



Maya Gupta

**High Stakes:  
Reining in Violence**



**Maya Gupta pours available free time into various animal rescue volunteerisms, including a local “no kill” animal shelter. She also works with a group providing respite care to pets of victims of domestic violence. Gupta finds victims “often delay entry to shelters if they know they can’t bring pets.”**

Maya Gupta (PhD, '06) is a Presidential Graduate Fellow and doctoral student in psychology. She was born into academe. Her mother has a doctorate in comparative literature and her father in statistics.

Gupta's research has led her into the netherworld of psychoses and criminal impulse, yet she remains optimistic and resolute.

Gupta is neither a "horse whisperer" nor a "people whisperer," but she is interested in the subtle ways that animals and humans interrelate. This interest influenced Gupta to seek out the experience of working with a prison population in her final year of data collection.

"A lot of people thought I was absolutely nuts," Gupta smiles. By analyzing the overlays between cruelty to animals and abuse, she sought patterns that might help predict violent behaviors.

She completed a year's training in a minimum-security camp in Atlanta last October. On her first day, an alarm rang out and the prison locked down. A staff member emerged splattered with blood, yet Gupta remained calm.



"I proved to myself it was something I could handle," she relates.

Despite lockdowns, Gupta generally found the prison calm and orderly. She discovered Victor Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning in a prisoner's locker. For Gupta, this signaled a desire to find humanity in inhumane circumstances.

When the internship ended, Gupta resumed animal rescue work. Today, Gupta decompresses along the drive to the farm near Bishop where she boards four rescued racehorses. The Bishop farm is only 20 minutes outside Athens, yet it is a world apart for Gupta – a refuge for both horse and rider.

At UGA, she is completing the remaining data analysis for her dissertation titled "Understanding the Links between Intimate Partner Violence and Animal Abuse: Prevalence, Nature, and Function." At the farm, she sheds her scholarly self and grabs tack and saddle. Gupta soon gallops across an open field, her dark hair flying.

Parole boards always want to know how likely a person is to be violent again, Gupta mentions. Answers are always frustrating; prisoner recidivism rates remain high. "It seems so easy to point fingers at people as bad people... we achieve nothing as far as preventing future violence.

"Cruelty to animals is a marker for problematic later behavior; it's a form of violence in and of itself... There's a connection between cruelty to animals and psychopathy. You hear all the media reports of serial killers, who are found to have tortured animals," she adds.

Gupta views violence as a form of control, relating it to familial relationships. During her studies, she met with the psychiatrist who testified during the trial of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Their exchange strengthened her insight into the dynamic between families and violence.

“We have a lack of understanding into why people are violent,” Gupta observes. Her research intends to shed new insight. In her observations, callousness to animals demonstrates signs of suffering by the perpetrator as well.

After completing her dissertation in May, Gupta will likely move to Atlanta. She remains interested in animal welfare and continues animal rescue work. She is involved with an organization that helps place and foster pets of those entering domestic violence shelters.

Ideally, Gupta hopes she will become a psychologist with an animal-related organization. She enjoys the empirical and scientific “flavor” of psychology, but adds this caveat: “I always thought the most important thing about research was to put a human face on it.

“In a program like mine, where research time must be balanced with the extensive clinical training and coursework required to become a clinical psychologist, the Presidential Graduate Fellowship has made it possible for me to accomplish considerably more than I otherwise could have,” Gupta says. “Additionally, being a Fellow has placed me in a unique community of scholars from across the university and has provided opportunities to give back to the university through service and mentoring.”

#### **About Presidential Graduate Fellows**

The Presidential Graduate Fellows Program was designed to attract exceptionally qualified and promising doctoral students to UGA. Each year, 12-14 students are selected from a field of departmental nominees to receive the award, which carries an annual stipend and tuition waiver.

The funding is guaranteed for up to five years. Fellows engage in full-time research and graduate studies, as well as other complementary activities. Opportunities for professional development are a component of this program.



