



UNIVERSITY OF  
**GEORGIA**  
WUGA 91.7 and 94.5 FM

**WUGA**  
**NEWSLETTER**

SPRING 2021 | WUGA NEWSLETTER | WUGA.ORG

## WUGA HELPS SERVE THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF UGA

WUGA is operated by the University of Georgia through a partnership with Georgia Public Broadcasting. As an NPR affiliate, WUGA broadcasts high quality news and informational programs to Athens and surrounding counties in Northeast Georgia. Along with programming produced by NPR and GPB, WUGA's local programming, news and production staff produce 11 individual shows each week. This is in addition to local daily news updates that are broadcast from 6 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Many of WUGA's local programs are developed through partnerships with schools and units on UGA's campus including the School of Music, the College of Public Health, Terry College of Business, Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, the School of Social Work, Franklin College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Public and International Affairs.

Regularly broadcast programs such as *On Stage/On Campus*, *Georgia Health Report*, *Outside the Box*, *Sound of Athens*, *African Perspectives*, *Classic City Science* and *The Other Side of the G*, as well as special event programs, such as local and regional election coverage, are produced with our campus partners. These programs are produced with UGA faculty and immersive student involvement. *The Other Side of the G* and several other local WUGA productions have received numerous awards from the Georgia Association of Broadcasters, the Georgia Associated Press Media Editors and the national Public Media Journalists Association.

WUGA provides hands-on experiential learning opportunities for UGA students from a variety of schools on campus. Each semester students work alongside station professionals to produce news, informational and entertainment programs. Students are mentored to develop proficiency in radio journalism, production, social media, entertainment programming, and website development. Students from Grady College, SPIA, the School of Music, the College of Public Health, Franklin and Terry Colleges have gained valuable experience and knowledge of the role of public radio in serving the community.

WUGA staff work with interns and UGA students from all academic backgrounds to uphold the pillars of success at UGA. Students learn about civic engagement by participating in political coverage and covering stories on town hall meetings. They learn about teamwork and inclusion by working together to produce news stories and features on Athens topics and people. Interns engage in critical thinking and communication by helping to develop radio programs. Many students find a love of broadcasting and public media and go on to become our colleagues in broadcasting. The station is more vibrant and energized by the work these students are doing every day!



Former intern Gemma DiCarlo and current intern Isabella Luu

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT: CLASSIC CITY SCIENCE

Since 2014, *Classic City Science* has presented more than 200 segments, with more than 60 researchers on topics including Alzheimer's research, development of a universal flu vaccine, concussion prevention in sports, and even the creation of a biological bone repair agent called Fracture Putty.

Host April Sorrow interviews some of UGA's most prolific researchers to discuss not only the latest findings, but also how research initiatives at the University of Georgia are directly impacting the state, the nation, and even the world.

These 6-minute segments air as part of *Living on Earth* Sundays at 1 p.m. and *To The Best of Our Knowledge* Monday and Tuesday evenings at 8:05 p.m.

Find these segments on our website on the *Classic City Science* [landing page](#).

UGA Research



## ATHENS )) NEWS MATTERS

Jessica Wurst, Assistant Producer for  
*Athens News Matters*

### MEET THE TEAM: JESSICA WURST

When Jessica Wurst was a kid, her dream was to become a florist, and have her own flower shop. Fortunately for the WUGA staff and the Athens community, Jessica's love of people led her down a different path.

"I still can't believe I get paid to talk to people," says Jessica, reflecting on her passion for public radio and her experiences with WUGA, first as an intern and now as Assistant Producer for *Athens News Matters*. "WUGA is the best thing that has happened to me in my college career. I was given the freedom to cover stories and the independence I needed to grow as a journalist."

Jessica received her Master's in Journalism and Mass Communication from UGA in 2020, but graduating in the middle of the pandemic didn't dampen her enthusiasm for radio.

"Toward the beginning of the pandemic, I produced a story about how domestic assault survivors were coping with the emotional and financial challenges of the pandemic. Sometimes the most difficult stories to tell are the most important ones." Jessica also enjoyed covering all things animals, from backyard chickens to the honeybee program at UGA. "I have covered the birds and the bees," jokes Jessica.

As for where she sees herself in the future, Jessica plans to be an executive producer for NPR. When she's not producing radio, Jessica likes hanging with her four dogs, or rollerblading. "The pandemic really brought out my inner skater girl," says Jessica. We're excited that Jessica rolled onto our team, and we look forward to hearing her voice for a long time to come.



## THREE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ALEXIA RIDLEY

Considered the voice of WUGA news, Alexia Ridley joined the UGA staff as a reporter for the television station previously owned by UGA. Then, Alexia moved over to WUGA and the rest is history.

Here are some interesting facts you might not know about our own Alexia Ridley:

1. She grew up as an Air Force “brat” and has lived in many states and three foreign countries.
2. She was actually born in Savannah, GA and has always enjoyed the St. Patrick’s Day parade.
3. In her career she’s interviewed many people including Alice Walker, Charlayne Hunter-Gault, Michael Stipe of REM, John McCain, former governor Nathan Deal, Stedman Graham, and even Ivana Trump during a visit to Georgia.



Alexia Ridley



## FORMER INTERNS ENJOY BROADCAST JOBS

Staff have enjoyed working with interns for many years within the halls of WUGA. Our interns go on to become our colleagues in broadcasting.

Adhiti Bandlamudi is the Silicon Valley reporter at KQED, the NPR affiliate in San Francisco, CA.

Victoria Knight served as our graduate assistant and now works for Kaiser Health News.

Spencer McGuire, a news intern, is now the morning show producer at WCJB TV20 in Gainesville, FL.

Wangechi Sarah Warui went off to work for CNN after graduating and serving as WUGA news intern.

Andrew James now works at WPDE TV in Myrtle Beach, SC.

Adrianna Booker, one of the first WUGA intern voices our listeners heard on the air, also works at an NPR affiliate.

Gemma DiCarlo has become a reporter and host at WVPE in Elkhart, Indiana.

Our own staff reporter, Jessica Wurst, began her journey with WUGA as an intern, then became the graduate assistant, and is now working as a paid staffer on *Athens News Matters*.

Each semester, WUGA chooses interns to help with news, production and operations, *Athens News Matters*, website, and social media.

Learn more about WUGA internships on our [Employment Opportunities](#) page.



Former interns Jessica Wurst, Megan Wahn, and Gemma DiCarlo with Alexia Ridley

