

# Taking Flight

April 2014

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# Taking Flight – April 2014 Edition

## Message from the Dean

As we approach the spring commencement, our College, along with many of our programs and Departments, has been honoring the graduates, the various award recipients, and those students who have earned special honors. As dean, it's been my honor and pleasure to speak to many of these groups and to meet with many of these students.

I've been impressed with their accomplishments; rest assured, our best students are as good as any, anywhere in the world. But I've also been impressed by some other things, less tangible, but more telling, than grades. Our students are a focused and hard-working lot. Many have double-majored, worked internships, or held jobs, while completing their degrees. They're ambitious, with solid plans for the future. Many have already begun their careers, or they've made plans to further their educations. Finally, I've been impressed with their grace and humility. They are more than just good students; they are good people. And they reflect well on the College, the faculty, and the alumni.

So, on behalf of the College of Business, I say to our graduates, our honor students, our award-winners, and our high-achievers, "Congratulations. We are very proud of you; keep up the good work."



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## Alumni Spotlight: Travis and Sharon Hester

Travis (MBA, 2008) and Sharon Hester have shared a passion for mathematics since they found themselves seated next to each other in a sixth grade math class. After careers in business (Travis) and education (Sharon) and raising three children, they recognized the need for supplemental education. They made some phone calls and researched the different supplemental education providers and decided to open a Mathnasium in Columbus. Travis serves as the franchise's general manager and Sharon as the center director.



Because future jobs are going to be more technologically advanced, the couple believes the need for students with solid math skills is great. Unfortunately, recent studies show that U.S. students are falling behind in math education. In fact, recently, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) ranked U.S. math students 26th out of 34 countries participating in the 2012 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Travis says that it is critical that our students

not fall behind in math education as much of the basic foundations of engineering, medicine, and architecture among other fields is mathematics. "You really can't go into any field without going through math in some way," he adds.

A good tutor must understand how the learner thinks. The only way to build and teach is to understand what it is that the learner already knows. According to Travis, the first step to succeeding as a tutor is figuring out how students process what they have been taught. A good tutor pauses to be sure the student has understood what has been taught and, if not, finds another way to present the material. Travis and Sharon believe the Mathnasium concept of teach and move on works perfectly in the one-on-one session environment the learning center provides. To counteract any negative connotations their students may have about learning math, Travis and Sharon tell them that learning math is like going to the gym for the brain. They even call their students "mathletes."

Travis and Sharon hope Mathnasium will help Columbus-area students succeed in the technology-driven future workforce by providing them with the necessary tools accomplish their goals.

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### **Georgia Southern College of Business Hosted International Visitors during the Savannah Council on World Affairs**

The Georgia Southern College of Business, through the North American Mobility Program, hosted Dr. Katia Romero, professor of economics, and Dr. Arturo Bocardo, department chair of economics, from the University of Veracruz (Universidad Veracruzana) during the week of April 14, 2014, in conjunction with the Savannah Council on World Affairs held on Thursday, April 17, 2014.



On Wednesday, April 16, Dr. Romero and Dr. Bocardo-Valle toured the Georgia Southern University campus and concluded their day meeting with and speaking to the Georgia Southern College of Business student organization, the Economics Club. On Thursday, the two professors completed their campus tour with a visit to City Campus and traveled to Savannah to speak at the Savannah Council on World Affairs. The program topic was "Mexico- Two Facets of a Complex State." Drs. Romero and Bocardo addressed renewable energy in Mexico and social and economic implications, respectively. Friday, April 18, the pair concluded their visit to South Georgia meeting College of Business faculty on campus and participated in a research seminar, "The Economy of Mexico's Southern Border," given by Drs. Greg Brock and Constantin Ogloblin from the College of Business.

The University of Veracruz is located in Xalapa, the capital of the Mexican state, Veracruz and has strong ties to the port of Veracruz, the largest city in Veracruz and Mexico's largest port. The state of Veracruz also has the region's largest oil refinery in Latin America. Dr. Greg Brock, professor of

economics, has connections with both Drs. Romero and Bocardo. Both professors helped Dr. Brock and his wife on visits to the University of Veracruz in 2007 and 2010, the latter of which was when Dr. Brock was a Fulbright Scholar.

