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# ATHENS BANNER-HERALD

THURSDAY, JULY 9, 2026 | ONLINEATHENS.COM

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## Program gives struggling artists \$1,000 a month



A few commissions, contracts, sales or cancellations can dramatically change what artists earn in a given year.

GETTY IMAGES

### The result: freedom and time to focus on their art

**Joanna Woronkovicz**  
Indiana University  
**and Doug Noonan**  
Indiana University Indianapolis  
THE CONVERSATION

Though artificial intelligence is making it easier than ever to produce images, music and text, the technology is also making it harder for the people who have traditionally produced this work to earn a living.

A photographer who once was commissioned to make art for an advertising campaign is now competing with graph-

**The program selected artists through a weighted lottery. It adopted an expansive definition of "artist." Anyone engaged in artistic, cultural or community-centered creative practices – such as musicians, storytellers or muralists – was eligible to apply.**

ics produced by the AI image generator Midjourney. A novelist who used to make money on the side as a technical writer is seeing that work be replaced by a series of prompts in ChatGPT.

The extent to which AI will upend creative work remains unsettled. But that uncertainty has made guarantee-

ing income for creatives a more viable policy idea.

In fact, creatives in New York recently participated in the largest basic income program for artists in U.S. history, the Guaranteed Income for

**See PROGRAM, Page 3A**

## UGA lands key leader for school of nursing

**Wayne Ford**  
Athens Banner-Herald  
USA TODAY NETWORK

The University of Georgia announced recently that Laika Steiger was hired as senior associate dean for administration and operations for the Victoria Kay Ivester School of Nursing, which was established last year.

Steiger was formerly the associate dean of clinical practice operations and executive director of the Emory Nursing Learning Center at Emory University.

She will work toward launching the school's Bachelor of Science in nursing and oversee other aspects from finance to accreditation, according to UGA.

"Laika has spent her career building the kind of programs and partnerships that bridge higher education and healthcare delivery, and she does it with rare judgment and heart. Landing her as my partner in leadership was an early win for this school, and I could

**See STEIGER, Page 2A**

## Rain helps GA recover, but dry risks linger

**Erica Van Buren**  
Augusta Chronicle  
USA TODAY NETWORK

After an extended drought that began in May, a trend experts say is linked to climate change, conditions have improved in some Georgia counties, while others remain in severe drought.

Thomas Barrett, forest protection chief with the Georgia Forestry Commission, said recent rainfall has eased drought conditions and reduced wildfire risk.

"For us in Georgia, at least, after all the rain that we've gotten over the last month and a half or so, our potential has gone way down," Barrett said.

**See RAIN, Page 2A**

## Colorado man wanted for attempted murder in April caught in Athens

**Wayne Ford**  
Athens Banner-Herald  
USA TODAY NETWORK

Athens-Clarke police recently assisted the FBI in the arrest of a Colorado man wanted as a fugitive on an attempted murder charge in that state, according to a recently released report.

The suspect, Gohjan Sierra-Delgado, 25, was arrested early on the morning of

June 27 at a business on West Broad Street, according to police.

Police booked the suspect into the Clarke County Jail on a fugitive from justice charge with a hold for Aurora, Colorado, and a hold for the Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency.

Police said the suspect was arrested without incident. At the time of his arrest, the suspect was residing in a duplex neighborhood off Commerce Road.

Aurora Police Department Public Information Officer Joe Moylan said Tuesday that the charge stems from an April 20 shooting of a 27-year-old man, who sustained a non-life threatening gunshot wound.

The suspect and victim knew each other. The department's fugitive squad developed information that Sierra-Delgado was in Athens, which led to his arrest, according to Moylan.



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