



COLLEGE *of* ATHENS

CoA Summer 2023 Newsletter

Equipping the next generation of Christian leaders to transform the world in Jesus' Name



Living Well

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

2 Timothy 4:7

This is the time of year for celebrations! In late May and early June, schools release for summer break. We get invitations to graduations and we make plans to attend weddings. We often think of these events as benchmarks or as the finish of something important—a school year, a degree program, or even (in the case of a wedding) the end of a certain season of life.

We congratulate people on their achievements. We as a culture equate success with completion—with finishing. We want to check off all the boxes on our To-Do lists. We want to hurry up, get done, and get on to the next thing. We celebrate achieving our goals. We even use this idea as a euphemism in eulogies to denote someone who has lived a full and worthwhile life. “He finished well,” we say. Meeting our goals is important.

The idea of “finishing well” is found in Scripture, but it is almost always tied to the broader idea of *perseverance*. Perseverance still has a mind to achieving goals and finishing well, but the focus is not only on the ends, but also on the means. We are called to “run with endurance the race set before us,” always looking to Jesus as our Guide and Motivator (Hebrews 12:1). God is concerned with our end destination surely, but He is also concerned with the journey we take in getting there, and our continual growth along the way. Taken from another perspective, the end of one thing is often just the start of something else. So, it is with the Christian life. Once we come to salvation in Christ, our old life ruled by sin is over, but our new life with Jesus has only just begun (Galatians 2:20). How disappointing if we treated our relationships with our spouse or our friends the way we often approach our relationship with Jesus! However, we as believers often view our relationship with Christ in just this way. We assume that since our eternal destiny is secure, the best part about being a Christian has already been checked off of our proverbial To-Do list.

As believers in Christ, we have the assurance of an eternity spent in God’s presence, but we also still have the here-and-now on this side of eternity. Christ came not just to save us for the next life, but for this life as well. We are called to evidence the reality of our new life in Christ by demonstrating the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). These allow us to live with one another, loving people as Jesus loves them and as He loves us. We learn to properly acquire and appropriate these fruits through the power of the Holy Spirit in us—through studying and meditating on Scripture, through prayer, and through fellowship with other believers. How we go about living life, day-after-day, year-after-year—especially how we live as a part of the families and communities where God has placed us—has a direct influence on our ability to spread the Good News of God’s kingdom. Despite our different histories, different accomplishments, different seasons of life, and the different ways we come to saving faith, we are called to live in unity with one another, living lives worthy of Christ “standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27). Striving is not easy, nor is it quick. Loving and serving God by loving and serving other people is not a mere once-and-done task to be checked off of our To-Do list. Remaining faithful to the gospel is not for the faint-hearted. The Christian life is a marathon, not a sprint. Better still, the Christian life is not just a set of responsibilities; it is a relationship, both with our Savior and with the rest of mankind that he made in His image. Our goal as followers of Christ is not just to finish well—we are called to *live* well, too.

By Cynthia Wilbur, CoA Assistant Director of Program Services

LET THERE BE ...



 COLLEGE of ATHENS
Transformed!
CONFERENCE
SATURDAY, JUNE 10TH

Join us for *Transformed!* 2023
Saturday, June 10th
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

"*Let there be light!*" is the theme of this year's *Transformed!* Conference! [Registration](#) is still open! Join us for what promised to be a faith-bolstering day of focusing on the light of Christ in Him and in you!



CoA Spring 2023 Academic Honors

Congratulations to our Spring 2023 Academic Honors recipients!

President's List (3.76 - 4.0 GPA)

Undergraduate: Tina Hester, Dee Pesaresi, Coryn Zurcher

Graduate: Amy Alred, Lisa Graham, Angela Stocker

Dean's List (3.5 - 3.75 GPA)

Undergraduate: Destiny Groberg, Janet Lopez



CoA Celebrates First CLI Graduates!

Congratulations to the first cohort of CoA's Christian Leadership Institute (CLI) who graduated June 1st from their 18-month program. Graduates are:

Gina Hernández

Sandra Kittle

Anne McKelvy

Douglas Schneider

Jeffrey Snowden

Maura Snowden

The graduation keynote was delivered by Rev. Jerry Stewart who commissioned these individuals to confront the darkness in the world with the love and Truth of Christ! The students gave testimony to the blessing of making the journey with their other cohort members and the deep friendships that developed in Christ as a result.

This non-degree program is designed for any Christ-follower interested in growing in their power and authority in Christ for the sake of being the light of Christ at work, in your family, and anywhere in your personal sphere of influence. Contact Paula Riobo (p.riobo@collegeofathens.edu) to find out more about being part of CLI.