The Georgia Southern College of Business was excited to host Drs. Romero and Bocardo-Valle. The North American Mobility Program is an initiative funded by the U.S. Department of Education to explore public policy issues in Mexico, Canada, and the United States. For more information about the presentation by Drs. Romero and Bocardo-Valle, please contact Angie Threatte at 912.478.2570 or [athreatte@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:athreatte@georgiasouthern.edu).

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### **Georgia Southern City Campus Hosted Entrepreneur Guest Speaker Hannah Davis of BANGS Shoes**

On Wednesday, April 9, 2014, the Georgia Southern City Campus hosted an entrepreneurial speaker, Hannah Davis, in the College of Engineering and Information Technology. She discussed her inspiring journey to having her own shoe company and brand. Hannah Davis is a young entrepreneur whose brand, "BANGS," focuses on humanitarian efforts and contributing to global sustainable change. All students were encouraged to learn from Davis's real life entrepreneurial lessons and successes.



The brand "BANGS" was inspired and originates from the Chinese character that translates, "to help." This company's philosophy is to invest in long-term sustainable change and to change the way consumers think about social development. "BANGS" is partnered with 6 different non-profit organizations that have made it their mission to contribute to sustainable change. Each colored pair of shoes represents support of the mission of a certain partner and non-profit organization, and 20 percent of net profit is donated. Such partners and non-profit organizations help to build wells and sanitation systems in Africa, keep financially disadvantaged students reading all summer, alleviate poverty, and more.

Hannah Davis's goal is to "stand on issues" as she grows her company and brand globally. The Georgia Southern City Campus was proud to host Davis as an entrepreneur guest speaker for students to ask questions and absorb knowledge on what it is like to be a successful entrepreneur. This event is another example of how the Georgia Southern City Campus works to equip entrepreneurs in an effort to create more jobs for a more sustainable economy. For more information or further inquiries, please email Suzanne Hallman, business advisor, at [shallman@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:shallman@georgiasouthern.edu).

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## Logistics Roundtable

On February 25th, the Georgia Southern Logistics Association (GSLA) and logistics faculty hosted the 5th GSLA Logistics Roundtable at the Nessmith-Lane Conference Center. GSLA is a student organization advised by Drs. Monique Murfield and Chris Boone, both assistant professors of logistics at Georgia Southern University.

Drs. Murfield and Boone worked with GSLA student officers to host the Logistics Roundtable, which drew 185 students and 46 managers from 21 companies, all seeking to hire logistics students. Companies included Target, CH Robinson, Norfolk Southern, CSX, Exel, Philips Van Heusen, JB Hunt, R&L Global, Dollar Tree, Frito-Lay, SAIA, CL Services, and Total Quality Logistics. Managers first participated in panel discussions during which students had opportunities to ask questions related to preparing for and beginning careers in logistics. Then, managers and students were given the opportunity for more informal and individualized networking. Many students used this event to make connections for interviews for internships and full-time career opportunities.

Finally, as part of the GSLA Logistics Roundtable, Drs. Karl Manrodt and Steve Rutner hosted the first Faculty Forum, at which managers were given the opportunity to have a dialogue with faculty on curriculum, expectations of students upon graduation, and issues in the industry for which Georgia Southern College of Business logistics students should be prepared. Together, all of the logistics faculty and students were very excited by the success of this event, which has grown 113 percent in the last two years.



GSLA Officers (l-r): Rob Smith, Trent Turner, Adam Murfield, Annie Butler, and Ryan Rakestraw.

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## College of Business Scholarship Awards Luncheon

On April 5, the College of Business hosted its first Awards Luncheon and Banquet at the Performing Arts Center. The event honored College of Business scholarship donors and scholarship recipients. Several Departments within the College held receptions for their scholarship recipients on campus. The Department of Economics & Finance recognized its scholarship recipients at City Campus in downtown Statesboro, while the Department of Marketing & Logistics and the Department of Information Systems recognized their scholars within the College of Business and the College of Engineering and Information Technology, respectively.



Front row (l-r): Landon Lotnam, Bryan Flores; Back row (l-r): Eric Salazzo, Jeremy Hull, Ryan Landers, Sean Underwood



Please view the Thank You video produced for our scholarship donors at [coba.georgiasouthern.edu/donate](http://coba.georgiasouthern.edu/donate).

