

Sophia Dillard

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

- Georgia State University student with extensive experience in program development, operations, research, and community engagement. Skilled at building systems, coordinating cross-functional teams, managing complex workflows, and creating people-centered experiences. Brings strong communication, project execution, and learning agility to mission-driven organizations.

EXPERIENCE

Beverage and Front-of-House Program Developer

2023 – December 2025

Perennial Restaurant

Montgomery, AL

- Developed a hyper-local, hyper-seasonal, and low-waste front-of-house and bar program centered on sustainability and community partnerships.
- Collaborated with educators from Auburn University at Montgomery's Kinesiology Department to deepen understanding of nutritional benefits and educate guests on the health impact of locally sourced food systems.
- Conducted statewide research on small farms, producers, and purveyors, integrating findings into menu development and guest education.
- Provided ongoing educational programming for staff and guests, crafted original beverage recipes, and supported the restaurant's mission of environmentally conscious hospitality.

General Manager

2020 – 2022

Omakase Table (Resident Pop-Up at Brush Sushi Izakaya and Silom Thai and Sushi)

Atlanta, GA

- Oversaw daily operations and developed the full front-of-house program for a high-touch, reservation-driven dining concept.
- Curated beverage pairings for a daily rotating menu, integrating research on Japanese beverages and guest experience design.
- Built sustainable systems, managed cross-functional communication, trained staff, and supported the concept's growth with a focus on hospitality, workflow efficiency, and team leadership.

Wine Program Manager and Purchaser

2022 – 2023

ChopShop

Atlanta, GA

- Led the strategy, procurement, and curation of a diverse wine program for both retail and events.
- Built vendor relationships, managed inventory, and analyzed sales trends to optimize offerings.
- Designed and facilitated engaging tasting experiences, strengthening community engagement and customer education.

Server and Bartender

2018 – 2019

Brush Sushi Izakaya

Atlanta, GA

- Developed expertise in craft cocktails, wine, sake, and espresso beverages in a high-volume, quality-driven environment.
- Created beverage pairings for rotating tasting menus and contributed creative programming, including hosting a themed ATL Anime Night pop-up to engage diverse guest communities.

Bartender and Manager

2018 – 2019

Spoon Eastside

Atlanta, GA

- Managed nightly financial closings and supported operational decision-making in a fast-paced environment.
- Delivered high-volume bartending service while fostering open communication across the team to streamline workflows.
- Led training sessions focused on skill-building, service standards, and teamwork.

Additional Bartending and Service Experience

Atlanta, GA

- Poor Hendrix (Michelin Guide 2023), Atlanta | 2021-2022
- The Chastain (Michelin Green Star 2023), Atlanta | 2021
- Grindhouse Killer Burgers, Atlanta | 2016-2018
- Legacy Catering Events / Ventanas, Atlanta | 2014-2016
- Max's Coal Oven Pizza, Atlanta | 2013-2016
- Gained extensive high-volume bartending experience with a focus on craft beer, small-batch whiskey, and spirits. Trained under Atlanta's first Michelin-awarded sommelier, strengthening beverage knowledge and service technique.
- Adapted quickly to new environments during off-site catering events, executing synchronized service and maintaining client satisfaction at large-scale events, weddings, and corporate functions.

ACTIVITIES & LEADERSHIP

Tabling Volunteer, Visual Arts Department, Alabama State University

2024-2025

Volunteer

- Assisted with public outreach and student engagement by tabling for the Visual Arts Department at campus events and the Fall Festival at the Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts.

Children's Educational Workshop Volunteer

2024-2025

Volunteer

- Supported and led interactive educational activities for children during fundraising events for a children's museum over two consecutive years. Contributed to event setup, workshop facilitation, and donor engagement.

Art and Wellness Festival Volunteer, Alabama State University

Volunteer

- Facilitated children's educational activities and community programming at ASU's Art and Wellness Festival, supporting family engagement and creative learning.

Migrant Support Program Gift Sale Volunteer

Volunteer

- Assisted in organizing and running a charitable gift sale to raise funds for a Migrant Support Program, including merchandising, event flow, and donor interaction. (Chicago, IL)

CORE (Community Organized Relief Effort)

2020

COVID-19 Testing Support Volunteer

- Conducted patient intake for free COVID-19 testing, including verifying identification, collecting and entering medical and demographic information, confirming symptoms and exposure history, and ensuring accuracy of data for clinical staff. Supported patient flow, assisted with screening protocols, and collaborated with medical personnel to maintain safe and efficient site operations. (Atlanta, GA)

Studio Assistant, Visual Art Department, Alabama State University

Studio Assistant to Philip Jasen

- Assisted with fabrication of set pieces for The Nutcracker and Nina Simone performances at Alabama State University.

Puppeteer Volunteer, ALIEEP Performance "Love Over Hate"

2025

Puppeteer

- Participated as a puppeteer in the ALIEEP performance Love Over Hate at Troy University's Davis Theater, contributing to an educational and community-centered arts production. (Montgomery, AL)

Teacher's Assistant, Paideia School Summer Camp

2014

Teacher's Assistant

- Supported classroom activities for 4- and 5-year-old campers, assisting with learning stations, creative projects, group play, and daily routines while ensuring a safe and engaging environment.

SKILLS

Program and Project Management: Workflow coordination, Training and development, Cross-functional collaboration, Process improvement, Scheduling, Event coordination

Communication and Education: Guest and consumer education, Public engagement, Staff training, Curriculum-style programming, Community outreach, Workshop facilitation

Research and Analysis: Field research, Sourcing research, Trend analysis, Qualitative observation, Documentation, Information synthesis

Operations and Administration: Inventory management, Financial closings, Data entry, POS systems, Intake processes, Logistics, Vendor coordination

Creative and Technical: Recipe development, Curriculum support, Writing, Set fabrication assistance, Problem-solving, Adaptability

AWARDS & HONORS

- Published Writer, The Polishing Cloth (Georgia State University literary publication), 2025

EDUCATION

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA

Bachelor of Science, Chemistry.