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Summer 2006

## Georgia Southern Magazine

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# GEORGIA SOUTHERN

SUMMER 2006 • VOLUME 8 • NUMBER 3 • WWW.GEORGIASOUTHERN.EDU



The theater is the **Capital of the South.**

The campaigns include enrollment, fundraising and building top-of-mind awareness.

# Atlan**ta** MATTERS

Among the University's key objectives for Century Two:  
To make Atlanta a truly **Southern** town.



# To Our ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

We were thrilled this summer to welcome the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra to the stage of the Performing Arts Center (PAC). The June 29 concert, featuring the music of Borodin, Saint-Saens and Tchaikovsky marked the ASO's first visit to our campus, and we look forward to many more over the coming years.

The PAC continues to shine as a regional resource. Director Albert Peralion and his staff are to be congratulated for their ongoing work to create so many memorable occasions at Georgia Southern.

The ASO concert was yet another example of the thriving relationship between the University and the institutions, employers, and people of Greater Atlanta. More than 40 percent of our incoming freshmen are from that market, and more than 12,000 Georgia Southern alumni live and work there.

For many of our alumni, professional pursuits in Greater Atlanta are seeded by significant opportunities they experienced as Georgia Southern students. You can always find our interns and co-op students on assignments in the halls of state and local government and the offices of Fortune 500 companies. Broadcasting majors Suzanne Milton, of Tifton, Ga., and Kimberly Keys, of College Park, Ga., for instance, just served as interns on the staff of Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin. From the Communication Arts Department alone, more than 50 students interned in Greater Atlanta this summer, at places like Georgia Power, the Cobb and Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and some of the area's top PR firms.

The benefits of our many partnerships are two-way. A great case in point is in our College of Information Technology, which for the past five years has provided software development services to NCR Corp.'s Retail Solutions Group, headquartered in Duluth.

Georgia Southern students, with their faculty mentors, develop the software that drives many models of NCR's highly interactive digital cash registers. Dean Jim Bradford says NCR's recent internal evaluation showed that the Georgia Southern product is the highest quality software the company has obtained from any of its outsourcing partners. Additionally, the last Georgia Southern release was beta-tested at Graceland, in Tennessee, and can now be found on cash registers in such places as the U.S. Senate Dining Room in Washington, D.C., CIA Headquarters, and even the Kyoto Express restaurant in Statesboro. The entrepreneurial relationship with NCR provided a model for our student-faculty software development enterprise, Eagle Informatics, and it now boasts eight corporate clients.

Georgia Southern has done great things to build its relationships within Greater Atlanta and will, particularly through our Alumni Association, work to strengthen the ties that bind our burgeoning community of graduates there.

Bruce Grube, president



*The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra made its first visit to the Performing Arts Center on June 29th.*

FRANK FORTUNE

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## » 16 Why Atlanta matters

It's home to thousands of alumni, the leading supplier of students and the center of state power and influence. Atlanta is focus of strategies driving the growth-mode university.



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# Doctorate in clinical psychology approved

A University doctoral degree in clinical psychology – the only one of its kind in the state – has been approved by the Board of Regents.

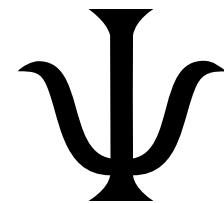
The Regents have okayed the development of a Psy.D., a practitioner's degree designed to train professionals to provide direct mental health services.

"This new applied doctoral degree not only fits perfectly with Georgia Southern's mission, it will also meet the mental health needs of underserved populations living in the rural areas in Georgia," said University President Bruce Grube. "These graduate students will be doing clinical practice and internships here, and some will likely remain in Southeast Georgia for their professional lives."

"There's been greater demand for the Psy.D. in recent years as the growing need for mental health practitioners has become apparent," said psychology department Chair John Murray. "The American Psychological Association (APA) accredits the Psy.D., so as the program grows we will move toward that credential."

The new degree will admit students who have earned a bachelor's degree, and will require a five-year commitment – four in the classroom and in practica, and one in internship. The program will begin in fall

*"In today's rural setting, a psychologist not only offers mental health treatment, but also provides referrals to social services and works with state, county and church-based agencies. We are preparing people to make other people's mental health better. They will be doing really honorable work."*



**John Murray**  
chair, Department of Psychology

2007 with approximately five students, then will grow incrementally as more students are added each year.