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## **Georgia Southern Hosts Consul of Belgium During Economic Development Tour**

As part of The Savannah Region International Economic Development Tour hosted by the World Trade Center Savannah and Georgia Power, Genevieve Verbeek, the Consul General at the Consulate General of Belgium in Atlanta, visited campus on Thursday, March 27, where she met with University President Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D., Charles Patterson, Ph.D., vice president for Research & Economic Development, and representatives from the Development Authority of Bulloch County.

During her visit, Verbeek toured the College of Business Administration and enjoyed a program at the Center for Wildlife Education. Dean Allen Amason commented, "Globalization is a key driver of economic development and growth, and Georgia Southern is positioned to become a prominent player in the world of international business. So it makes sense that the Consuls General of Belgium and Nigeria would want to visit our campus and meet with our faculty. As I sat and listened, while topics like professional education, student exchanges, and career opportunities in international business were discussed, I was impressed by the scope of the opportunity and by the range of our expertise. I look forward to seeing the College of Business increase its investment and its footprint in the world of international business."

Verbeek was appointed Consul General of Belgium in Atlanta in 2012. With jurisdiction over the Southeastern states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, and Tennessee, she also serves 5,000 Belgian nationals and represents and promotes Belgian interests, trade, and investments. As Consul General, she works to foster cultural and academic exchanges.

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(l-r): Cameron Sutcliffe, Chris Schwing, Ron Payne, Gary Glover, Carlyle Hall, Danielle Anderson, Brandon Edwards



From left: Charles Patterson, Ph.D., vice president for Research & Economic Development; Phoebe Alazie, civil servant; Genevieve Verbeek, consul general at the Consulate General of Belgium in Atlanta; Georgia Southern University President Brooks A. Keel, Ph.D. and Kathy Oxford, international trade specialist at Georgia Department of Economic Development.

## **8th Annual Georgia Southeastern Regional Community Bank Symposium hosted by the Center for Excellence in Financial Services**

The Center for Excellence in Financial Services, along with the Georgia Southern University College of Business, hosted the 8th Annual Georgia Southeastern Regional Community Bank Symposium on Thursday, April 3 from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm at Forest Heights Country Club in Statesboro. The Georgia Bankers Association and the Georgia Southern College of Business were co-sponsors of the event.



Front row (l-r): Troy Hoskovee, Sarah Gleissle, Christopher Byron, Devon Jameson, Melissa Biemal, Brad Conyers  
Back row (l-r): Brian Bright, Michael Mattus, Zach Tatum, Michael Dean, Steve Wise, Thomas Dujenski, Edward Sibbald, Allen Amason

During the conference, Joe Brannen, president and CEO of the Georgia Bankers Association; Roger Tutterow, professor of economics at Mercer University; Rob Cochran, CFO for the Brand Banking Company; Omar Esposito, senior relationship manager with the Federal Home Loan Bank; and Thomas Hinkel, vice president and director of Compliance Services at Safe Systems presented on various topics ranging from the economic outlook and loan demand in Southeastern Georgia to technology and retail banking. Thomas Dujenski, FDIC regional director-Atlanta; Kevin Hagler, the commissioner of the Georgia Department of Banking and Finance in Atlanta; Joel Palmer, assistant deputy comptroller in the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency in Atlanta; and Steve Wise, vice president- Community Bank Supervision of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta, participated in a panel discussion on regulatory perspectives.

Edward H. Sibbald, director of the Center for Excellence in Financial Services at Georgia Southern stated, "Our annual Symposium addresses issues and challenges that are current, relevant, and timely for community bankers. The focus this year will be on interest rate risks and issues surrounding the use of innovative technology to provide retail banking services. These topics replace credit issues for the first time in five years—a very positive sign that the worst is over in terms of loan defaults and bankers are once again setting their sights on promising future initiatives."

The Center for Excellence in Financial Services is a business center within the College of Business. The Center provides services to financial service companies, as well as business and civic associations involved in banking, risk management, insurance, and financial planning. In addition, the Center assists in student career planning and placement upon graduation.

The Center seeks to provide community banks with services in four broad areas: industry information services and custom-designed training for bank management and board of directors; performance consulting services in areas of financial assessment, revenue enhancement, asset and liability management, strategic planning, and risk management; regulatory examination preparation assistance in terms of developing effective, streamlined strategic plans, risk management analysis and reporting programs, and compliance assessment; and applied situational research and market share analysis. The Georgia Bankers Association is the trade and professional organization

representing the interests of banks and thrift institutions in the state of Georgia. Virtually every institution is a member.

