. The survey instrument (B-Index) (Hoy, n.d.) was administered to 546 seventh and eighth grade students in their language arts block. In each grade level, there were three collaborative blocks, six regular blocks, and three advanced blocks. This eleven item questionnaire utilized a 6-point Likert scale, with the scores for items 4, 9, and 11 inverted. The highest point total (66) indicates a school environment which encourages bullying. Descriptive statistics (number of subjects, means, and standard deviations) were determined along gender lines, grade levels, and class types. The study investigated differences and the interactions that existed when viewing bullying perceptions between gender, grade level, and class type by utilizing a Univariate Analysis of Variance statistical technique. Descriptive statistics along gender lines, grade levels, and class types pertaining to students’ perception

of bullying revealed the following results: Gender (Males = 262, Mean = 40.2, SD = 7.8; and Females = 284, Mean = 40.3, SD = 7.9); Grade Level (7th = 249, Mean = 38.7, SD = 8.5; and 8th = 297, Mean = 41.5, SD = 7.0); and Class Type (Collaborative = 115, Mean = 38.9, SD = 8.9; Regular = 298, Mean = 40.7, SD = 7.7; and Advanced = 133, Mean = 40.5, SD = 7.2). The results from the Univariate Analysis of Variance indicated non-significance was detected along gender lines. The study revealed significant difference between grade levels  $F(1, 544) = 20.9, p < .005$ . Significance was also found between class types  $F(2, 543) = 3.957, p < .005$  and when comparing the interaction between class type and grade level  $F(2, 543) = 5.048, p < .005$ . It can be concluded that the grade levels and class types may perceive bullying differently. Since bullying can be decreased by the presence of high teacher morale, positive learning climate, and organizational structure of the learning environment (Yoneyama & Rigby, 2006), creating these conditions is highly recommended. Implementation of anti-bullying programs, workshops for teachers on how to handle bullying in the classroom, and system-wide mandates such as the zero-tolerance policy are established methods of controlling bullying (Skiba, 2010, p. 28). In the near future subjects will be moving into a new, spacious school environment. Further studies are warranted to determine if bullying perceptions change along gender lines, class types, and grade levels.

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# Campus News

## Take Charge of Your Life!... AND RELAX

Maureen Chemsak  
Guest Writer

A healthy lifestyle includes taking care of mind, body, spirit, and heart, and keeping these in balance. In a world filled with constant change and instant communication, managing the stressors in life is a daily challenge. For students, the balance includes work, family, school, and community commitments, in addition to taking good care of ourselves.

Of course, a healthy person chooses to take care of themselves first, not in a selfish way, but in a way that allows them to make good decisions, live in the present, and use every minute to the fullest. If the choice is a good one, the next day will be fulfilling and positive; if the choice is a bad one, the next day is filled with worry, confusion, conflict, and stepping back to fix the mistake.

Knowing how to relax is an important part of achieving balance in a hectic lifestyle. It also helps us to sleep better, and rejuvenate quicker. Here are seven suggestions to practice relaxation. Read first quietly; then read out loud; then let your body respond, and then teach the process to someone else.

First, create a relaxing environment around you by calming all of your senses. Use soft lighting and sound to help to soothe you. Turn off TV, video games, electronic devices, cell phones, and allow for no extraneous distractions. You can use your favorite scented candles to help create pleasant smells.

Allow yourself to be still for 10-15

minutes by sitting or lying down. If in a chair, make sure that your head/neck is supported, legs uncrossed, arms at your sides and eyes closed. If lying down on your back, use a bed or a mat; you can place a pillow under your head and knees. Mentally scan your body for any muscle tension; if you become aware of any tension, adjust the muscle group until you can feel more relaxed and comfortable.

Try to breathe through your nose and exhale through your mouth in slow, full and deep breaths. Imagine your lungs and stomach to be like a deflated balloon, and when you inhale, very slowly fill the space to capacity; as you exhale, deplete all of the air in your lungs and stomach. While exhaling, allow your shoulders to drop and your chest to relax. Imagine a cool feeling as you inhale and a sense of warmth as you exhale. Think, as you exhale, that the tension is leaving your body. Spend 3-5 minutes breathing to relax and to create a quiet peacefulness.