CoA 2023 Boston Mission Trip

A team of 6 CoA' students and staff went on a one-week mission trip to Boston, Massachusetts May 6th-13th. They partnered with Beacon Community Church in Belmont, a suburb of Boston where they assisted with their Sunday services, youth gathering and community groups. The team served the church through various service projects, prayer walked the local neighborhoods, and actively engaged in evangelism on the city streets. While in Boston, the CoA team helped with the following evangelistic outreaches such as:

- + handing out 280+ church invitation cards;
- +holding 44 spiritual conversations with locals
- + engaging in 40 prayer conversations with different individuals;
- + conducting 22 spiritual surveys;
- +having 10 gospel conversations; and
- +giving out gospel tracts, *Gospel of John 21-Day Challenges*, and *More Than a Carpenter*.

Overall, it was a wonderful experience for the staff and students and the Lord blessed their work!

Campus Development Update



With infrastructure and architectural plans complete, CoA is eager to occupy its beautiful 114 acres. **What's most needed at this time are generous saints who can pledge monthly or annual gifts for the next three years to sustain the cost of building until the living spaces are occupied by our many students! The goal is \$45K in new monthly gifts and pledges,** and we're well on our way to meeting that goal. Will you be the one whose gift makes this critical difference? [Click here](#) for more details about the CoA building plans. Thank you for your prayers that God will make an incredible place for our students to live and our local community to visit! [Make your 36-month pledge today](#), noting "Capital Campaign." Every gift matters!

Taking CoA to Prison!



CoA is excited that 56 inmates at Hancock State Prison have enrolled in our Leadership and Christian Ministry degree programs. They will complete one course every eight weeks on their journey through our Christ-centered curriculum. Two brilliant CoA faculty each teach one day per week on site at this maximum-security facility. The HSP men are deeply grateful for the opportunity to learn who they are in Christ and to prepare well for a fruitful life. Definitely pray over this beautiful opportunity to impact the enrolled students and that what they learn will have Godly ripple-effects throughout the prison. Government funding is not currently available for this effort. CoA welcomes your generosity towards the Hancock State Prison initiative to help with the program-related costs. ([Click here](#) to make a one-time or monthly recurring gift noting "HSP.") Many praises to God for His favor!

CoA Students Win Award



Jamie Semple and Savannah Waldrop both participated in the CoA Song Writing class in spring semester 2022. Through that class, they wrote the song "Safe Place". In March 2022, they participated in the Georgia Assembly of God District Fine Arts program. Their performance scored top three in the state with a score of "Superior with Invitation." As a result, they have been invited to compete nationally in early August in Columbus, Ohio.

2023 Athens National Day of Prayer

This year's Athens National Day of Prayer Breakfast on May 5th was a huge success! Nearly 600 guests gathered in-person at the Classic Center. Some of the notable attendees included the Mayor of Athens, elected officials, and representatives from our public service departments such as police, sherriff, military, and first responders. Keynote speaker, Dr. Mark Rutland, an author, educator, and church leader, encouraged attendees to engage in God-focused, steadfast prayer. Christy Freeland led the time of worship. There were plenty of prayers lifted up by local pastors and community leaders. CoA is honored to host the Athens Area National Day of Prayer Breakfast that gathers and unifies our community in Christ through prayer!



CoA Upcoming Opportunities

Make plans now to go deeper in your faith. CoA always has ways to connect you with others who share your passion for life in Christ!

Healing Trauma Workshop



Trauma and the effects of trauma abound—as residue from the pandemic, natural disasters, childhood abuse and any other pain of life. In this 3-day workshop, join instructor Sandra Selmer-Kersten as we learn to identify different types of trauma, how it affects us, and how to overcome the effects of trauma in Christ.

August 14-16, 2023

9:00 am-5:00 pm

[Single-Day Resistration](#)

[3-Day Registration](#)

Contact dpesaresi@acmin.edu for additional information.

CoA Employment Opportunities

Assistant Director of Admissions

The Assistant Director of Admissions will be responsible for recruiting students to enroll in the College and assisting them through the admissions process. Specific duties will include attending college recruiting fairs across northeast Georgia and surrounding areas, participating with the college's admissions and onboarding team in the overall admissions strategy, effectively and creatively utilizing social media and other marketing materials, and assisting with undergraduate Academic Advising.



COLLEGE of ATHENS

For more information, please visit our [CoA Employment Listings!](#)

CoA Service Opportunities

New Heart Thrift Store

Planning on doing some spring cleaning? Looking to refresh your home or closet? Be sure to stop by the [New Heart Thrift Store](#) and stock up for the new season! Located just outside of downtown Watkinsville at 1450 Greensboro Highway, New Heart is open Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00am until 5:00 pm.

Proceeds from purchases and donations will help fund the CoA student scholarship fund while also giving back to other community ministries. Additionally, volunteers are also always needed and appreciated! To volunteer, please call 706-705-1702 or email info@newheartthriftstore.org.



Thank You, CoA Business Sponsors!



CoA Mission Statement

College of Athens is a biblically-grounded, Holy Spirit-empowered, accredited Christian college that prepares and restores men and women who will teach, reach, lead, and minister to others out of their identity in Christ through relational, hands-on training for life and leadership in the church, in the marketplace, and across the globe.

Our Contact Information

College of Athens
PO Box 7953
Athens, GA 30604
706-769-1472

<http://collegeofathens.edu>

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