

The Mariners' Log

Charting the Course Since 1961

A newsletter for the alumni of the College of Coastal Georgia, Coastal Georgia Community College, Brunswick College, and Brunswick Junior College.



To view more photos, check out the College's Facebook [page](#).

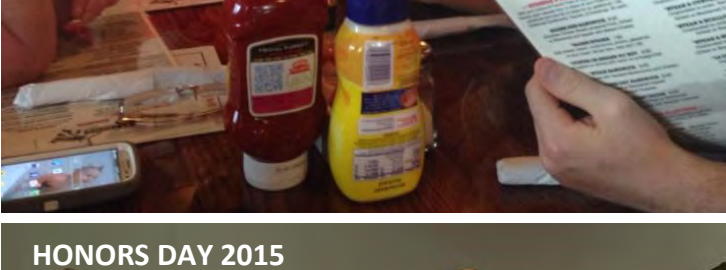
Alumni Q&A: Dr. Ben Harrell '15



Coastal Georgia alum Ben Harrell truly has Mariner Pride. He graduated in 2015, earning a bachelor's in psychology with a double minor in economics and math, and described the Class of 2015 as "a great graduating class." Ben initially chose to major in psychology because, as a non-traditional student, the courses worked with his schedule, but he stayed because the psych professors are second to none. He even still has some of the materials from those courses.



What have you been up to since graduating? What are you currently doing?



Since graduating, I went on to earn my Ph.D. in economics at Georgia State University's Andrew Young School of Policy Studies. I now work at Vanderbilt University as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Economics and the LGBTQ+ Policy Lab. I'm a health economist that studies health disparities, health insurance markets, and discrimination in access to healthcare, especially among LGBTQ+ populations.



In what ways did your experience at Coastal Georgia prepare you for your current career?



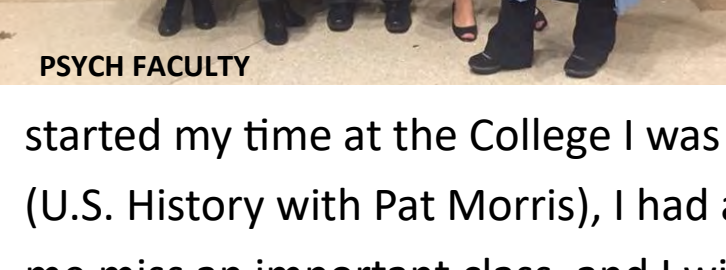
I've worked at a large public institution (Georgia State) and a large private research institution (Vanderbilt) in addition to Coastal Georgia, and I can tell you right now that no single institution has been more personally invested in my individual success than Coastal. The math and economics departments (especially Dr. Laura Lynch and Dr. Don Mathews) worked hard to get the econ and math minors up and running so that I could have those under my belt to look good for Ph.D. applications and wrote letters of recommendation for me that helped get me accepted in four different doctoral programs. I would not be where I am today without Coastal Georgia.



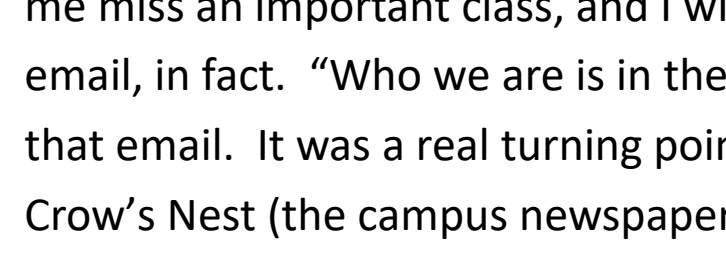
Looking back, how did you change over the course of your time at the College?