**Gupta is retraining four rescued race horses, teaching them dressage and cross country jumping.**

## Uttiyo Raychaudhuri:

### Lessons in Leadership, Daring and Good Fortune

The streets of New Delhi, India, teem with more than 15 million residents in rickshaws and cars. The frenetic city was home to Uttiyo Raychaudhuri (MA, '03; PhD, '06) before he exchanged careers and continents. Today, he sprints towards completing his doctorate in natural resources in only two and a half years.

Last fall, Raychaudhuri expanded his considerable talent for leadership during the Graduate School's second Leadership Workshop at Amicalola Falls State Park. The annual retreat is an ongoing initiative that Dean Maureen Grasso developed for promising graduate students at UGA. The doctoral candidate, who coordinates UGA Studies Abroad in the South Pacific and Caribbean while teaching, says, "Dean Grasso works to bring out positive energy," Raychaudhuri observes. "We all know who we are, but you need a setting like the Leadership Workshop to know yourself a little better."

Scholarship comes easily for the man who left past accomplishments behind to follow his heart straight to Athens.

Four years ago, Raychaudhuri shared a savory tandoori dish with friends in New Delhi. He could not guess that he would soon be ordering the chicken Malai kabob he enjoys at Bombay Café in Athens. For in 2002, the slightly built architect with pale brown eyes and a fondness for crisply tailored suits still jockeyed between his offices in New Delhi and Calcutta.

Raychaudhuri was disciplined and focused. Yet outwardly, he raced to keep apace, like everyone in New Delhi. His architectural practice thrived despite high fees – nearly double what other architects commanded – and his clients included Microsoft and Silicon Graphics. As Raychaudhuri's work progressed, he absorbed both eastern and western influences. He admired how Frank Lloyd Wright's designs incorporated water and other natural components. He sought ways to lessen the impact of his designs on nature.



His temples throbbed with ideas for sustainable ventures, like one in the Himalayas. Called "Nature Quest," Raychaudhuri's development synthesized natural materials and resources. He stayed at Nature Quest alone, near the legendary top of the world, to watch the millennium dawn.

**Raychaudhuri on Studies Abroad treks with students in the program. His doctoral research centers on protected areas management and environmental justice.**

Then, during a holiday gathering, the young bachelor met his destiny in the guise of Kakali Bhattacharya, a UGA doctoral student visiting India. Bhattacharya (PhD, '05) had spent the past 17 years in North America. Their attraction was powerful. When she left New Delhi, Raychaudhuri's focus shifted. His thoughts flew 8,000 miles to Athens, Georgia, the town with the curious name.

Soon they were engaged, and Bhattacharya pressed the question: Would her fiancé leave India and join her in Georgia? Raychaudhuri's heart knew the answer before his head did. New Delhi's streets buzzed with sounds, saffron colors, cinnamon smells. The enormous city never rested, nor even paused. If he could survive the stresses of competitive India, Raychaudhuri reassured himself that he could make it in the United States.

With farewells to his secretary and partner, Raychaudhuri locked the office door for the final time. No longer would Raychaudhuri lose himself in the sheer joy of seeing his own designs rise up from the hard earth. He was leaving something he loved passionately for someone he loved passionately.

"They say architecture is the mother of all arts. I still am an architect," he reminded himself. He was an architect with a bold new plan and bride in a new world.

On July 2, 2002, the newlyweds reunited. They walked dreamily along the quiet streets of Athens. Raychaudhuri was pleasantly surprised when locals murmured hellos. Something in him relaxed.

Weeks later, he entered graduate school at UGA, although Cornell had accepted him to study robotics. He leaned more toward the study of planning, especially recreation-based planning. By the fall of 2003, Raychaudhuri completed a master's degree in recreation and leisure studies. The next semester he began doctoral studies in natural resource management in the school of forestry. By summer 2006, he will have completed it.



