

Science department hosts first-ever alumni panels for students

Tom Webb
Staff Writer

On Wednesday, Sept. 30, the Science and Math Division hosted its first-ever Alumni Panels, featuring recent alumni. Students in Career Development classes 249, 349, and 449 chose between two panels: one Health Science and one Environmental Studies.

The speakers from the event included former biology majors Erica Zufferey, Dr. Taylor Scovel-Gepfert, Megan Orr, and health science major Dr. Ashley Hughes, all 2019 graduates; Integrated Studies major Dr. Ash Woods (class of 2017); and environmental studies majors Mary Regan Clark (class of 2022), Mckayla Robinette (class of 2020), Drake Elder (class of 2022), and Lucas Gomez (class of 2020).

The panel introduced students to young professionals in their academic areas of interest and allowed students to ask questions about what life looks like after college. Panelists discussed their time at Brevard College, where they went after high school, how Brevard College gave them unique connections and growth opportunities, and gave advice for students about moving beyond the undergrad world and into grad school/their future careers.

The panel focused on students' interest in finding how to pay for grad school, how to get through school with a learning disability, tips for getting through admission requirements, and learning how to use school to build connections you can take with you into the world post-undergrad.

After graduating, each alum went down a different path. Many of their plans were disrupted by either COVID or other big life changes, but all of them said that Brevard College had a large impact on their development and how they discovered their interests and future goals. Students were able to take advantage of hearing from people who were just a little bit farther down life's path than they were, and were able to get a better understanding of where they want to go from Brevard as well as how to account for sudden changes in plan or obstacles that may appear in their paths towards their careers.



Students interested in Health Science listening to alumni on a Zoom conference.

If you would like to see the Alumni Panels for themselves, Dr. Maveety and Dr. Hillyer have the conferences recorded; feel free to reach out to them.

Brevard College rises 14 spots in 2027 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings

Brevard College has once again been recognized among the nation's Best Colleges by U.S. News & World Report, rising 14 spots in the publication's 2027 Best Colleges rankings and earning recognition in two categories.

Brevard College is ranked No. 16 among Regional Colleges in the South, up from No. 30 last year. The College also ranks No. 14 among Top Private Regional Colleges in the South.

"The latest rankings from U.S. News & World Report are an encouraging reflection of Brevard College's continued progress," said Dr. Bradley J. Andrews, President of Brevard College. "The rise of 14 places in the rankings reflects the continued work of our faculty and staff to provide an experiential liberal arts education and help each student reach their full potential. We are proud of what Brevard College continues to accomplish and remain focused on building on this momentum."

Brevard College's presence in the U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings underscores the College's commitment to academic excellence and its mission to prepare students for lifelong learning and meaningful careers.

"These rankings highlight the strength of the Brevard College experience," said Dr. Chad Holt, Vice President of Admissions and Financial Aid. "Our students benefit from an education grounded in personal attention, experiential learning, and close faculty-student relationships, all of which help prepare them for success after graduation."

The latest U.S. News & World Report rankings add to Brevard College's record of recognition. The College currently enrolls 790 full-time undergraduate students, one of the largest enrollments in the College's history. Brevard College has also received a National Teacher of the Year award and been recognized as a College of Distinction for the second consecutive year. The College has introduced new academic programs in Artificial Intelligence Management and Engineering Science, along with



Brevard College rose 14 spots in the 2027 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings and earned recognition in two categories.

new graduate programs and an annual undergraduate research conference.

The U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings provide prospective students and their families with information to compare colleges and universities across the United States. The 2027 rankings evaluate institutions using up to 17 factors related to academic quality and graduate success.

Prospective students and their families can learn more about Brevard College and view the 2027 U.S. News & World Report Best Colleges rankings at USNews.com.

Coltrane opens: how is it helping?

Eve Rich
Contributor

The campus is one step closer to having a completed student center: there is now a completed road/walkway between the construction site, the library, and Coltrane/Tornado Alley. Speaking of which, Coltrane is officially open as of Sept. 28.

The walkway has already encountered many cyclists, electric scooters, and the public alike. It's also now providing easier access to get from class to Coltrane. Overall, there's positive feedback about the food since it opened.

The only negative feedback was that there weren't enough chairs or tables catering to Coltrane. When you enter the building, there's a wide-open space with nothing, while outside there are umbrellas and tables. Students suggest putting more seating area inside.

Because of the location, many students do not have enough time to walk to and from the auxiliary gym for lunch each day. Coltrane offers students a closer dining option whenever it may be most convenient.