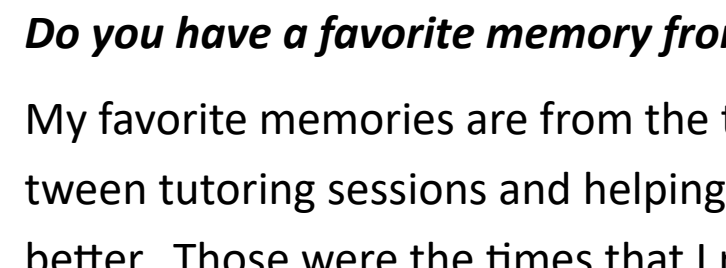
My time at Coastal marked the beginning of what I consider to be the most transformational times of my life. Candidly, when I started my time at the College I was a bit of a mess. I remember in one of the first courses I ever took (U.S. History with Pat Morris), I had a terrible dramatic coming out experience with my family that made me miss an important class, and I will never forget the kindness in her email response. I still have that email, in fact. "Who we are is in the only person we can be," she said. I still get chills when I think of that email. It was a real turning point for me. I went on to join the GSA and wrote an editorial for the Crow's Nest (the campus newspaper at the time) for National Coming Out Day in later years.



Do you have a favorite memory from your time in college?



My favorite memories are from the time I spent in the ATTIC with my fellow tutors—cracking jokes between tutoring sessions and helping people who were struggling with course content understand it better. Those were the times that I really knew I wanted to be involved in higher education.



Learn more about Ben's experiences [here](#).

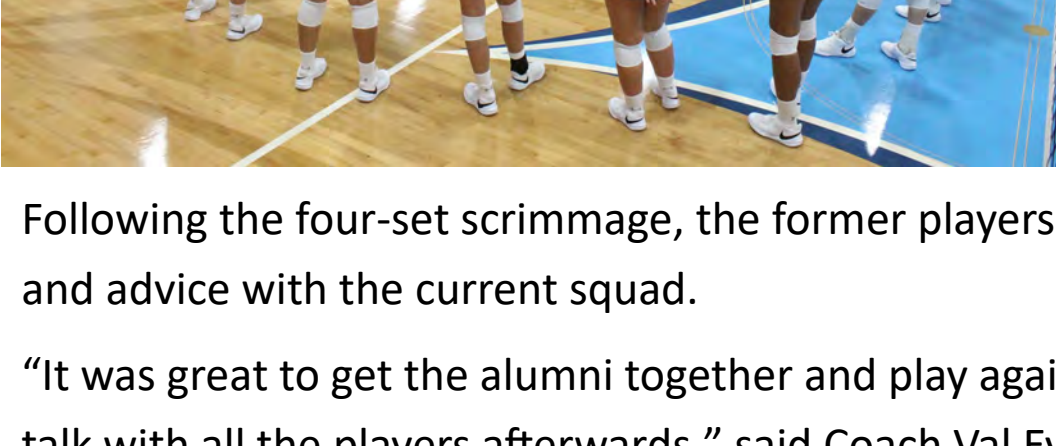
Alumni, we want to know what you've been up to after graduation. Please share with us your good news, job promotions, career changes, accomplishments, awards, marriages, birth announcements, and new businesses. We want to celebrate with you!

Contact us at alumni@ccga.edu and provide your name, year you graduated, and share your news which will be featured in the newsletter.



Stories by Jay Strader,
Sports Information Director

SPORTS SPOTLIGHT: VOLLEYBALL



VOLLEYBALL ALUMNI GAME

The Coastal Georgia Volleyball Team held a scrimmage against alumni of the program earlier this month.

Eight former players returned to campus to participate including Samantha Marie Kepler, Amanda Kline (Shelton), Maggie Bee (Hughes), Addie Pedraza, Hannah Mitchell, Lauren Stillman, Krya White and Rachel Amundson.

Following the four-set scrimmage, the former players were gracious enough to share their experiences and advice with the current squad.

"It was great to get the alumni together and play against them, but also great that they stayed to eat and talk with all the players afterwards," said Coach Val Every. "Their experiences of winning and becoming a close-knit group really inspired our players and I think they learned a lot from it."