Constantly give yourself permission to relax. Imagine that you deserve this special time to fully experience the sense of peace. If unwanted and intrusive thoughts interfere, imagine wiping them away with each relaxing wave of breath. With each exhale, allow the muscles to continue to relax. Become more focused on the soft sounds and the warmth/coolness of your breathing, thereby increasing the feeling of total comfort.

If you are an active person, you can

practice the tensing and relaxing of various muscle groups. Begin with your face and close your eyes tightly and clench your teeth; then gradually unclench your teeth and release the tension in your forehead and jaw and move toward total relaxation in your face. Then work through your body, tensing and releasing tension in the neck, the shoulders, the hands and arms, your stomach and buttocks, your thighs, calves, feet and toes. After tensing and relaxing each body part, take a long, slow and deep breath. If you find a particular part of your body that is constantly tense, such as neck, shoulders, or back, focus on that part of your body, and repeat the tension and relaxation, and say with each breath, "calm in, pain out." If you have a painful body condition, then instead of tensing, you can mentally focus on each muscle group, and allow each muscle to relax more and more deeply. Sometimes, people will sit in warm water or a bubble bath and breathe slowly to unwind and relax more deeply.

For some people, imagery is helpful in creating a relaxing state by using all of the senses. Imagine yourself floating softly, slowly on a billowy cloud, smelling the clean air, seeing the eagles soar, the weather being perfect on your skin, hearing the soft wind blow; or standing on top of a high mountain, smelling the crisp air, the pine trees, taste the perspiration, feel a sense of freedom, no responsibility but to enjoy the scene for

the moment; or on a tropical island with a light breeze rustling the palm trees, the taste of salty air, the gentle swaying of your boat on the waves, under the warm sun, rocking you gently back and forth. Use any pleasant imaginary or real experience in order to use all of your senses and fully participate.

The last step involves creating positive thoughts that will help you return to the "real world," once the relaxation session is over. Tell yourself that when you leave your relaxation session, you will feel alert, refreshed, calm, intelligent, energized and confident. These supportive self-statements can delete the old and distorted thoughts about ourselves, and help to create and input new thoughts that focus on your strengths and your assets.

Once learned and practiced, this entire relaxation process will take about 15 minutes. Do this exercise at least 2-3 times at consistent times each day. Like physical exercise, relaxation exercises can help you feel better and reduce the stressful and tense feelings that accumulate during the day. This self-care can make you more resilient, and is an excellent way to achieve balance in managing stress.

For more ideas on managing stress and anxiety, contact Counseling Services, 2nd Floor, University Center, Athens State University Main Campus; call 256-233-8140 for face to face appointment, telephone appointment, or email [Maureen.chemsak@athens.edu](mailto:Maureen.chemsak@athens.edu).

## Physical Education major represents Athens State as an ASAPERD officer and award recipient

Dr. Yvette Bolen  
Guest Writer

Mr. Justin Foster, physical education major and current ASU student intern, served as a Future Professionals Council officer this past year for the Alabama State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation (ASAPERD). He is the first physical education major at Athens State to hold such a position, attending professional meetings and conferences throughout the year. During the spring ASAPERD conference Justin was presented the prestigious

Bernice Finger award, along with Barbara Bloomquist of Auburn University, for his outstanding professional education endeavors.

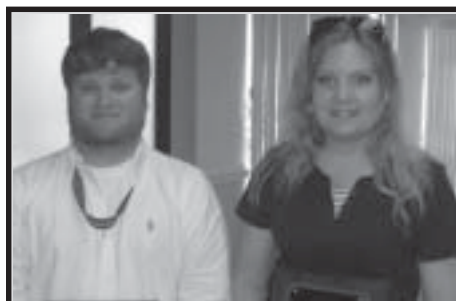


Photo courtesy of Dr. Bolen  
Award recipients Foster & Bloomquist

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3. What is the name of the PBS documentary in which Matthew Nolan will be featured?
4. What award did Justin Foster recently receive?



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