UNG Best Day Ever!
The Legacy of UNG's Gainesville Campus

Written by Bonita Jacobs, Ph.D., and Richard Oates, Ed.D.  
Illustrated by J'Nelle Short

Launching just in time for the annual Starlight Celebration, *UNG Best Day Ever!: The Legacy of UNG's Gainesville Campus* (August 28, 2021) captures the history and diversity of the lively Gainesville campus and community as seen through the eyes of a child.

Since he started school at the University of North Georgia's Gainesville campus, Ana Green's dad keeps talking about his best day ever. As the Green family prepares for the annual Starlight Celebration by touring campus and visiting Gainesville landmarks, Ana is determined to discover what makes a good day great. Will Ana make the Starlight Celebration the Best Day Ever?

In an approachable picture book format, University of North Georgia president Dr. Bonita Jacobs and Dr. Richard Oates, v-p of the Gainesville campus, explore the power of an education within a multi-generational family and in the greater community. Illustrator J'Nelle Short highlights the beauty of familiar landmarks that will inspire young readers and Gainesville natives to get outside and take pride in their city. Back matter includes a map of the campus.

The counterpart to Dahlonega's *UNG The Gold I See!*, *UNG Best Day Ever!* will be a perennial favorite on alumni family bookshelves and makes a memorable gift for Gainesville citizens, recent grads, and little Nighthawks. Better yet, every book sold supports the school you love—all proceeds from the UNG Legacy series go directly to student scholarships across all five UNG campuses!
Bonita Jacobs is president of the University of North Georgia. She took office as the 17th president of North Georgia College & State University in July 2011 as the University’s first woman president and only the second to lead one of the country’s six Senior Military Colleges. In 2014, Jacobs was named as one of the "100 Most Influential Georgians" by Georgia Trend magazine and as one of the "Top Education Leaders in Atlanta" by the Atlanta Business Chronicle in 2013 and 2014. Among her many initiatives at UNG, Dr. Jacobs' scholarship support for students has been a major priority. Her inauguration in 2013 was celebrated with the first Scholarship Gala. Since then, the UNG Foundation has raised more than $7 million for scholarships.

Richard Oates is vice president of the Gainesville Campus and Professor of Physical Education at the University of North Georgia (UNG). In 2012, Oates was recognized by the Atlanta Business Chronicle as one of the “Top 100 Leaders in Education” for the metro Atlanta area. He has served as vice president and on the Executive Board of the National Association for Kinesiology in Higher Education (NAKHE), through which he was recognized as its 2016 Distinguished Administrator and received the association's distinguished service award in 2020. He currently serves the Boy Scouts of America as a member of the Northeast Georgia Council’s Executive Committee and on the Board of Directors of the Elachee Nature Center, the Northeast Georgia YMCA, and the UNG Athletics Hall of Fame.

J'Nelle Short grew up in East Texas and attended Stephen F. Austin University where she earned her BFA. Upon graduating, she worked as a graphic artist for six years before finding her calling in education. She has been cultivating the creativity of her students for 33 years through her art classes and has been named "Teacher of the Year" six times. Short is a vibrant force in her community, serving as coordinator of the annual Veterans Day Celebration, Operation Fly-a-Flag, and Garden Club. Her art passions are many but include watercolor, graphic design, and large-scale murals. She loves life and enjoys decorating, traveling, and scuba diving.
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