



NEWSLETTER

President's Pen

Dear Piedmont University Community,

I'm excited to share with you that our campus is brimming with activity! Piedmont is hosting five FCA sports camps over the summer months - boys' and girls' basketball, two football, and running, plus two CSI summer camps, a STEM camp, fine arts camps, and four week-long law enforcement courses. These events bring over 1,500 young adults and law enforcement officers to our beautiful campus, providing an excellent opportunity to showcase everything we have to offer.

Summer Commencement is this week, and we look forward to celebrating these graduating students' accomplishments! And we're preparing to welcome the Fall 2025 freshman class on Sat., August 9.

Meanwhile, we remain focused on delivering high-quality education, fostering innovation, and encouraging connections across all aspects of university life.

I wish you all an enjoyable summer.

Sincerely,
Marshall M. Criser, III

July 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

Student Success	2
Piedmont Lions	3
Staff Spotlight	4
Alumni Feature	5
Upcoming Events	6

Piedmont Student Maddox Wilson's Nonprofit Comforts Kids in Distress with Calm Kits

by Grace Wills



Pictured far right

Inspiration often comes from the most unexpected of places — for Maddox Wilson, a Piedmont student from Flowery Branch, a conversation with a friend's family member sparked the idea for an entire nonprofit.

"My best friend's brother-in-law is a police officer," Maddox says, "and he talked about how hard it was when he had to take kids from their parents because they're so scared and upset."

These children, according to the officer, often picked up after a traumatizing event, usually had a hard time trusting the officer who took them from their parents — some were so young they did not understand why they had to leave their family behind. Maddox's contact said he would normally try to take them to a drive-thru for food and comfort, but sometimes that was not enough.

Maddox — then a senior in high school — knew what she was going to do. Using the officer's words as a guide, she got to work creating her nonprofit, creating and distributing what she dubbed Calm Kits.

The kits, given to local police and fire departments, contain a small snack and water bottle, a coloring book and crayons, and a stuffed animal. The hope, Maddox says, is that children who encounter first responders will now have some items that can calm them down and provide comfort. All of the items are the children's to keep, so that they get to have some items all their own for whatever comes next.

Collecting the supplies and assembling the kits was a challenge.

"Me, my mom, and my friend [who co-ran the nonprofit] did most of the heavy lifting," says Maddox, though over the course of the year, around 50 volunteers helped in various ways. The biggest job was collecting, cleaning, and repairing the stuffed animals donated to go in the kits.

However, their efforts paid off greatly; they were able to distribute hundreds of kits around their community. One police department alone received over 200 kits. The officers who received the Calm Kits believe their supply could last for years to come, positively impacting the lives of scores of children in difficult situations.

Maddox made her decision to attend Piedmont after touring campus with her teacher, an alum. Maddox's mom pushed her daughter to apply to SAIL after she learned about it in an email sent to parents. Maddox, busy with her nonprofit and hesitant, did not initially want to do it, but relented after hearing good things about the program. Now, after a year, she agrees that the program was essential in easing the transition to college. Her experience was so great that she has applied to serve as a SAIL Navigator in the upcoming year. "I think it will really help a lot of kids," she says, "and helping people is my goal." As she works towards becoming a life-flight nurse and continues her Calm Kits advocacy, there is no doubt that helping people is exactly what she is doing.



For more information about SAIL, click [here](#).



Piedmont Cheerleading Places Second at NCA College National Championship

by Danielle Percival



In just its third year of competition, the Piedmont University competition cheerleading team earned second place at the NCA College National Championship in the DIII Intermediate All-Girls Division.

The Lions placed second of 16 teams in the division with a 95.53 score in finals, the highest score in the history of the program and only 0.82 off the first-place team. .

That 95.53 score in finals was the 27th highest in the entire competition out of all 325 teams (that includes DI, DII, DIII, Junior College, NAIA, advanced and intermediate).

"At Finals, they bring all the teams from the division on the stage and call out their names and scores one-by-one starting with last place and moving up. Each team exits the stage after they are called," head coach Cristen Rabern stated.



"Being one of the last three teams on the stage is such a gratifying feeling because you know it means that you are in the winner's circle. When they called out third place and it wasn't our name, it was very it was very difficult to keep the emotions under control until we were announced. The girls worked so hard this season, and it was a truly memorable moment to watch them be able to celebrate that."

In 2024, the team placed fourth at nationals after coming in third place in its inaugural season back in 2023. In all three seasons of competition, the Lions have placed in the top five nationally in their division.

Career Services Director Lisa Mann is All About the Journey

by Terrie Ellerbee



in Boston, MA

Scroll through Lisa Mann's social media and you'll find more than just snapshots — you'll see stamps in her passport and stories from around the globe. Whether it's Ireland in March, Boston in May, or France last year, travel is her passion. "I love exploring new and exciting places full of rich culture, beautiful scenery, and great food," Mann said.