Months ago, he presented two posters at a conference in Wilmington, North Carolina. One of Raychaudhuri's research projects concerned interactive learning centers located in nature centers. The other was an analysis of the Tennessee Outdoor Recreation Area System and user fees, which he completed with doctoral student K. C. Bloom. On the surface, the work presented to the conference audience of 50 seemed far removed from his architectural roots.

**UGA has been a very good experience for me," he affirms. "I may not go to every game and do the Bulldog 'woof-woof!'" He pumps his arm, punching the air. "But I feel the same way (as others). I'm very patriotic in that way. I love my university! I love my (new) country. And I love my family."**

Yet it is not, he explained afterward. Architects must incorporate how clients work and live every day. Architecture and leisure studies both concern how people use their time and spend their lives.

Today, the expatriate insists his western lifestyle is leisurely. Yet Raychaudhuri has taught since his

first semester at UGA. He co-authored an electronic book. Simultaneously, he juggles study, papers, data analysis and research, winning numerous teaching awards and recognitions. Raychaudhuri's mentors describe him as a student unlike any other, of incredible momentum and accomplishment.

In addition, Raychaudhuri coordinates studies abroad in the South Pacific and Caribbean, the largest of all such programs at UGA. This summer he will lead more than 350 students to Australia, Fiji and Belize. Afterward, Raychaudhuri will travel to Antarctica for his first visit, leading a field study. Students will analyze "What are its (Antarctica's) issues, and what does it mean for land management and the understanding of the process?" The program runs the entire fall semester, culminating in a cruise of the Antarctic Peninsula. The scholars will also visit Tierra del Fuego and Ushuaia in Argentina.

However, before these physical expeditions, there remained an academic one for Raychaudhuri. He left for New Orleans last March to stay with relatives and write his dissertation.

New Orleans was likened to a bowl teeming with violent water after Hurricane Katrina. During breaks, the doctoral candidate walked, contemplating the ecosystems, the battered levees and the ravaged lock near Jackson Square. The city wall, a last defense, faced the mighty Mississippi.

Mississippi is Algonquin for big water. The big water connected Raychaudhuri back to his bride of four years, now working in Memphis. He thought back to the leadership program in Amicalola Falls. Amicalola is the Cherokee word for tumbling water. He had felt self-discovery washing over him like a waterfall.

"And," Raychaudhuri remembers, "A lot of motivation to perform."



### **Susan Lanigan Upward Trajectory**

Susan S. Lanigan (ABJ '84; JD '88) stands on the top rung of the legal department corporate ladder. As executive vice president and general counsel for Dollar General Corporation, she has earned membership within a select group. A tiny percentage of the general counsels employed by Fortune 500 companies are women – numbering about 70 nationwide.

Lanigan never mentions this nor any of her achievements – she prefers to discuss favorite books or writers. She has a decided preference for Harper Lee over other writers with legal backgrounds, such as John Grisham.

**Susan Lanigan maintains close ties to the Classic City despite her Nashville-based duties.**

Lanigan worked briefly as a writer herself at the Oconee Enterprise and might have taken a different path altogether if not for a cousin's influence.

What would Lanigan have students know? "That school

is so much more than a way to get from point A to point B.” She pauses before adding lawyerly advice: “Don’t settle.”

Unlike Lanigan, the majority of her female legal counterparts are “come latelays.” Most have taken their roles in recent years, according to legal statistics. Since graduating from UGA law school, Lanigan has been upwardly mobile, beginning as a litigator in the Atlanta firm Troutman Sanders. On paper, her career looks like an ascending missile that never misses the mark.

Last year, Lanigan was appointed the first chair of UGA’s new Graduate School Advancement Board.

“Susan Lanigan combines so many attributes - including her great love of Athens and UGA, her wonderful personal presence, and her extraordinary vision - into a great leader for this historic board,” observes Craig Edelbrock, professor and associate dean of the Graduate School.