When the program is fully operating, approximately eight students will earn the degree each year.

"There has been a paradigm shift in mental health services in recent years," said Murray, "and this degree will reflect that change. In today's rural setting, a psychologist not only offers mental health treatment, but also provides referrals to social services and works with state, county and church-based agencies. We are preparing people to make other people's mental health better. They will

be doing really honorable work."

Georgia Southern has offered the Doctor of Education Degree (Ed.D) through its College of Education, but the Psy.D represents its first doctorate outside of the educational field and will be offered through the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

In development over the past decade at the University, the Psy.D. degree is differentiated from the Ph.D. by its practical nature.

"The Ph.D. in clinical psychology prepares people to teach psychology," said Murray. "The Psy.D. prepares people to go into the world and make a difference in the lives of people with mental health needs."

## Carnegie Foundation boosts University to Doctoral/Research rank

Georgia Southern has passed a major milestone along its institutional journey to national distinction with its re-classification by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching from Master's I to Doctoral/Research University ranking.

Carnegie classifies American universities according to their primary functions. It began classifying universities in 1970, and has revised its rankings at least once per decade since then.

"To join the ranks of America's research universities is an important affirmation of the unfolding story of Georgia Southern," said University President Bruce Grube. "We are awarding an increasing number of doctorates,

and our excellent instruction includes more and more opportunities for research and public service," he added.

While many universities have focused on growth in recent years, Grube noted that Georgia Southern has combined its growth strategy with a commitment to higher quality.

"High-caliber academics and research opportunities that include students, often undergraduates, working side by side with faculty mentors will continue to set us apart."

Other Georgia institutions within the Carnegie research university classification are Emory University, Georgia Tech, the

University of Georgia and Georgia State University.

The change in Georgia Southern's designation will not result in a change of sector or a change in designation by the University System of Georgia. The Carnegie designation serves a broader national purpose for classification. USG's classification of Georgia Southern as a regional university relates to budget, tuition and other system-wide issues.

"We have crossed the halfway mark in our 10-year campaign for national distinction," Grube observed. "Research university recognition is truly gratifying to our dedicated faculty and staff members who work incredibly hard to move Georgia Southern forward."

# Saving dollars

## Decline in sand dollar population concerns Georgia Southern researcher Sophie George

Summer in the coastal Southeast has brought thousands of people to their favorite oceanfront destinations.

For some, a trip to the beach isn't complete without gathering a few sand dollars from the shore, but University biologist Sophie George encourages people to use discretion when they are collecting their souvenirs.

"Many visitors to the beach do not realize that taking live sand dollars threatens the species," George said.

She has been studying the sand dollar population on Tybee Island, east of Savannah. Unfortunately, most sand dollars are taken during the summer months, which is when they are reproducing.

"Because sand dollars look so unusual, a lot of people don't realize that they are alive," George said. "They get their velvety appearance from tiny spines and tube feet that are used in respiration, feeding and movement."

Sand dollars live on sandy bottoms in shallow water, so that they can burrow into the sand for protection. They can be found year-round, but they tend to appear in large numbers on beaches during the winter, spring and summer months.

"By removing large individuals, you are



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDREAS NEUMANN

affecting future population size," she said. "We can tell this by comparing sand dollars from sites easily accessible by car with those that can only be reached by boat.

"Over the last 10 years, I have observed

a decline in the adult population and a decrease in the size of large individuals in the Tybee Island population. This is quite evident when you compare Tybee to, say, Wassau Island."

## Glassblowing melds art and science to meet a need



Chemistry student Sarah Higgins from Cumming, Ga., creates a glass apparatus.

As hard as a select group of chemistry students is trying to learn how to make their own scientific equipment, they keep blowing it.

University chemistry students have been learning the art and science of scientific glassblowing – the process of making glassware by heating pre-formed glass pieces and then shaping them into laboratory equipment when the glass is soft.

Generally, the equipment they make cannot be found in catalogs.

The glassblower uses a plastic tube to blow into a corked glass piece as it is formed to the needed shape and function.

The class, offered every spring, has students

start by making simple objects and working their way up to bending t-tubes and finally a condenser to distill liquids.