As Director of Career Services at Piedmont University, Mann brings that same sense of adventure and discovery to her work with students — helping them launch journeys of their own. Some graduates head straight into the workforce; others pursue graduate school. For Mann, who is entering her eighth academic year at Piedmont this fall, guiding them through those transitions is deeply rewarding.

"I love working in private education," she said. "You really get to know your students and be part of their journey. The students, faculty, and staff are the reason I've stayed. Piedmont is full of incredible people."

Over the years, Mann has worked with aspiring doctors, future educators, entrepreneurs, and more.

"Watching students grow over four years is the best part of my job," she said. "Knowing I played even a small role in their success is what motivates me every day. We have such a diverse group of students with amazing stories. So many of them are on truly remarkable journeys."

And those journeys don't stop after graduation. At Piedmont, Career Services is a lifelong resource.

"We support students at every stage — from their first day on campus to their tenth year in the workforce," Mann said. "Whether they're applying to grad school or transitioning careers, we're here to help."

She encourages students to visit Career Services early — ideally during their first semester. One of the first classes they'll take, Piedmont 1101, is a first-year seminar that focuses on college success. Career Services plays an active role in those courses.

"By the end of the class, students will have a polished resume and cover letter, a LinkedIn profile, and the beginnings of a professional network," Mann said. "The goal is to equip them with tools they'll keep building on throughout their time at Piedmont."

That head start matters, she emphasized. "Students who begin early are far more confident and less stressed when it's time to search for jobs or internships," she said. "It's all about building the toolkit over four years."

"A liberal arts education really does make students more marketable," she said. "They've been encouraged to explore, think creatively, and chart their own course. And every employer I talk to is looking for strong soft skills — teamwork, time management, problem-solving. Even with AI on the rise, it's the human skills that are hardest to find."

Lisa Mann helps students find those strengths — and discover where they might take them next.



in County Wicklow, Ireland

Law School in Laramie: Piedmont Prepared Abby Mauldin Well

by Terrie Ellerbee



Elle Woods aside, getting into law school isn't easy. Just ask Abby Mauldin, who graduated from Piedmont University in May 2024 with a psychology degree. These days, she wakes up in Laramie and attends law school at the University of Wyoming.

That is about 1,600 miles away from the first-generation college student Mauldin was when she came to Piedmont. Her family supported her decision to go to law school but weren't sure how to help otherwise. That is where Piedmont's Director of Career Services Lisa Mann came in.

"Oh, Lisa and I are best friends," Mauldin said. "I started around this time — March — last year and I was in her office every other week. Lisa was the first person I told after my roommates that I got into Wyoming. I would not have known what to do."

Mauldin devotes most of her time now to reading and researching. The daily load is heavier than she has ever experienced.

"I read probably around 200 pages a week on top of research assignments," Mauldin said. "A lot of law is research and writing and those are two things that I really got to develop at Piedmont that have really served me well here. I was always researching, always on the library website looking for something. Piedmont gave me those foundational skills."

As she works her way through school, Mauldin will explore civil and criminal law. For now, she's leaning toward a defense practice.

"I think I might enjoy criminal law. I've started exploring that interest with one of my professors who is a big-shot criminal defense attorney and still practicing, so that's cool," Mauldin said. "But I also really enjoyed our civil classes, like on torts and procedure. I have applied for several jobs this summer with civil defense firms, so we'll see how that pans out."

Mauldin graduated from Piedmont after just three years, so many of her classmates are still at the university. She misses them and Piedmont, her "home away from home."

"Honestly, I loved my time there. I talk about it a lot. One of the best decisions I've ever made was going to Piedmont," Mauldin said. "It prepared me in so many ways for what I'm doing now and just as a person, it allowed me time to develop before moving to the next step of my life, which I think is so important."



SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, September 2nd



Mark your calendars to join Piedmont University at the 37th Annual Coach Cave Memorial Golf Tournament at The Orchard Golf & Country Club!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

\$1500 GOLD SPONSOR

Includes two foursomes, large hole sponsor sign, display table at event, company supplied banner display and insert in goodie bag.

\$750 SILVER SPONSOR

Includes one foursome, hole sponsor sign, and insert in goodie bag.

\$300 HOLE SPONSOR

Includes hole sponsor sign and insert in goodie bag.

Entry Fee

\$150 / PLAYER

\$600 / TEAM

To learn more or register, visit [here](#).

Calendar of Events

JULY

7/18 Summer Commencement

7/25 Summer Orientation 3

AUGUST

8/12 Opening Convocation

8/13 Fall Classes Begin

SEPTEMBER

9/2 37th Annual Coach Cave Golf Tournament @ The Orchard

9/20 Fall Family Day - includes concert in Ampitheater

For event details, or to view the full calendar, please visit [here](#).