Lanigan says she won’t miss a meeting – she vows to bring the same focus to the board that she brings to law. Prior to joining Dollar General, Lanigan spent six years serving as senior vice president, general counsel and corporate secretary for Zale Corporation in Irving, Texas. Lanigan presently manages an army of attorneys while overseeing Dollar General’s risk management, media relations, corporate communications, internal audit and community initiatives departments.

Her office offers a sweeping view of the Smoky Mountains surrounding the corporate campus. Dollar General’s headquarters occupy a hilltop in Goodlettsville, Tennessee, 30 miles from Nashville. From here, she reflects on the formative UGA experiences that helped shape her. She recalls her college years, even the salad days of law school, as “luxurious.” Both Lanigan and her husband are “double dawgs” who return to Athens for sports and visits. Gregory Alan Lanigan, (BS, ’85; MEd, ’87) played UGA baseball. He is fiercely loyal, Lanigan smiles.

She glances out the window; nearly 300 miles beyond lies the Athens campus.

“I know it’s bigger, but I was in Athens eight straight years, and it still seems the same to me when I go there. The old campus is still intact.”

The quaint older portions of the campus remind Lanigan of married housing on East Campus.

“I remember cinderblock walls, and that you couldn’t get two people in the kitchen,” she recalls with a grimace that becomes a grin. The couple enjoyed visits to former gathering spots like O’Malley’s and Cooper’s, and inexpensive meals at a “wonderful Jewish Chinese deli called Chow Goldstein’s.”

Immediately following her graduation, Lanigan began working at the Oconee Enterprise, while her husband continued graduate studies. “I loved journalism.”

Meanwhile, Lanigan’s cousin Keith Mull (JD, ’87) prodded the young journalist “to give law school a shot.” On impulse, she accepted Mull’s challenge and took the LSAT.

“Of course I wanted to be Atticus Finch (of *To Kill a Mockingbird*),” she confesses.

In law school, Lanigan excelled once again, earning her law degree magna cum laude. She went to work for Troutman Sanders on an historic trial concerning CNN’s right to air tape recordings of Panamanian General Manuel Noriega. The firm lost the highly publicized case, but Lanigan was motivated and challenged by the experience.

Although career achievements have been a lodestar, Lanigan values motherhood above all. "When all is said and done, I am all about my husband and my children."

The progressive company she represents has on-site daycare and a fitness center and maintains a family-oriented culture. Lanigan values family; she deferred motherhood until her 30s and savors the experience of raising her children, Drew and Alex. She also values and nurtures relationships. Her three closest friendships were forged during UGA law school days.

Lanigan's computer signals as e-mails come in; phone messages wait. She offers her business card and asks for reading recommendations. She reads Ann Patchett and Maya Angelou for pleasure whenever life allows.

Characteristically, Lanigan resumes the normal life of a working mother, albeit high on the corporate ladder.

**Amanda Ellis  
and the Race to Save the Honey Bee**

One sultry August morning last year, Amanda Ellis (BS, '02; MS, '04; PhD, '07) stood knee-deep in sunflowers and *Apis mellifera* – or honey bees. Thousands of blossoms bobbed and wobbled their oversized heads. The yellow vision spread over six acres at the horticulture department's farm headquarters on Hog Mountain Road, intended as bee food for nearly 75 hives humming on the perimeter.

Wearing protective gear, Ellis picked through the flowers, focused on the effects of a parasite she equates to a "honey bee tick." Her work, the first of its kind, considered the specific effects of parasites on honey bees and plants.

By December, the field lay fallow and the golden vision seemed like a faded mirage. Students at the bee station expertly tended the hives to ensure they would survive the many threats nature posed for bees.

Uga "double dawg" and entomologist Ellis sits down for a coffee, explaining how and why the honey bee is in such big trouble. Back at the entomology center's bee station, research students explore foraging, ecological issues and all manner of parasitic threats. For predators such as hive beetles and mites have decimated feral bees, Ellis explains.