"The techniques are quite difficult because of the precision and care needed," said chemistry professor Norman Schmidt. "To make an 'A' in the class, the condenser has to work without leaking." The class has gained in popularity over the past three years, and not just with chemistry majors.

"A lot of art students have been interested in learning glassblowing in this class, but we discourage them because it's a very scientific class," said Schmidt. "Most chemistry students interested in the course save it for their senior years."

# ELP hones international students' English

More than 20 years ago, Georgia Southern leaders saw an interesting phenomenon among international students.

Many of them were admitted with excellent grades in English, but when they arrived, faculty members found the students could neither speak nor understand the language. While they could read and write English, they needed intensive help with verbal communication.

To alleviate the problem, the University developed the English Language Program (ELP), an interactive program that requires students to spend five hours each day – 25 hours each week – practicing and polishing their English in and out of the classroom.

"The ELP offers a flexible, well-rounded program with classes in listening and speaking, reading and writing, grammar, U.S. culture,

and computer-assisted language learning," said Joan Stalcup, coordinator of the program. "The classes are offered at different skill levels and are designed to focus on getting non-English-speaking people comfortable with American communication and culture."

Generally there are three types of students who choose the ELP, according to Stalcup. The majority are those who come to Georgia Southern as international students, but don't understand enough English to be in the classroom. The program also helps legal permanent residents who are educated professionals but need better English language skills to get a job in their field. In addition, it serves international students who come here to learn English, then return to their own country to take jobs that require English.

Students in the ELP are urged to live on

campus with an English-speaking roommate and to participate in the programs offered by the Center for International Studies, such as the Cross-Cultural Friendship program, the Extended Families program, the Global Ambassadors program and the International Conversation Hour. According to Stalcup, the program has recently served students from Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Kuwait, Vietnam, Bolivia, Peru, Honduras, Colombia and Thailand.

"We concentrate on giving them the skills they need to survive," says Stalcup. "We teach them how to find a place to live, how to get food, how to send and receive mail, and how to complete the many forms they will encounter as international students. Their 25 classroom hours each week also include field trips to places that demonstrate American culture."

## Molecular biology lab brings 'CSI' home to University students

University biology faculty members have taken some of the investigative techniques from "CSI" television shows off the screen and placed them on the lab table.

Thanks to the creation of a state-of-the-art molecular biology teaching facility in the Department of Biology, students and faculty members at Georgia Southern have all the tools they need to conduct their own in-depth investigations of the molecules that are central to all biological life.

The facility offers access to cutting-edge equipment and techniques that are essential to the study of molecules such as DNA, RNA and proteins.

"This type of extensive, hands-on exposure to molecular biology is critical to students who are interested in securing jobs in the biotechnology industry, or going on to graduate or professional schools," said biology professor Laura Regassa. "All faculty members within the Department of Biology maintain active research programs, and many of them rely on molecular biology techniques.

"In addition," said Regassa, "all of the undergraduates in our department are encouraged to gain research experience with a



*Biology professor Laura Regassa demonstrates the use of lab equipment to students Ayanna Luke and Brooke Smith.*

faculty member.

"Students with an interest in molecular biology are better equipped to work in a research laboratory if they have already taken a class in the molecular biology teaching facility," Regassa said. "These students often present

their research findings at scientific meetings or publish their results in scientific journals."

Funds for the facility's equipment were provided by the Office of the Provost at Georgia Southern, the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology, and the Department of Biology. A grant for \$114,803 from the National Science Foundation (NSF) also helped fund the equipment.

The lab features an impressive array of high-tech instruments, including DNA electrophoresis setups, microcentrifuges, micropipettes, PCR thermocyclers, high-speed centrifuges, heat blocks, ultra-cold freezers, gel documentation systems and incubators.

"Each student has a work station equipped with all the items that are necessary to conduct independent experimental work," Regassa said. "Larger pieces of equipment are located throughout the teaching lab or in adjacent equipment rooms."

"By exposing our students to relevant technology in a real-life setting, they are better equipped to move on to the next stage of their academic careers or enter the biotechnology workforce."

# Brooks reviews African-American experience

When Erik Brooks came to teach political science at Georgia Southern four years ago, he knew about the University's great football team.

