



# Panther Press

A publication of the Georgia Academy for the Blind  
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*This institution is an equal opportunity provider*

**Dr. Cindy Gibson, Superintendent**

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Georgia Academy for the Blind - GAB

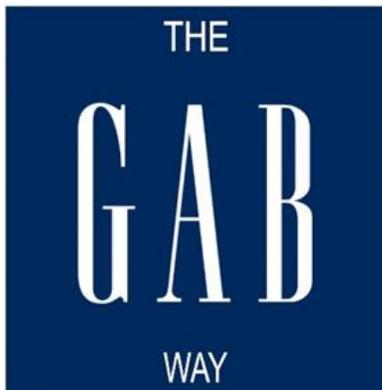


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Mission Statement: The Georgia Academy for the Blind provides quality education services to Georgia's students with visual impairments and/or visual impairments in conjunction with other disabilities to prepare them to achieve their highest level of independence in transition to college and career readiness. *Check out this student produced video*

*featuring this Mission Statement:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRrbhkGSe98>



Give it your best  
Achieve your goals  
Be respectful

## MAY:



### *GAB's Graduating Seniors Class of 2020.*

**Juan Acosta-Garcia**

**Tyzie Brooks**

**Caiden Evans**

**Kaleb Evans**

**Quay Gibson**

**Angelica Howard**

**Quez Howard**

**Jayla Jackson**

**Quinton Jones**

**Joseph Maxwell**

**Noah Nizza**

**Jartavius Primus**

**Alicia Rivera**

**Malcolm Ruffin**

**Blake Smith**

**Shayla Stanford**

**Jordan Woods**



This newsletter is published by our Parent Mentor/Family Engagement Specialist, Jennifer Minter. Please send your ideas, news and resources in your community to her. [JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us](mailto:JMinter@doe.k12.ga.us), 478-262-3303. ***Please remember to contact her if you've had a change in address, phone number and/or email!***

# A message from our Superintendent

**“We don’t need 2020 to have perfect vision.”**

## Senior Class 2020

So how shall the Year 2020 define you? If “define” means “limit,” then for GAB the answer is: It does not, and it will not! The Class of 2020 Seniors nailed it with their motto “We don’t need 2020 to have perfect vision.” Speaking for all of us at GAB, their insightful theme communicates resilience, mindfulness, transitional thinking, and confidence in a time of uncertainty.

Remember, (Perhaps you would rather not!), that students returned to school August 2019 to 2 weeks of no HVAC. Whew! But we adhered to the GAB Way and made it fun with creativity and resilience. We stepped up our pool activities, practiced mindfulness in sensory perception, increased investment in popsicles and shorts, and basically hunkered down for the duration. Similarly, after not having access to our auditorium for 2 years, this 2019-2020 year, our students, under the direction of Ms. Catie Hollway, presented *The Grinch* with all the lights, cameras, and action imaginable in the newly remodeled Reynolds Auditorium.

It does not stop there! In a year of a Statewide 4% budget cut, we received assistance from our leadership at the Georgia Department of Education for our students and staff to attend and receive honors at the American Printing House for the Blind, SCASB wrestling, cheerleading, and fine arts competition, the national goalball tournament, and numerous local activities. Once again, creative responsibility to budgeting and assurance of the value of recognizing student achievement in an environment of financial volatility and change, drove fidelity to the Vision 2020!

An instructional topic of the ECC - Expanded Core Curriculum is advocacy. As all students transition from high school to *adulthood*, as it is now called, the GAB seniors are armed with tools to advocate for their needs, their rights, and the wellbeing of all. Without question, the Class of 2020 is unique for so many reasons beyond their control. They have witnessed historical highs, moral lows, and through it all, as a result of the Corona Virus, they became part of history by being the first class to redefine “pomp and circumstance,” and what the true meaning of graduation really is. To the highest potential, each Senior 2020 has embraced his/her social and civic responsibility in being leaders amongst their peers and choosing the leaders of their future.