With classes so close to one another by even 15 minutes, students don't have time. The hardest part about scheduling your time is figuring out how and when to eat and making sure it's healthy.

Coltrane has succeeded in the speed of the first week; this de-crowds the lines at Bills during the midday rush, when it used to be lines out the door and overworked staff.

Now, when you walk into Bills, you see a more relaxed and rearranged coffee shop. With all the positive changes, students wonder what the student center will change once it opens.

As of now, the student center is set to open later next spring and closer to summer. But for now, Coltrane is making the student population a lot happier.

COM Honor Society to host arcade night on Monday, Oct. 5 at 6 p.m.

Madeleine Pollock
Managing Editor

On Monday, Oct. 5, the Communication Honor Society—Beta Alpha Pi—will host a kickoff event at the White Squirrel Arcade from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. The event will be free to society members but open to all Brevard College students and faculty by donation to The Boys and Girls Club.

Attendees can donate by cash, card, nonperishable food items, school supplies, or feminine products, and will then have unlimited access to the arcade during the event. Beta Alpha Pi members decided to give back to The Boys and Girls Club, which provides after-school and summer programming for children and youth in Transylvania County. Most events will have a fundraising component for this great local cause.

Beta Alpha Pi is structuring the society differently than many honor societies; they want to encourage attendance from those within the society and the communication major, as well as anyone from Brevard's campus community interested in meeting new people. Communication is a versatile and interdisciplinary subject, so being able to network amongst other majors can be very valuable.

The White Squirrel Arcade is generously supporting the event and will be offering 15 percent off any food or beverage items purchased. They serve a variety of items like Italian Ice, pretzels, candy, chips, sodas, and more. They also have a diverse array of retro and modern arcade games



The White Squirrel Arcade has a plethora of games to choose from.

so that everyone can find something they enjoy.

Contact pollockms@brevard.edu with any questions about the COM Honor Society or the event!

Oct. 2 marks National Custodial Worker's Recognition Day

How you can show appreciation to those who keep campus clean

Autumn Jones
Editor in Chief

Behind the scenes of every functioning college campus is a dedicated network of people who ensure that our campus remains clean and welcoming. Oct. 2nd marks National Custodial Worker Recognition Day, a time to honor the hardest-working teams in our community and give them the appreciation they deserve.

Historically, custodial work is one of the most underappreciated and overlooked professions. Because custodians often work odd hours, their labor is easy to take for granted. The day was established to bring visibility to people whose work is essential to daily life.

Campus custodians deal with everything from the standard dirt and dust trekked in to big messes and spills left behind by students. They are the first to arrive to prep buildings for the day, and often the last to leave, and go beyond sweeping and sanitizing.

While a national day gives us a specific calendar day, gratitude for our campus workers shouldn't be confined to just 24 hours.

Never underestimate the power of a genuine thank-you card. Take two minutes to write a quick note expressing your appreciation for the work they do in your dorm building, academic hall, or student union. Leave it on a desk or hand it to them directly with a smile.

The absolute best way to respect a custodian's labor is to lighten their load. Clean up after yourself in the auxiliary gym, Bills, the library common areas, and dorm areas. Throw away your trash, wipe down spills, and respect the spaces we share.

If you're an RA, part of SGA, or a club, propose a way to present a small token of appreciation—like snacks, coffee cards, or a signed banner—to the custodial staff.

It sounds simple, but a surprising number of students pass by staff members every day without acknowledging them. Pausing to say "Good morning, [Name]" acknowledges their necessary presence in our campus ecosystem.

The next time you see someone mopping the lobby floor or emptying a classroom bin, take a second to look up, say thank you, and remind them that their hard work doesn't go unnoticed.

BC alumna Olivia Hyde hired as University of Montevallo's Cycling coach

Liam Smith
Staff Writer

Brevard College alumna Olivia Hyde has begun appearing at the Southeastern Collegiate Mountain bike races again, but not as a Brevard Cycling athlete; instead, Hyde proudly wears the purple of the University of Montevallo in Alabama as Montevallo's Cycling Head Coach.

Hyde, from Hoover Alabama, graduated in fall 2025 with a degree in Environmental Studies with a focus in science and a Wilderness Leadership and Experiential Education minor (now, the program has been changed to Outdoor Leadership and Experiential Education). She also served as editor in chief of The Clarion for the fall 2024 semester.

After graduation, Olivia continued her career in the cycling industry as a D1 cycling coach for Montevallo. "My role is to work on the logistics and organization of the races... I help plan and get the team to events as well as recruit and facilitate practices," Hyde said.