Since then he's learned a lot more about the University, and he's put some of it into a newly published book, *Pursuing Promise: A History of African Americans at Georgia Southern University*.

"Once I arrived, I wanted to know more about the University," said Brooks, "and as an African American, I particularly wanted to know how African Americans had contributed to the community and to the University."

From his arrival until the end of 2003, he gathered and read everything he could about the experiences of African Americans in Bulloch County and at Georgia Southern, making the most of visits to the University's Henderson Library and to the Statesboro Regional Library.

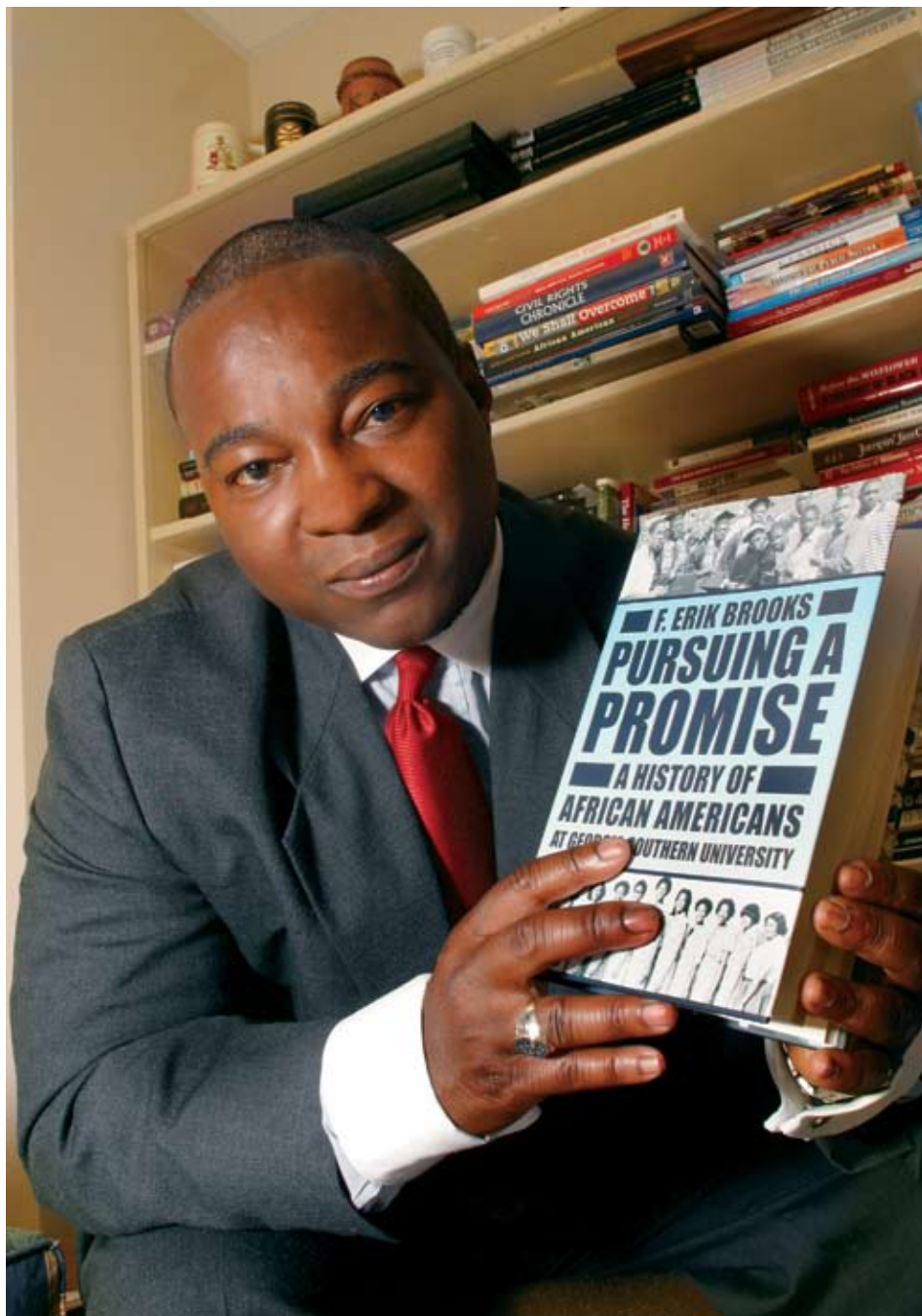
"There was almost too much information," said Brooks. "I had to declare a cutoff point and start writing." He wrote until 2005, then approached Mercer University Press in Macon, Ga., which had published other similar books.

