This spring, Anderson and Hale secured funding from the Sue Stinson Enrichment Endowment, created by Dance Professor Emerita Sue Stinson to promote dance within a context of social justice. They're using it to develop a program they call "The Dance Lab," to create more mobile, interactive events for dance students and the public.

Anderson says it will make dance students more comfortable with letting an audience in on the process and imperfections. "In the School of Dance, we say, 'we're not afraid to fail," she says. "What you make may not look great initially, but you get some nuggets of fantastic material that you can develop."

A DRAW FOR STUDENTS

Hale, who is from Rock Hill in South Carolina, and Anderson, who is from Covington in Georgia, say they were drawn to UNCG for the chance to study a diverse array of movement styles, its rigorous academic opportunities, and the stellar faculty. "I came here for mentorship, guidance, and to become a better teacher," says Anderson.

Walton says it's important for programs like these to be student-led, balancing experience with fresh perspectives. "There's so much that students learn from the process of collaborations and project development," Walton says. "They discover they have the skillsets to do important, impactful work."

Méndez hopes more dance students will look to the Weatherspoon for inspiration. "We want to be a place where students feel welcome to collaborate with us and propose new museum programs that capitalize on their experiences and interests."



by Janet Imrick
learn more at weatherspoonart.org & vpa.uncg.edu



EXPLORING AI FOR CHILD SAFETY

Dr. Hamid Nemati, professor of information systems and supply chain management, has been studying artificial intelligence, or AI, for longer than most. He did his doctoral research on AI methods to optimize flows of items across networks. His interest in AI has only grown stronger as advances in AI technologies, including ChatGPT, have made them more widely used.

One project his team has been excited about is the use of AI methods to mitigate child abuse and maltreatment.

Hamid and Bryan alums Dr. Minoo Modaresnezhad and Dr. Yuzhang Han – his past doctoral students – tasked themselves with developing a robust AI system that could help predict child abuse when given information from the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System.

The data, which the government began collecting in the 1990s, includes detailed information about child abuse reports down to the zip code. Hamid says those in the AI space have a high interest in the use of this type of structured, detailed data collected over a prolonged period.

The prototype system their team developed could predict recurrence of child maltreatment better than any previously proposed systems. The results appear in the prestigious journal Knowledge-Based Systems.

The next steps are testing and feedback from different agencies – a tough ask when agencies are already overburdened. "What we're trying to get is a better sense of how these systems can become part of the daily routine for child protective agencies."

An extended version of this story appears in the Fall 2023 Bryan Business Report. Visit bryanbusinessreport.uncg.edu to read it and to catch up on recent research on tourism, fashion, alcohol, and the workplace.