She explains varroa mites are the beekeeping world's biggest problem. "In fact, this mite has virtually domesticated honey bees in the United States. If we do not keep colonies and treat for this mite, the bees will die. This is why we have seen such a drastic reduction in feral bee colonies over the last 15 years. They are all dying because of varroa."

Ellis makes compelling arguments. With her empathetic smile and sobering news, she makes honey lovers want to slap a Save the Bee sticker onto their fender. Ellis believes almost everyone shares her fervor for bees. She marvels that there are more Internet searches on bees than any topic apart from religion. She and her husband keep bees and have four colonies in their backyard, yet Ellis confesses she doesn't care for honey. Ellis has better reasons for admiring bees' industry.



Bees are singly responsible for billions of dollars in American food production – estimated to be worth as much as \$9 billion annually. Where bees once showed up as a matter of course, desperate farmers now resort to renting hives for pollination. Beekeepers truck in colonies to pollinate flowering trees, vineyards and crops where there are insufficient indigenous bees.

Ellis's research focuses upon two tiny mites, the tracheal and the varroa, each of which have steadily destroyed healthy hives over the past two decades.

**Amanda Ellis spent nearly two years in South African game parks, doing research to complete a graduate degree in zoology, while her husband, James Ellis (BS,'00; PhD, '04), completed his doctorate in entomology at Rhodes University.**

Reports say that over 80 percent of feral bees have been wiped out nationwide by parasites, reducing beekeepers' hives by 25 percent each year. Thankfully, Ellis points out, UGA is on the leading edge of research with hopes to help engineer a better, more disease-resilient bee.

The United States has no indigenous bee. What is commonly identified as a honey bee here in the United States is European – one of several classifications, or races, of honey bee. “The Italian honey bee is known to be a good producer and gentle,” she mentions. Russian bees are notably more mite resistant. Selective breeding programs further disease resistance among popular bee races such as the Italian.



**Ellis researches the effects of both varroa mites and small hive beetles on pollination. She warns that if we do not keep colonies and treat for this mite, the bees will die.**

While researchers have waged mite and parasitic defenses as hives are ravaged, the public's eye has been trained on another invader. The infamous African bees, bane of Grade B films, have surfaced in Florida. “But you can have an extremely gentle Africanized bee,” Ellis points out. Again, breeding may alter many traits, including aggression.

Bees are bred for qualities that Ellis says increase their production and yet may select against traits that confer resistance. “The UGA bee lab has a major breeding program where they are trying to breed a better, more resistant bee. Once again, UGA is at the cutting edge of bee research,” she adds proudly.

“There are several groups throughout the country doing similar work in breeding resistant bees. The special thing about UGA is that we are trying to combine multiple characteristics, such as resistance, honey production, gentleness, etc. In nature, production and health do not always go hand in hand. UGA is breeding for both. This is what is most novel. It is a fascinating way to reduce the use of chemicals.” Entomologists avoid chemicals because they taint honey. They also know that varroa mites are becoming resistant to the chemicals used to control them.

Researchers developed a wire screen placed underneath hives so that the sticky mites fall through the mesh and out of the hive. The screens are part of the integrated pest management (IPM) plan that UGA scientists promote for beekeepers to use.

“Hygienic queens” are so named because their offspring actually remove brood, or baby bees, infected by varroa mites.

All pollinators (birds, bees, etc.) are scarce, yet bees are the most important of all crop pollinators. Bees transfer pollen from the anthers of a flower to the stigma of the same or different flower. This process must take place within a fixed period known as “receptivity.” Seedless watermelon flowers, for example, are receptive for only one day.



In the fragile balance of nature, a day becomes of exquisite importance. As Ellis labors in the laboratory alongside other researchers, she is keenly aware of the urgency of their work.

In the end, Ellis hopes to demonstrate that the bee’s most painful sting would be its loss.