To the Seniors 2020, you are in a class all your own. The honor is yours today, and we will celebrate you as the economy reopens. Of your future, we are confident even in this time of uncertainty. You have been served with “Compassion over Compliance,” now carry on, carry on, carry on.

**Cindy**



**In Corona order Payne Stewart will see his first beach walk before The Masters. Unprecedented and mindful gratefulness time we are in. We'll just eat goldfish and trust the process.**



**Mrs. Churchwell's and Mrs. Rushing's classes planted seed potatoes as part of their horticulture class with Mr. Blackwell back in mid February. The potatoes kept growing even though no one was at campus! This week Mr. Blackwell harvested the red skinned potatoes. Who needs grocery stores when you have hardworking GAB horticulture students!**

## Happening now on GAB campus: Georgia Mobile Audiology



- The team will travel to locations in and outside of Atlanta (about 50/50) across all of Georgia. We've broken the state up into about 8 regions, and we'll get to each region about once every three or four months. Right now, COVID is preventing us from traveling extensively, but this is the plan once everything is back open.

- The vehicle is parked at GAB for the duration of the stay-in-place and out-of-school order. It is solar powered (for the electricity that it needs to run the clinical part of the vehicle) and has to be parked outside. We're so thankful to GAB for letting us park there during this time. Once we go back to school, we'll continue to park it at GAB when we're not on the road because Macon is such a great, centrally located place for our traveling around the state. Also, GAB's Anna Bass handles all the financial accounting for the program so it's easier to have her nearby "Sunny".

- We offer full audiological services to children ages 0-22 years of age (we're a program under Dept. of Education and under Division of State Schools). We're a full clinic and can provide testing, hearing aids, family education, and screenings. We also do a good bit of connecting parents and professionals to others who can help them get services for their children.





# Project | SEARCH®

**We would like to congratulate the following seniors for being accepted into Georgia Academy for the Blind Project SEARCH at Navicent Health (GABPSNH) Cohort IV for SY 2020-2021:**

**Tyzia Brooks**

**Jayla Jackson**

**Joseph Maxwell**

**Armando Vias**

**GABPSNH is our competitive nine-month transition program designed to provide graduating seniors the skills needed for competitive employment. Through this program, our interns are immersed in work at Macon's Navicent Health from 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Monday – Thursday. Fridays are designated for a day of career exploration and a focus on independent living. Our work departments at Navicent include: Create Café, Linens, Environmental Services, and Supply and Distribution.**

**Patricia Edenfield – PS Instructor**

**Mary Beth Drinkard – PS Skills Trainer**

**Alicia M. Jackson -PS Program Manager**



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*Alicia Rivera and Quez Howard*

**have been named the 2019 - 2020 Recipients  
of Middle Georgia GLRS Transition Achievement Award.**

**This annual award is presented by the  
Middle Georgia Regional Transition Council.**

**Simultaneously, each student acknowledges and  
says "THANK YOU" to his or her STAR Teacher.**

**Alicia has chosen *Mrs. Catie Holloway* as her STAR Teacher,  
and**

**Quez has selected *Mrs. Melanie Thompson* as his STAR  
Teacher!**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson said it so eloquently,  
"Life is a journey, not a destination."**

**Good Luck, *Alicia and Quez* as you begin your  
journey beyond GAB!**

**Mrs. Rushing's surprise visit included an "end of the year treat basket!"**



**Mrs. Rushing visited each of her students and presented them with a yard sign that congratulated them on moving up to the next grade level!**



# May Birthdays

**5-4 Jordan W.**

**5-4 Mary Beth**

**5-19 Tyzia**

**5-20 Heidi**

**5-20 William**



"When this has passed  
may we say  
that love spread more quickly  
than any virus ever could,  
may we say this was  
not just an ending  
but also a place to begin."

~ CHRISTINE VALTERS PAINTNER