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### **College of Business Says Farewell to Retirees**

On April 3, the 2014 Retirees Recognition Ceremony was held at the Builders of the University Terrace. During the ceremony, four College of Business faculty and staff were recognized: Dr. Donna Fisher, Ms. Vicki King, Dr. M. Jill Lockwood, and Dr. Harry R. Wright, Jr. The College of Business will miss each of these people who contributed to the success of the College. We wish them the best in their future endeavors.



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### **Business at the Ballpark: College of Business Baseball Game Day**

On April 12, the Georgia Southern Eagles hosted The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. The baseball game was designated as the first annual College of Business, Business at the Ballpark. Allen Amason, our dean, along with the commissioner of the Sunbelt Conference, threw the first pitch, and College of Business students participated in the on-field promotions during the game. College of Business students, faculty, and staff all received free admission to the game, and, our alumni were able to purchase discounted tickets at \$5 per ticket. We look forward to continuing this new tradition.



Dean Allen Amason, right, throwing the first pitch of the 10-5 Eagle win over UNC-Greensboro.

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### **The Georgia Southern College of Business Advanced Sales Team Competes in the 16th Annual National Collegiate Sales Competition**

The Georgia Southern University College of Business Sales Centers' Advanced Sales Team competed in the 16th Annual National Collegiate Sales Competition (NCSC) during the weekend of March 28 – 31 at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw. The College of Business team of 13 marketing students competed in several categories.



Front row (l-r): Melanie Weisman, Sydney Perry, Caitlyn Loudy, Ali Smith, Nicole Clewis, Kelly Kraft  
Back row (l-r): Caleb Hughes, Nico Drolet, Chris Moore, Austin Younker, Josh Roe, Anna Ligon, Mike Kayler, Linda Mullen



This year, the NCSC hosted 65 universities from around the country to compete in 6 rounds of competition, divided into undergraduate and graduate competitions. The top 50 teams to place in the competition are always invited back to the competition the following year. Our Georgia Southern College of Business Advanced Sales Team will be returning to compete in 2015.

Also during the weekend, students had the opportunity to meet with nationally recognized sales firms, interview, and secure jobs with these top US companies. Several of our students will be continuing the interview process with companies who were in attendance at the sales competition.

The National Collegiate Sales Competition began in 1999 and is the largest and oldest sales role-play competition. The purpose of the NCSC is to enhance the practice of professionalism within the sales profession. It hosts the top collegiate sales teams and faculty from the leading University Sales Programs in North America.

For more information about the Advanced Sales Team, contact Linda Mullen at [lmullen@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:lmullen@georgiasouthern.edu).

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## **Belk Day**

Wednesday, April 16, 2014 was touted Belk Day at the Georgia Southern College of Business. Representatives from Belk visited the College to speak to several classes during the day. Originally, Belk Day was slated for Wednesday, February 12, however, due to the second winter storm of the season, it had to be cancelled and rescheduled.

The College of Business welcomed the following Belk representatives: Amanda Varnadore (MKT, 2009), recruiting manager; Daphne Folsom (MKT, 2004), assistant store manager; and Brandy Lewis, sales team manager. During their campus visit, these representatives visited two principles of retailing classes, an intro to business class, a retail store management class, and spoke to a general assembly of students and faculty. During their presentations, they spoke to students about Belk's history, culture, giving back to the community, and career opportunities. Many students asked questions regarding Belk's internship programs, which consist of store and corporate internships in the fields of management, buying/planning, and finance and accounting. They even previewed the "Belk Store of the Future" video, which spoke of a new shopping experience for customers in the coming years. This retail segment, called omni-channel retailing, ensures a consistent shopping experience for the customer, from online to brick and mortar shopping. Its emphasis is a personalized brand experience.

After the general assembly presentation, the College of Business hosted a lunch for the Belk representatives and students interested in pursuing careers with Belk. Students were able to speak



(l-r) Amanda Varnadore, Brandy Lewis, Daphne Folsom

personally to each representative about Belk career opportunities and their experiences with the company.

We thank Belk for its continued partnership and look forward to having Belk representatives on campus in the future.

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