### **WANT TO KNOW MORE?**

UGA’s honey bee program has offered the annual Beekeeping Institute, in cooperation with Young Harris College, since the 1990s. Web site: <http://www.ent.uga.edu/bees/>. Click on “2006 Beekeeping Institute” for the agenda and registration form.

The State Botanical Garden of Georgia offers periodic educational sessions on bees and beekeeping. State extension programs throughout the country provide public education lectures on beekeeping and other beneficial insects.

Athens honey is available for purchase at UGA. The sales support entomological research and projects. The honey is available in quart jars (\$8), pint jars (\$5), 16-oz. queen line glass jars (\$4) and 12-oz. plastic honey bear containers (\$3.50). To buy or reserve an order of honey, call 706/542-9035 or 706/542-3687.

### **LET US BEE MINDFUL**

We massage beeswax ointments onto our nail cuticles and our faces before retiring. We buff beeswax polish into our furniture; slip an elegant beeswax candle into a chandelier; slather luminous honey onto morning toast. The signs of bee’s industriousness are everywhere – some more obvious than others – for example:

- + Pollinators are responsible for one third of all foods sold by our nation’s grocers.
- + Bees are essential to pollinate more than 100 different types of crops in the United States (including watermelons, cantaloupe, citrus and apples).
- + Beekeepers today physically transport hives to various crop locations to assist in the pollination of millions of acres of farmland.
- + Without bees to pollinate foods, crop yields could drop as much as 50 percent.
- + In recent years, beekeepers report losing 25 percent of the hives annually to various causes, including drought and mites.
- + In the United States, 80 percent of the wild honey bees’ population has already been lost.
- + Apitherapy is the practice of inducing bee stings to treat disease symptoms (including arthritis and multiple sclerosis) and also refers to eating local honey to treat pollen allergies.
- + Drones (male bees) do not sting nor gather pollen.

## Craig Edelbrock



Craig Edelbrock  
Courting Three Muses

Craig Edelbrock is the new associate dean of the Graduate School. He inhaled Coleridge after discovering *The Road to Xanadu* at age 12. He became a PhD at age 25. Writers and artists color his worldview, which may explain Edelbrock's romance with vintage ink pens.

Stacks of weighty-looking doctoral dissertations arrive at his office, and Edelbrock is the designee who must plunge in and read. Read he does, for the obscure fascinates.

GS Magazine: What is something people might not suspect about you?

Edelbrock: I secretly wish I could be an artist, poet or composer because I value creativity above all. I would trade everything I have done—which is admittedly not

### **Craig Edelbrock is the new associate dean of the Graduate School.**

much—for one brilliant creative stroke.

GS Magazine: Was there a life-changing moment for you as a scholar?

Edelbrock: A major turning point for me occurred when I began reading more broadly outside of my area. Three writers who opened my mind were Jacob Bronowski (*Science and Human Values*), Loren Eiseley (*The Innocent Assassins*) and Joseph Campbell (*The Mythic Image*).

GS Magazine: How many pens are in your collection? What is your favorite?

Edelbrock: About 20 vintage and collectible pens. My favorite is a "Cracked Ice" fountain pen and pencil set made about 1940 by Conway Stewart, an English company. Black with white veins running through it, it is a favorite of pen collectors worldwide.

GS Magazine: You also collect bronze medals? What and why?

Edelbrock: I have a collection of antique and vintage swimming medals (oldest dates to 1889) – both of our kids are swimmers, so you get the connection. I also collect Olympic medals (my favorite is a 1936 Berlin Olympics Participation medal: not an athlete award but given to all participants, officials, etc.)

GS Magazine: What appeals most about the UGA campus?

How does it compare?

Edelbrock: The UGA campus has remarkable beauty and history concentrated in a small geographic area. Unlike other university campuses, the newer buildings fit in to an elegant vision of what the

campus of a great university should look like.

GS Magazine: Any southern idiosyncrasies that crack you up?

