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FEATURED

Albany State students take part in learn-to-hunt program

By Georgia Wildlife Federation

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Eleven Albany State University students received firearms training recently at the Flint River Skeet & Trap Club by members of the community as part of the Georgia Wildlife Federation's Academics Afield program.

Special Photo: Georgia Wildlife Federation

ALBANY — Eleven Albany State University students received firearms training recently at the Flint River Skeet & Trap Club by members of the community. The following day, six of those students went on a guided hunt with the Georgia Wildlife Federation's Academics Afield program.

Coach Dan Land and Valerie Wallace from ASU joined as academic advisors, and Quail Forever's Jennifer Ward volunteered her time assisting hunters. The hunt, hosted at Quail Country by property owners Tracy and Kay Hatfield, was successful with two squirrels being harvested. Afterward, students were taught to field dress their harvests and were offered a meal with game meat.

The Academics Afield Program is a learn-to-hunt program aimed at introducing college students with a non-hunting background to hunting and shooting sports. The program is currently established at four colleges in Georgia and many more throughout the United States.

"Passing along hunting knowledge to the next generation preserves the tradition and ensures a source of funding for conservation," Coral Minchey with the Georgia Wildlife Federation said in a news release. "Many of these students would not have pursued hunting without the Academics Afield workshop."



Over the last few decades, the number of active hunters has declined, leading to a decrease in funds available for conservation efforts. Learn-to-hunt programs enable non-hunters to get the support and education needed to become a hunter. In turn, this increases the number of licenses and ammunition purchased and contributes to the funds available for state wildlife management.

College students are excellent candidates for this program because their recreation levels peak and they desire to try new hobbies. College students also have financial flexibility, and they begin to build their life-long identities.

Academics Afield programming is supported by the GA R3 Initiative; National Shooting Sports Foundation; Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's Outdoor Fund, and grant No. F22AP00937 from the Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration Programs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



Carlton Fletcher