Montevallo's cycling team currently has five athletes across both endurance and gravity disciplines. Hyde brings a supportive voice and a safe space for her athletes to grow both personally and athletically.

She reflected on her time at Brevard and how it prepared her for this role; she claims "leading and executing trips with my minor in [WLEE]... directly prepared me for a job like this." She also credits BC Cycling Head Coach Bradford Perley for his attitude towards helping the cycling team better themselves on and off the team.

In 2024, Olivia raced to a fourth-place finish at Collegiate Mountainbike Nationals in Bentonville, Arkansas. "It took a long time to get there and a lot of training," she said. Her coaching philosophy embraces the fact that everyone faces difficulty when racing and no race day is ever perfect. Yet, at the same time, she firmly believes that "if the win came easy, the win is not as sweet."

Looking back on her unique job, Olivia said that it was her dream job, but also that she didn't know it was a possibility. She encourages anyone to take the chance and submit that application for a dream job or school even if they might not be qualified because they may surprise themselves.



Olivia Hyde

Lastly, Olivia wants to say "Hi" to her friends at Brevard, and wishes a good fall semester for everyone. Additionally, she wanted to shout out and thank a number of faculty for her success; she's grateful for Erasme Uziyeye, Quintin Overocker, Bradford Perley, Ryan DeGarmo, and Jenny Kafsky for their support and encouragement. Her final comment was, "These professors have truly changed my life and made me motivated to try at school."

The Ecusta Trail expands

Alexus Warren
Contributor

Western North Carolina is preparing for the expansion of the Ecusta Trail. This multi-use greenway connects Hendersonville and Brevard and is expanding about 20 miles, running through both Henderson and Transylvania County.

The trail opened in July 2025 in downtown Hendersonville; those six miles connect to Horse Shoe, and the next phase will add another 13.5 miles toward downtown Brevard. The project is expected to start in 2027 and end in 2029.

This matters for the Brevard College community because many incoming students arrive on campus without vehicles. With this trail, many students can safely walk or bike to Hendersonville. The trail is being developed along a former railroad corridor, giving it a historical and recreational background. This will benefit history and environmental science classes, as well as the outdoor classes Brevard College offers. It allows many professors to teach on the trail in real time and helps Brevard

students connect with the area, which the college is actively promoting.

The trail already brings activity to surrounding businesses from people walking and biking; expanding the trail will give more businesses opportunities to grow their clientele and gain more exposure. This could help Brevard's downtown businesses and gain more exposure for Brevard College.

For the Brevard community, this expansion could mean more than just another place to exercise; it gives the community a chance to explore and see the beautiful towns. As construction moves to Brevard, the community can use less motorized transportation and take in the sights, while also allowing people to see the old railroad corridors and serving as a bridge between the two communities.

For more information:

<https://www.ecustatrail.org/>

<https://visithendersonvillenc.org/businesses/ecusta-trail>

<https://www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/north-carolinas-ecusta-trail-may-2026-trail-of-the-month>

<https://www.hendersoncountync.gov/recreation/page/ecusta-trail>

Brevard College Theatre presents 'Around the World in 80 Days'

Brevard College Theatre will present "Around the World in 80 Days," adapted by Mark Brown from the classic novel by Jules Verne, to kick off the College's 2026–27 theatre season. Performances are scheduled from Thursday through Saturday, Oct. 1–3 at 7 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 4, at 2:30 p.m. in the Morrison Playhouse at the Paul Porter Center for Performing Arts on the campus of Brevard College.

This quintessential adventure story will feature seven Brevard College student actors: Nell O'Brien '27, Tallulah Fish '28, Madison Norris '27, Devian Anderson '28, Jonathan McNabb '29, Logan Hislop-Boccanfuso '29, and Kevin Taylor '29.

Directed by faculty member Dan Toot, Around the World in 80 Days sees

Phileas Fogg take to the seas, lands, and skies to circumnavigate the globe in a kinetic and fun-filled theatrical adaptation of Verne's novel. Train heists! Elephant rides! Frontier gun battles! With seven actors playing more than 39 characters, the audience will experience one of literature's classic adventure stories, while witnessing the impressive speed and agility of an ensemble of student actors, with technical and design support from the entire Brevard College Theatre company.

The show runs 90 minutes with no intermission. Ticket prices are \$5 for students, faculty and staff and \$15 for the general public. Tickets can be purchased online at onsthestage.tickets/brevard-college/season or at the door, if available.



THE CLARION

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Photos by Matthew Queen via [brevardcollege](https://www.instagram.com/brevardcollege) on Instagram.



