



## Small loans, big impact



Santa Rhina Baret Figaro is a recipient of a microloan from Wofford College's James-Atkins Student-Managed Investment Fund. The loan has supported a thriving business and helped her family build a home.

By Robert W. Dalton

In a small community in the eastern corner of the Dominican Republic, Santa Rhina Baret Figaro has a thriving business where she sells bread, sandwiches, fried chicken and fresh juices. It was all made possible by a \$100 loan through funding provided by the James-Atkins Student-Managed Investment Fund.

It's a scene that's played out hundreds of times across the Dominican Republic over the past eight years. The fund has provided \$56,000 — \$7,000 each year — for Esperanza, a nonprofit founded in 1995, to disburse microloans to people who wouldn't otherwise have

access to capital.

“We’re trying to address poverty for the long haul,” says Dr. Philip Swicegood, R. Michael James Professor and Chair of Accounting, Business and Finance. “If we can move the needle, at least now there’s an opportunity.”

The James-Atkins Student-Managed Investment Fund was established in 2008 with a \$100,000 gift from R. Michael James '73. Robert D. Atkins '65 provided an additional \$100,000 in 2016. In addition to the program in the Dominican Republic, the fund also provides microloans in Haiti. Its portfolio there is about \$22,000.

Slaton Schneider '22, a finance major from Hoover, Alabama, is the fund’s managing partner this year. She says the fund is a great way to learn about investing, but the microloan component gets members more motivated because of its impact.

“What we’re doing is important learning-wise, and it’s having an impact of alleviating poverty,” Schneider says. “Esperanza is taking the financial support and the business skills and applying them to a social cause. It’s really inspiring.”

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## Study abroad recognition



Kenzie Syiem '23 is one of 75 Wofford students studying abroad during the fall of 2021. She's in Granada, Spain.

Wofford College's study abroad program remains among the highest ranked in the United States. In fact, it's continuing to climb, according to the Institute of International Education (IIE).

The institute's Open Doors 2021 Report, released each year during International Education Week, ranks Wofford No. 7 in the percentage of students participating. It's also No. 7 on the list of leading baccalaureate colleges awarding credit for study abroad and No. 4 among baccalaureate institutions for short-term study abroad.

"Wofford's high percentage of study abroad participants is reflective of a campus community that is committed to lifelong learning and a curiosity about the world," says Amy Lancaster, Wofford's dean of international programs. "The college continues to explore ways to make study abroad experiences more accessible and to better prepare our students for success overseas. Not only do these experiences prepare our students to be more engaged with the world around them, study abroad alumni are also more competitive in the job market. Studies have shown that college graduates who studied abroad earn as much as \$7,000 to \$10,000 more annually than those who did not study abroad."

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Learn how Wofford students studying abroad have an opportunity to blog.

## Terrier StartUp Challenge



Alec Schrader '24 and Cassie Figueroa '24 had the winning concept in the sixth annual Terrier StartUp Challenge.

Two Wofford College students with a fourth-place finish in a statewide venture pitch competition last week won the college's sixth annual Terrier StartUp Challenge.

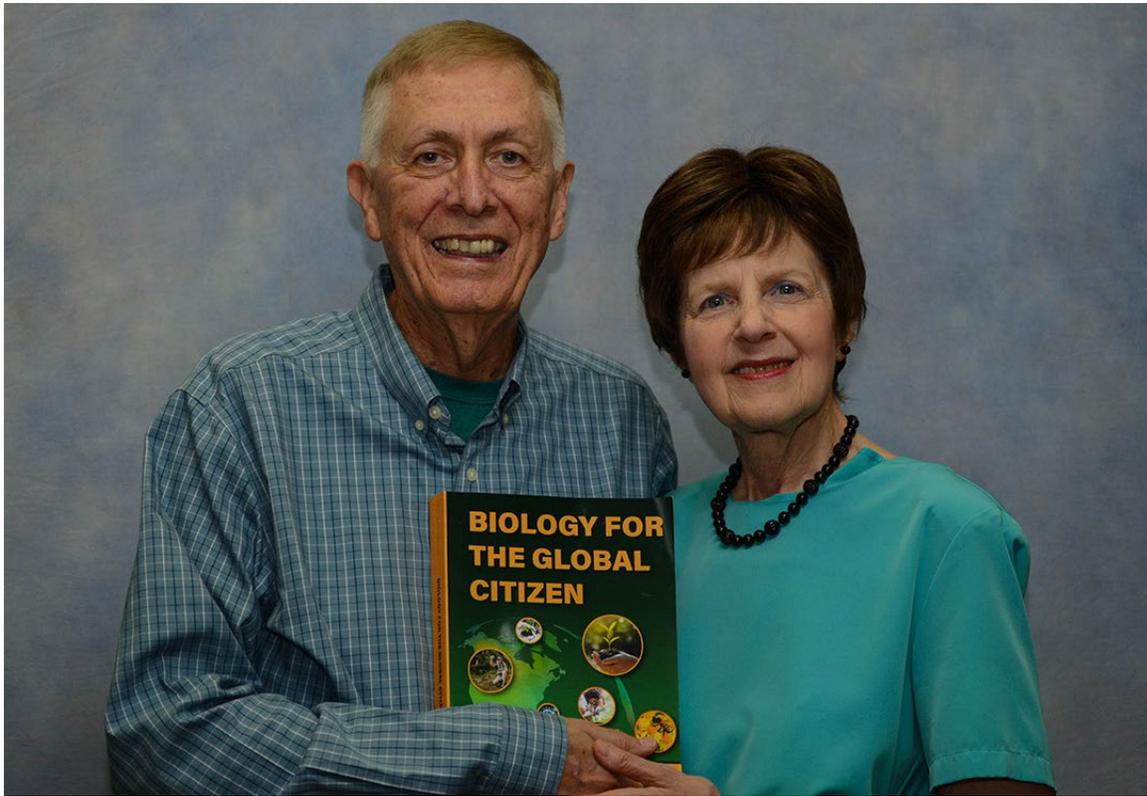
Cassie Figueroa '24 and Alec Schrader '24 won \$4,500 of the contest's \$10,000 in start-up funding for their concept Campus Connections. The business is a consolidated website where college students can offer services, including haircuts, photography, oil changes, rides, etc. Students wanting to use those services could book appointments and pay through the website.

"Alec and I have a lot of passion and enthusiasm, and we are excited to get started," says Figueroa, a business economics major from Charlotte, North Carolina. "Our next step is to file for an LLC and develop software to launch our platform. The funds from tonight will help us get there and achieve those goals. We truly see this growing into a massive platform, the market is so huge with 20 million college students."

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**Cassie Figueroa '24 and Alec Schrader '24 placed fourth in the 60-team SC Innovates venture pitch competition.**

## Shiflets publish new textbook



Retired faculty Drs. Angela and George Shiflet co-authored "Biology for the Global Citizen" with Dr. Murray Pendarvis, assistant professor of biological sciences at Southeastern Louisiana University.

Retired faculty Drs. Angela and George Shiflet partnered with Dr. Murray Pendarvis, assistant professor of biological sciences at Southeastern Louisiana University, to write the recently published textbook “**Biology for the Global Citizen.**” It’s intended to be an introductory resource for students with varying backgrounds in biology. It includes personal applications and active learning experiences to help students develop an understanding of how science is pertinent to their lives. Angela Shiflet is the college’s Larry H. McCalla Professor Emerita of Mathematics and Computer Science and a former chair of the Department of Computer Science. George Shiflet is the Larry H. McCalla Professor Emeritus of Biology and former chair of the Department of Biology.

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