Edelbrock: There is sweetness in conversations, even with strangers, that is disarming at first, but rapidly becomes endearing. I have adjusted quickly to people calling me "Dear" or "Darling," or the like, which I have never heard anywhere else I have lived.

GS Magazine: What's on your iPod?

Edelbrock: Most frequently played: Miles Davis' album "Kind of Blue," and Coltrane's incredible, 17 minute, "My Favorite Things" from the 1963 Newport Jazz Festival.



**Carl Jordan (left) relaxes with protégé Jeffrey Stoike. Farm 255's owners mesh good fare with environmentally sustainable practices. Stoike, fellow doctoral student Jason Mann, general manager Jerid Grandinetti, Olivia Sargeant and Kate Smith are the restaurant owners. Other key figures are head chef Tamar Adler and Nick Zaroni, a business consultant.**

restaurant.

As the restaurant's doors were about to swing open Stoike's blood began to race. The normally laid-back guy took off his ball cap and ruffled his light brown hair.

The details! Crews of 10 to 20 people still swarmed over the restaurant laying tile and waxing floors.

### **Farm 255 Connects Fresh-from-the-Fare with conviviality**

Why Slow Food in a Fast-Track World? It seems counterintuitive.

Begun in 1986 by Italian Carlo Petrini, Slow Food promotes gastronomic traditions and traditional foods. The movement has 83,000 members worldwide, reconnecting with agrarian roots via farm-fresh and local fare.

Is America ready for Slow Food? "Yes," declares UGA's Jeffrey Stoike, both doctoral student and a new restaurateur. (Stoike is a Presidential Graduate Fellow, who pleasantly urges Athens diners to take their time.)

The menu at Farm 255 explains, "we exercise patience and celebrate those summer-time staples that love the heat: tomatoes, eggplants, corn, okra and the like."

Slow Food USA selected Farm 255 as one of six American restaurants for recognition at the Terra Madre Conference in Italy this fall. "While lots of folks source sustainably, none are running a farm and a restaurant in synch as we are without subsidies like Stone Barns' Rockefeller endowment," says Stoike. "This is a watershed moment of international recognition."

On a sweltering summer's day last year, Stoike and a partnership of professors and friends were set to open Farm 255. Their Athens venture melded progressive farming with the group's dreams of a unique

Stoike mentally compared the scene to an old-fashioned barn raising. Inspectors jotted notes as workers slipped aside. Health inspectors surveyed the new kitchen as someone else hung a restroom soap dispenser. Nevertheless, the fledgling group had done what observers said could not possibly happen! They had created a new restaurant from the dust and forged relationships with local growers to support their initiative in only four months.

Even detractors had to admit, the restaurant looked sleek. Replete with vaulted ceilings, upscale bar and alfresco dining, the result was impressive.

“The vision has existed amongst our group since those college days of idealism,” Stoike explains. The group included fellow student Jason Mann (PhD, '09) and four community members. Jerid Grandinetti, Kate Smith (on sabbatical from undergraduate studies) Tamar Adler and Olivia Sargeant were set to expand the Athens culinary scene with their progressive foray into Slow Food. Farm 255 was an unusual moniker for a nightspot and eatery. It refers to the venture’s farm, the Full Moon Cooperative.

A Community-Supported Agricultural program (or CSAA), Full Moon is an eight-acre plot leased from Carl Jordan, a professor at UGA’s Institute of Ecology. Jordan’s 100-acre farm, steeped in the principles of progressive and organic agriculture, initially attracted several of Farm 255’s owners to Athens. Jordan mentored the students as their ideas took form.



**At Full Moon Cooperative: “The farm is the reason I and the others ventured out this way, and is an example of agro forestry, agro ecology, silvo-pastoralism, applied ecology, social ecology...you name it,” says Stoike. Jordan (left) recently received a \$194,000 grant from Southern Sustainable Agriculture, Research and**

The students' leased field hosted organic seed-saving workshops for small-scale farmers, seminars on permaculture and an accredited UGA course called "Organic Farming and the Ethics of Sustainability." There, the co-op members practiced a no-till approach to farming. They minimized their imprint on the earth, coaxing crops to maturity without chemicals. Inside the restaurant, organic became a mantra. Diners heard recitations of how menu features reflected nature's cycles and seasons.

