

## Metro Atlanta Dominates Georgia College Campus

By: Meredith Lawrence

Forty-one percent of the GC 2016 class came from four counties in the Metro Atlanta region, while at least 25 rural counties did not contribute a single student.

“Our game plan is to grow our pool of diverse students,” states Ramon Blakley, director of admissions at GC, “while maintaining our strong connections to the Atlanta suburbs and other areas throughout Georgia.”

Fulton county yielded the highest percentage with 848 students, followed by Gwinnett County contributed 839, Cobb with 521 and Dekalb with 256. All of these counties are adjacent to one another. Nine counties out of the 30 that make up the Metro Atlanta region accounted for 59 percent of the 2016 GC incoming class.

Although GC primarily recruits prospective students in Georgia, recruiters in 2017 have traveled to cities such as Nashville, Tennessee, and Charlotte, North Carolina.

“We can define diversity on campus in many ways, including ethnic, geographic, religious, political diversity, and more,” said Will Brown, senior associate director of admissions. “All of these aspects are at the core of a liberal arts education in learning how to think critically and how to learn with an open mind.”

GC has a selective application process, but the review process is the same for any student in differing countries and states. The goal is to attract the best students.

“We evaluate the rigor of a student’s high school curriculum within the context of the school they are coming from,” Blakley said. “When we’re able to hear directly from the students in their essays, evaluate their leadership potential in their resumes, and read about their character and work ethic from their teachers/counselors, these help us to try to determine if the student will ultimately be successful at GC, both inside and outside of the classroom.”

GC evaluates academic and non-academic factors as “very important,” “important,” “considered,” and “not considered.”

The geographical residence of a student is only considered, but state residency is important.

“We note our geographic diversity from a statistical point of view, as it’s certainly important to what we do,” said Brown.

GC’s Within Reach program offers several incentives to prospective students, targets students from schools in Baldwin County and surrounding areas.

“This outreach includes application days, application fee waivers, and college planning seminars,” Blakley said.

These incentives will potentially increase the pool of applicants around Baldwin County and surrounding areas. The 2016 class included 318 students came from Baldwin County.

“I feel as though the school is trying to diversify, but there always seem to be a minority within pictures either on the website or in pamphlets given to possible students,” said GC junior De’onna Pennamon. “It’s not as diverse as they make it seem.”