Freak of The Week: The Purple Martin

Tom Webb
Staff Writer

The Purple Martin, *Progne subis*, is a cavity-nesting swallow with a migratory range spanning from Brazil to Canada, passing through North Carolina and Brevard as early as February, with peak migration in March.

The Purple Martin is notable for the massive flocks it forms, sometimes containing up to 500,000 individuals in flocks so dense they show up on weather radar. This is useful for birders who seek to track them down to participate in "Purple Martin Parties." Gatherings of both birders and non-birders, typically occurring in open urban areas such as empty lots and parking lots. The main focus of these gatherings is to observe the mesmerizing, shifting shapes Purple Martin flocks form.

Purple Martins feed, bathe, and drink water exclusively during flight. These Martins are capable of consuming 262 billion insects a year and can skim the surface of ponds and other sources of water to drink.

Purple Martins in the Eastern US rely nearly entirely on humans as a source of habitat, as their original nesting sites, the cavities of old trees, are now almost absent from the wild. Purple Martin Houses have been popular for hundreds of years, with indigenous people hanging up gourds for the birds to nest in. Currently, there is an issue

of introduced species, such as the European Starling and House Sparrow, forcing Purple Martins out of their nest boxes and even killing them in some cases. One way many birders are attempting to prevent non-martins from nesting in the Martin housing is by designing specific entrances for their bird boxes that make it challenging for non-martins to enter.

The Purple Martin is a species whose existence is closely tied to the presence of humans. Many people establish Martin Houses to bring the birds to their yards, and many others contribute to Martin Conservation funds or participate in bird watching events across the birds' migration path. Whether one is an avid birder or just getting started, the Purple Martin is an incredibly fascinating and unique species that people of all ages can appreciate.



An iridescent freak. Photo by John Davis

Sources:

NC Purple Martin Society - About Purple Martins. (n.d.). <https://www.ncpurplemartin.org/about-purple-martins>

Looking for a job? The Cindy Platt Boys and Girls Club is hiring

Avery Mattina
Contributor

Looking for a flexible 3-, 4-, or 5-day schedule, afternoons only (2:15–7 p.m.), and no nights/weekends? The Cindy Platt Boys and Girls Club of Transylvania County is the perfect place for you.

This schedule is perfect for a college student looking to work an after-class job. In fact, multiple Brevard College students work there.

BC alumna Calista Henry, the 3–5 Program Director at The Club, is excited for college students joining the BGC (Boys and Girls Club) family. "Every day, our staff have the opportunity to create meaningful connections, encourage growth, and be a positive role model for the children who count on us. Working at The Club is a great opportunity for anyone interested in working with children, coaching, health and wellness, STEM, the arts, or youth development," Henry said.

The Cindy Platt Boys and Girls Club of Transylvania County is part of the

national Boys and Girls Club of America, which is a community-centered youth development after-school care program designed to provide young people with academic support, mentorship, and life skills.

"We are so excited to welcome individuals who are passionate about making a difference in the lives of young people! Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens," she continued. "Our staff also have opportunities to give back to the community through service projects, mentoring, tutoring, and other programs that support our members and the community around us. This is your chance to give back to the young people who count on us, make a difference in your community, and be a part of something bigger than yourself."

Bringing yourself and a smile every day can make the biggest difference in a child's life; the local Boys and Girls Club is a perfect place to do so!

Email Patty Wagner, pwagner@bgctransylvania.org, if interested in this opportunity.

BC Cycling selects roster for Nationals next week in Grand Junction, Colorado

Elli Clark
Staff Writer

It is official: with the conference season finale this past weekend, Sept. 26 and 27, Brevard's Cycling team has selected its roster of athletes to represent the school at the Collegiate National Championships. For the second year in a row, it will be held at Powderhorn Resort in Grand Junction, Colorado.

"This has been the hardest selection I've ever had, which speaks to the level of our team. This is a special group, and I'm very excited for the Colorado trip," head coach Brad Perley said.

The national team consists of 20 cyclists, and there are two disciplines: gravity and endurance, but within each discipline there will be two races each: dual slalom and downhill, plus cross-country and short track. The whole competition will take place over four days from Oct. 8 to Oct. 11.

Representing Brevard in the men's cross-country will be juniors Ned Broersma and Owen Jones and freshmen Emilien Belzile, Ethan Wood, Asher Boeger, and Grayson Franks. On the women's side will be senior Madeleine Pollock, junior Ayana Gagne, sophomores Lily-Rose Marois, Elli Clark, and Cecilia Link, and freshman Lacey Dennis.