## **Education to assist UGA's Institute of Ecology in using shrubby perennial legumes as a way to make soil more suitable for organic farming.**

"What Jason and I are doing dovetails with our research," Stoike explains. "His in restorative agro-ecology and outreach, mine in political ecology, ethics and policy." Mann, Stoike adds, is the most dedicated to farming as a lifestyle and the business visionary.

The group pondered other components, too, considering musical, cultural and political activities to host (such as a Farm Aid event last Halloween.) Stoike weighed how best to structure the "flow of influences" significant to each.

"We are looking to make the place more of a gathering place for the community, not just a hot venue for a nice dinner or bar scene, but a place to really pass time, connect with different and like-minds, scuttlebutt, whatever. Ways that this will begin to take place include regular themed dinners with speakers on progressive matters related to food, agriculture, culture, sustainability." Mann wants to integrate Full Moon more fully by having employees of Farm 255 work in the fields or sell produce from a stand in the restaurant's courtyard.

Stoike's ideas germinated years earlier in a Berkeley co-op. Communal meals fed the students on a level he had never before experienced. "At the co-op we shopped at the Berkeley farmer's markets and made meals every night in a commercial-grade kitchen for upwards of 50 people."

Passion and tradition fused with politics when Stoike and fellow students started a catering company in the San Francisco area (home of Slow Food devotee Alice Waters, owner of Chez Panise.) The caterers created everything from chanterelle risotto to pit-cooked brisket, sourcing the foods served from collectively run farms and tiny "backyard gardens."

"Two of my Berkeley buddies, Jason and Jerid, were the first to move to Athens to farm on Professor Jordan's land." They dubbed their new co-op Full Moon. Stoike graduated and traveled before joining his friends at Full Moon. Several of them had prior experience in either catering or wine businesses and decided to gamble on a restaurant.

The partners sourced foods from area farms, inviting organic meats and vegetables. Stoike is proudest that "if they were not grown by us at Full Moon, they were grown by hands that we have shaken." The enterprise is a hit, according to reviews, and the Farm 255 concept might spread to other towns.

“Clearly, we saw the right ingredients, so to speak, here in Athens. Farming can happen anywhere, and at some point will probably need to happen almost everywhere. It would just look very different depending on the ecological and social conditions. We would take those same principles to set up shop anywhere else.”

### **The Endangered Farmlands of America**

- According to the EPA Web site, 3,000 acres of productive U.S. farmland are lost to development every day.
- Between 1974 and 2002, the number of corporate-owned U.S. farms increased by more than 46 percent.
- 82 percent of Americans are somewhat or very concerned about the decreasing number of American farms.
- 85 percent of Americans trust smaller scale family farms to produce safe, nutritious food.
- The average principal farm operator in the United States is 55.3 years old.
- According to the USDA's 2002 Census of Agriculture, 39 percent of all primary operators of U.S. farms work off the farm at least 200 days each year.

### **EDITOR'S NOTE:**

Permaculture (PERMANent agriCULTURE) stresses sustainable and harmonious interrelationship with humans, plants, animals and the earth. Source: Permaculture Connections.

No-till farming, conservation tillage and zero tillage, refer to farming without disturbing the soil by tillage.

Jeffrey Stoike has been invited to participate in a pilot project of the Panama Project. The Panama Project is designed to combine conservation and cultural principles to protect endangered sites. For further information: <http://nationalzoo.si.edu/>.

Farm 255 is open Tuesday - Sunday and is located at 255 W. Washington Street in Athens, Georgia  
Phone: 706/549-4600

The Full Moon Co-Op Web site is [www.FullMoonCoop.org](http://www.FullMoonCoop.org).