The team of current Mariners won the contest 3-1, but this event was not about the stats. The alumni members originally come from all of the country including Texas, California, and Illinois, and all remain in the Glynn County area because of the special bond they made with each other and with the community.

Not all of these former players played with each other, but the bond of being a Coastal Georgia Mariner Volleyball player runs deeper than age or year graduated.

Kepler, Kline, Bee, Pedraza, Mitchell, Stillman, White and Amundson embody what it means to be a Mariner and their contributions on and off the court reflect that.

MARINERS START SEASON STRONG WITH 3-0 WIN OVER BREWTON-PARKER



The Coastal Georgia Volleyball Team opened its season against Brewton-Parker on Saturday in the Howard Coffin Gym. The Mariners dominated, winning the match 3-0 with scores of 25-6, 25-10 and 25-17.

"Today was a perfect way to open our season. Our team worked hard, earned our points and limited the errors on our side of the net. We had incredible control on offense putting up a .477 hitting percentage as a team," said Coach Val Every. "I'm incredibly proud of this team and how they handled the match today, we are looking forward to the rest of the season."

Read more about the game [here](#).

SYDNEY MARTIN: A SUMMER OF REFLECTION

Sophomore Sydney Martin experienced lots of success in her freshman year. Coastal Georgia's volleyball team was given the No. 5 seed in the Sun Conference Tournament and turned it into a Conference Championship game appearance. She was a large part of that run, averaging 1.05 blocks per set which ranks third all-time among Mariners for a single season.

Her success on the court did not come without trials off of it. Martin did not start the collegiate chapter of her life in an ideal way. She was exposed to COVID-19 and could not attend school her first week in college.

"It was very tough considering I was sent home my first week of school and had to contact all my professors online about missing my first week of college," said Martin. "It also caused me to miss so many games which made me lose the opportunity to prove I deserve a spot as the starting middle which is what I always wanted as a freshman."

But adversity does not last forever. Martin was able to come back and eventually earned herself a starting role in the middle position. Though she played in just 65 sets, she led the team with 68 total blocks. With, hopefully, a full season of work Martin expects to be among the top players in the Sun Conference this season.

Read more about Sydney [here](#).

UPCOMING GAMES:

- = AUG 31—vs. Middle Georgia State College, Coffin Gym at 7 p.m.
- = SEP 3—vs. Point University, Coffin Gym at 12 p.m.
- = SEP 3—vs. Savannah State University, Coffin Gym at 6 p.m.
- = SEP 10—vs. Wesleyan College, Coffin Gym at 2 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE

GIVING TUESDAY
November 29, 2022

Choose to Support :

- Scholarships
- Athletics
- Degree Programs
- Student Programs
- Faculty and Staff Development

ELEVATE'22



GIVING TUESDAY IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO ELEVATE '22!

SAVE THE DATE OR ELEVATE YOUR GIVING TODAY!

ccga.edu/elevate

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

There is always something going on at the College of Coastal Georgia. Here are some upcoming events:

- Volleyball
 - vs. Middle Georgia State College: Aug 31, in Coffin Gym at 7 p.m.
 - vs. Point University: Sep 3, in Coffin Gym at 12 p.m.
 - vs. Savannah State: Sept 3, in Coffin Gym at 6 p.m.
- Golf
 - M. Golf: Sept 12-13: Sanctuary Cove Golf Club, in Waverly, Ga., TBA.
 - W. Golf: Sept 12-13 Pine Lakes Golf Course, Jekyll Island, TBA.
- September is Hispanic Heritage Month.
- Giving Tuesday: Nov 29. More information to follow.
- Check out the College of Coastal Georgia [Calendar](#) for all events.

STAY IN TOUCH

We would love to stay in touch with you. Please tell us about yourself and what you've been up to after college. Update your contact information [here](#).

Questions? Contact alumni@ccga.edu.

