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The Fierce Green Fire

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Wofford College. Department of Environmental Studies

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# The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program

Volume 12, Issue 17



## *Sustainability and Public Health Lecture by Walker Vincent '24*

Attending Former State Representative Harold Mitchell's lecture at Wofford was truly enlightening to me as a non-Spartanburg resident. Not only was it an excellent presentation of information, but it has lingered within my head and heart. Mr. Mitchell had endured what people would consider unthinkable—he and all the people he knew and loved were contaminated by invisible and deadly chemicals during their young age, some even passed away leaving no understanding of the reason for casualty at the time. After some persistent research, Mr. Mitchell uncovered that his Arkwright neighborhood community was being contaminated by a nearby fertilizer plant which later would be deemed a 'superfund' cleanup site.

The members of the community were told that the site was clean after its closure in the 1980's but this was a lie. Though many people under these circumstances would owe it to chance and go on with their lives, for Harold Mitchell this sparked the beginning of a journey which would lead to the development of millions of dollars of infrastructure aimed to protect poor

communities from the impacts of unjustly applied environmental regulations. While protecting these communities, Mr. Mitchell found correlations between these environmental injustices and other socioeconomic issues. His work would eventually grow into a nationally recognized movement known as ReGenesis, a community-saving organization that brings economic development to neighborhoods around abandoned and potentially deadly sites such as the Arkwright fertilizer plant, and provide access to health care for those impacted.

Harold Mitchell's work has genuinely inspired me to focus on my own community in Charleston, which up until now I imagined a perfect haven to grow up in. But after listening to Mr. Mitchell, I vividly remember waking up in the morning to the smell of sewage from the water treatment facility in the middle of our harbor, or the dramatic change of water color when approaching the local papermill. Certainly not everything is as it seems, and if there is one thing that I have learned from Mr. Mitchell and my environmental studies courses, it's to be the first to ask the questions and the last to give up.



*Students in ENVS 160 traveled to Lake Bowen for a kayaking field trip with Dr. Telligman and resident river guide, Bob Hathcock.*

## Upcoming Events and Opportunities

May 12<sup>th</sup>  
6:00-9:00pm  
Goodall Center, 351  
Broadway Street, Glendale,  
SC 29346

***Waterbourne: Both Toxic and Miraculous:*** An experiential mixed-media exhibition exploring contaminated Southern legacies through the lens of baptism. The event will feature live readings (7:00pm) as well as digital and physical artwork approaching the rite of baptism as gender affirmation, as a legacy of evangelical Christianity, and a reminder of the value of our watersheds.

Ongoing [Job Opportunity with Spartanburg Area Conservancy – Conservation Director](#)

Ongoing [Job Opportunities with the US Forest Service](#)

Ongoing [Job Opportunities at Teton Science School](#)

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## PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

### *University of Georgia – Master of Agriculture & Environmental Education*

The College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at the University of Georgia offers a Master of Agricultural and Environmental Education degree (MAEE). The program is 36 semester hours and includes a thesis or non-thesis option with classes being completed online or on campus.

Students learn to teach in leadership positions, educate and communicate with the public, and conduct research within the agricultural and environmental sciences. The program's mission is to develop leaders, educators, and communicators to engage in food

systems that are environmentally and socially sustainable.

The UGA faculty, highly rated for their teaching, research, and outreach programs, offer personal attention, supportive educational environment, and a small school atmosphere at a large university.

Visit: [Graduate School – University of Georgia – Agricultural and Environmental Education](#)

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