For the men's gravity, the teams differ between dual slalom and downhill. For dual slalom, the team consists of juniors Matthew Mitchko and Max Canterbury, sophomores Eli Houle, Walker Cottingham, and freshmen Eason Vaughn and Belzile.

For downhill, it will be Mitchko, Canterbury, Houle and Cottingham, sophomore Wilson Degarmo, and Vaughn.

On the women's side, in both downhill and dual slalom, it will be Pollock, Clark, Dennis, and freshman Matilda Gentry. Marois will join to compete in the dual slalom.

Last year, Nationals took an unexpected turn as heavy rainfall impacted course conditions and schedule. To start the week off, the endurance athletes raced both of their given events in one day. Unfortunately for the downhill riders, with the rain on the following days, what was supposed to be a very technical and legit course was switched to be a sluggish, mud-soaked green trail.

Having finished second in the overall team omnium with two individual podium finishes from now-alumni students Owen Clark, Matthew Leliveld, and Nicole Bradbury, and at the time freshman Marois, Brevard is eager for another shot. Bright and early on Tuesday, Oct. 6, the team will head to catch their flight to Grand Junction.



Photos by Alecia Janeiro.



Tornados spin past Guilford Quakers in a 59–0 win

Jordan Ramey
Staff Writer

Hello everybody; your weekly sports reporter is back with details on this past weekend's contest of football between our own Brevard Tornados and the Guilford Quakers. This is by far the Tornados most dominant win of the season as they advance to 3–0 on the year. The Tornados were able to pitch a shutout with a final score of 59–0. Both offense and defense shone in this battle for the Tornados.

The offense was headlined by the attack on the ground once again. The identity of this Tornado offense is starting to form as the Tornados were able to rush for over 300 yards against the Quakers. Junior running back Zion Fauntelroy-McDaniel was able to rack up two touchdowns in his appearances in the game, and junior wide receiver Messiah Ramseur, who transferred from the Quakers, was also able to contribute to the ground

game as he scored a rushing touchdown as well. Freshman quarterback Christian Concele completed a little less than half of his passes but racked up 137 yards through the air and threw for two more touchdowns for the Tornados.

The defense continues to shine for this year's football team. They only gave up 156 yards of total offense, and only 33 of those yards came from rushing. Senior linebacker Will Hadden led the Tornados with eight tackles, and junior defensive end Deshon Hadden accumulated 3 tackles for loss, a sack and a half, as well as a forced fumble. Sophomore safety DJ Stevenson picked off another pass in this contest, bringing him to 3 on the year as well as his first collegiate touchdown, as he was able to house call the interception in this past Saturday's contest.

The Tornados are back in action at Ives-Lemel Field this Saturday, Oct. 3rd at 1:00 p.m. They are opening up conference play against a competitive Belhaven team. Make sure to be there and support our Tornados!

Tornados upset Sewanee Tigers 1–0 with a miraculous Janie Steele goal

Connor Sechrist
Contributor

A stellar performance from the back line and a fourth-minute goal in the first half by Janie Steele helped the Tornados get a shutout win over the SAA Conference Sewanee Tigers on Tuesday afternoon.

The Tornados and the Tigers entered the non-conference matchup undefeated. The Tornados were 6–0–2, with the two ties coming from another SAA school, Oglethorpe University 1–1 and the other tie against Carolina University 0–0. The Tigers have a 4–0–2 record, with the first tie coming from Trine University 1–1 and the second coming one game before the Tornados matchup against the number 9-ranked Division III team in the nation, Emory University, with a high-scoring 3–3 final score. Not only the tie against a top-ten team, but the resume of the Tigers set the tone for what kind of team they are. Back-to-back SAA Conference titles in 2023 and 2024, and a game short of the SAA Conference Championship last

season, falling to Rhodes College 0–1, who would later go on to make it to the second round of the NCAA Tournament.

The Tornados seemed unfazed in the Tuesday matchup. The Tornados faced 25 shots on the day, but the backline did not make those shots easy. Abby Nunez had nine saves to help clinch the shutout victory. “It’s really important for us to have games like this to help us get better defensively, and it’s great to see our defensive line be able to perform the way that they are,” Nunez said.

Little offense was displayed by the Tornados with only three shots total, but it was the early fourth-minute 25-yard shot from Janie Steele that was all the Tornados needed. “I didn’t even know what to think. It was an accident, but it was a goal. I was surprised but happy it went in,” Steele said. “It feels really good to score, but I’m super proud of the whole team; that was a really good team that we just beat. I’m super proud of the defense and everyone.”



Photos by Isabella Zambuto.

