

Around KENNESAW

AN AROUNDABOUT LOCAL MEDIA PUBLICATION

FEBRUARY 2023



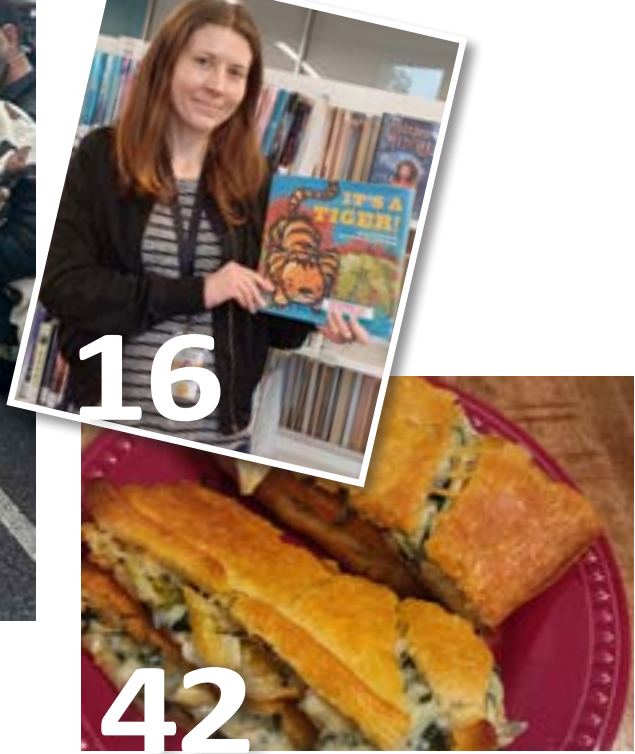
**Caffeine and Octane
Offers Auto Paradise**

**Perfect Weather
for Winter Reading**

FINDING THEIR WINGS

MOUNT PARAN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

YOUR COMMUNITY. YOUR MAGAZINE.



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Mount Paran Christian School

The strong partnership between MPCPS and Kennesaw State University (KSU) is celebrated by Shelton the Eagle and Scrappy the KSU Owl, with MPCPS alumna Emily Roberts, in the cover photo.

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Cover photo provided by MPCPS.

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FINDING THEIR WINGS

Mount Paran Christian School Students Take Flight at Kennesaw State University

Each year, 100% of the graduating class at Mount Paran Christian School (MPCS) is accepted to a college or university. One reason all seniors are accepted is they are well-prepared for a 21st century education, all within small classes on a collegiate-style campus. MPCS also offers 56 Advanced

Placement/Honors courses, allowing many students to enter their first year of college with numerous course exemptions under their belt. These seniors have experienced firsthand the benefits of a curriculum, taught from a biblical worldview, that is built on liberal arts, innovation, STEAM principles and a growth mindset. The result is a group of graduates who crave deeper faith, embrace intellectual curiosity, are well-prepared, live courageously and pursue excellence.

In the May 2022 graduating class, 101 MPCS seniors were accepted into 108 colleges or universities. Of the top five colleges that members of the Class of 2022 joined last fall, Kennesaw State University (KSU) tops the list.

From One Nest to Another

Kennesaw State is a favorite choice because the school is listed among the nation's top national universities by U.S. News. As one of Georgia's most innovative institutions in teaching and learning, KSU offers undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees on two suburban campuses in Kennesaw and Marietta.



MPCS graduates heading to KSU.

According to Viola Lussier, MPCS director of counseling, strong nursing, business, education and engineering programs draw the students to KSU. Dr. Trici Holmes, MPCS director of college counseling, credits the university's popularity to its strong performing arts program, variety of majors, academic and sports programs and financial assistance available through the HOPE/Zell Miller Scholarship.

Another appeal for MPCS graduates is KSU's proximity to their alma mater. Courtney Barbitto, MPCS director of auxiliary and volunteer services, said KSU and MPCS have a strong relationship that benefits both.

"We have current KSU Bagwell School of Education students working in our after-school and summer camps programs and hope to deepen that partnership in the future," she said.



MPCS pre-K4 student Hoyt Wallace with Shelton, the Eagles mascot.

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Jessica Davis, an MPCS Class of 2019 graduate, attends KSU and returns to her alma mater to tutor students in the extended-day program.

“I chose Kennesaw State University because of its incredible education program, as well as its location,” Davis said. “Kennesaw and Mount Paran have both been great partners to prepare me as a future teacher. I have been able to get great practical experience in how to work with students through the after-school care program and summer camps at MPCS while I learn to be an educator in the classroom at Kennesaw State.”

Flying to New Heights

The MPCS college-preparatory coursework prepares graduates to excel in college and beyond. MPCS alumna Ashton Duncan Hilbrands, Class of 2008, was encouraged to participate in dual

enrollment during her senior year and was able to complete most of her freshman-year KSU requirements while still in high school.

Hilbrands earned a bachelor’s degree in biology and a master’s degree in exercise physiology. As a physical therapist, she knew she needed more education to advance her career.

“After working in health care for several years, I became more aware of the need for health care providers to have a stronger

background in business management,” Hilbrands said. “Physical therapy school prepared me very well to take care of patients but did not prepare me for the business side of health care.”

She entered the KSU Part-Time Evening MBA program because she wanted a program that met in person and would provide a great networking platform. “KSU’s MBA program continually ranks high when compared to other schools, and I truly saw the value in their program,” she said. Hilbrands has found that her MBA has opened doors, allowing her to step into her current role as a clinic director and set her apart in the field of physical therapy.

In her third year at KSU, Emily Roberts, a 2020 MPCS graduate, is a psychology major who has always felt a calling to guide others by incorporating faith: “Psychology would set me on the path to seminary, ministerial work or counseling for churches,” she said.

Currently, Roberts works with the MPCS extended-day program, in addition to her studies at KSU. Returning to her alma mater, Roberts said that, above all, “Mount Paran taught me how to stand firm in my faith on campus. Obviously, being at a liberal arts school (like KSU) means different religions and ideas will be presented. Whether it be through one-on-one conversations or group interactions, I would like the opportunity to share faith with those who are struggling in life.”



MPCS alumna Emily Roberts reading with second-graders Scarlett Foster and Abbie Pointer.