



## An Apple a Day

BY HAYDEN FIELD | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAMIEN SALAS

While most University of Georgia students were concerned with holiday gift exchanges or trying to relax over a long-overdue vacation, Brittany Whitlock's 2012-2013 winter break focused on a revolutionary idea for a new student organization that was blossoming in her mind.

Whitlock, a sophomore biology major from Johns Creek, Ga., has always enjoyed outdoor activities like running, biking, kayaking and hiking. Joining Weight Watchers with her mom changed the way she looked at her relationship with food, but when she got to college, she yearned for a group comprised primarily of people her own age who related to her current place in life.

"The idea was that I've always had my own struggles with maintaining my health," Whitlock says. "I really love exercising, but I have problems with food like overeating and eating the wrong things. I felt like I didn't have the support I needed within UGA. I knew there were a lot of people that were on the same page as me, but there is no student-led resource. I felt like a club community would be really beneficial to all of us."

Now in its first semester as an official organization, Healthy Living at UGA is growing into the supportive, informative and engaging club that Whitlock had always envisioned.

Whitlock sat down at her computer over winter break and sent out Facebook messages to gauge potential interest in her club to a variety of different groups, such as UGA Class of 2016. "I had no idea if anyone else actually cared," she said. Lucky for Whitlock and the UGA student body, the overwhelming amount of positive responses kept pouring in.

"I saw something when I was choosing to go here that UGA was one of the healthiest universities," Whitlock says. "It's true that a lot of people are really healthy, but I found it very surprising that with that amount of people that care, there wasn't a student group for it. Going to the activities fair, there was no organization about not gaining the 'Freshman 15' advertising itself to me."

Healthy Living at UGA will not only act as a resource for incoming freshmen worried about beginning or maintaining healthy habits, but as a supportive and fun system for all UGA students looking to adopt a

healthy lifestyle in their college years. Whitlock's determined eyes and delighted smile reflect the nature of the club — serious about health, but going about living it in an interesting and enjoyable way. "We have a lot of speakers come in and talk, like Earth Fare, Rubber Sole Yoga, a belly dancer and a personal trainer," Whitlock says. "Just to connect students to all of the options they have to pursue their own interests in staying fit in Athens. It's such a health-conscious community."

Going out on a limb by determinedly pursuing her idea turned out well for Whitlock. When she returned from winter break, she and a few friends spent the semester growing interest, interviewing people and selecting an executive board. Over the summer they made a visually appealing, unique website for the organization that's full of useful resources, (<http://healthylivinguga.wix.com/home>) and hammered out the schedule.

So far, Healthy Living at UGA is a toddler in the world of campus clubs — young and still growing. The club's Facebook group already has upwards of 80 members, and weekly meetings of about 10 students make up an intimate setting that enables members to truly support each other's goals, get to know each other and participate in fun activities like spontaneous racquetball games. Members of the organization all share goals for living healthier lifestyles in college. "Health is just really important to me," Whitlock says. "I think preventative medicine is absolutely the best way to ensure your health rather than going to a doctor and having them prescribe all these medicines. Just taking care of yourself from the beginning, that's kind of where I'm coming from."

# A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO *Navigating Health*

## 8 Tips About Nutrition, Sleep, Stress and Exercise That Can Help You Through College

*In college, people have different associations with the idea of living a healthy lifestyle. Some may think it means giving up all the food they love, while others may see it as having to suddenly do crazy workouts to have a rock star body. But the truth of the matter is that being healthy is not all about eating salads everyday and having six-pack abs. Instead, thinking about living a healthier lifestyle in college challenges you to think critically about how you treat your body now and how that can affect you down the road. As we've probably all heard before, you don't reach the final destination in one giant leap, but rather, many small steps along the way. If you're up for the challenge, here are eight tips to get you started in the right direction.*

BY LAUREN PRATT | PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSEY GROSS AND LEXI DEAGEN

### 1 | Don't skip breakfast.

Not eating breakfast is unhealthy because it "starts your day in almost a deficit role," says Kisa Raye, M.Ed., an exercise physiologist and part-time health and wellness professor at the University of North Georgia. Your metabolism will not work as effectively if the body is not getting the proper nutrients it needs to start the day. This can lower your glycemic index, or blood sugar levels, causing you to become tired or have low energy. According to Thomas D. Fahey, Paul M. Insel and Walton T. Roth's book, "Fit and Well," foods containing a high glycemic index could lead to a higher risk of diabetes or heart disease. In the same way that cars need fuel to run properly, our bodies need food in the morning to get our metabolism going and have energy for the rest of the day because "your body works better if it's fed on very rigid intervals during the day," says Raye.



### 2 | The cost of eating healthy is worth the long-term effects.

Whether students don't think they have enough time to make healthier meals, it's too expensive or they just don't like the way healthier food tastes, being disciplined to eat right takes a certain amount of planning and sacrifice. "The biggest thing that anybody can do is plan and be realistic with what their food choices are," says Raye. Don't just force-feed healthy food to yourself that you can't enjoy. Instead, find things that you know you typically enjoy and seek out a healthy version of that. Fruits, nuts and protein bars are all good examples of a healthy snack option that you can take on the go. While eating healthier can also be more expensive in some cases, it is important to first assess how much you are spending on other items and decide if you may need to cut certain excess costs to buy healthy food. "I like to encourage people to look at how much money they spend eating out," says Brooks, "and then take some of that money they spend eating out and put it towards buying real food at the grocery store and they'll find that they probably save money by making food at home in the long run." She also says, "You can make a good meal for five dollars or less." For a college student trying to salvage every penny they have, this should come as great news. For more specific ways to buy on a budget you can go to [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) and click on the tab "Healthy Eating On a Budget."