"There's been a lot written about integration of the flagship universities across the South, but very little about integration of the smaller public institutions," said Brooks. "There's a rich history of black students, staff and faculty at Georgia Southern that had never been chronicled."

Thanks to Brooks, those stories were captured, starting with the founding of First District A&M School and the Statesboro Industrial and High School, and continuing to the present, when African Americans comprise 23.3 percent of Georgia Southern's student body.

Brooks grew up in Montgomery, Ala., where the story of Rosa Parks and the history of the civil rights movement were part of the community fabric. Although he never intended to teach the history and politics of the civil rights movement, when asked he agreed to teach the subject, and he found that it fit. His life in Montgomery also played a part in his decision to write *Pursuing Promise*.

"Montgomery's history was recorded and was there for me and for others to read and



Political science professor Erik Brooks and his book *Pursuing Promise: A History of African Americans at Georgia Southern University*. The book chronicles the contributions African-Americans have made to the University and local community.

learn from," said Brooks, "but Statesboro's wasn't. This is Georgia Southern's centennial year, and it seemed like an opportune time to write it down."

Brooks said the response to his work has been positive. His students, too, were excited by the book. "They really like seeing an entire book about their school," he noted.



## Model UN team gains high praise once again

Viewing global issues from another country's perspective reaped top honors for a team of Georgia Southern students at the annual National Model United Nations conference in New York.

The conference hosted more than 240 teams from around the world.

The students received Outstanding Position Paper and Distinguished Delegation Awards. All the students were enrolled in the Model UN class taught by political science professor Barry Balleck.

"This recognition is a well-deserved reward

for the dedication and commitment the students exhibited in researching, writing and debating international issues from the viewpoint of a different culture," said Balleck.

The Georgia Southern students were assigned to represent Norway at the national conference last spring. Prior to the conference, Balleck's students spent the semester studying Norwegian government and culture. This research became the basis for the paper and simulated debates on numerous real-world global issues such as nuclear nonproliferation,

the use of economic sanctions, combating AIDS and human rights.

"Our students had to go beyond the mindset of America and look at these issues through the lens of a foreign culture. This is an important skill to have in order to compete in the global marketplace," Balleck stated.

Georgia Southern has a long history of providing trans-cultural opportunities to its students, added Balleck. This was the 35th consecutive year that the University has competed in the National Model UN conference.

## Van Tassell is named University's 2006 Professor of the Year



International Studies professor Darin Van Tassell was honored with the University's 2006 Wells/Warren Professor of the Year Award.

Van Tassell is an assistant professor in the Center for International Studies, a 1989 alumnus, and a faculty member since 1994.

The professor said his instructional technique is more that of a learning facilitator than a lecturer.

"I am uncomfortable with the trend these days toward instruction instead of education," said Van Tassell. "Students can certainly become well-instructed, but not all are educated. Facts and skills learned from textbooks can change quickly as more facts and better skills are learned. Yet, education involves inquiry, close reading, interpretation, recognizing parallels, and understanding causes and consequences."

Van Tassell structures his courses around what he calls "class dialogues in which

information, knowledge and thought will be generated through lecture/background, discussion, class activities, and especially the Socratic method.

"I became a professor because of my love and passion for learning that I try to share with my students," Van Tassell said. "I try my best to inspire each student to learn and grow intellectually."

The professor was a 2004 Governor's Teaching Fellow for the Summer Symposium of the Governor's Teaching Fellows Program, and was Georgia Southern's nominee for the University System of Georgia's Teaching Excellence Award in 2002.

The Professor of the Year Award is endowed by former Gamma Beta Phi advisors J. Norman and Rosalyn Wells and is named in honor of their parents, Nolan and Audrey Wells and Hartwell and Lucile Warren.

## Student awarded rare Tau Sigma scholarship



Tau Sigma honor society has awarded University student Rebekah Rotton one of only five scholarships nationwide among 6,500 members at 56 universities.

Rotton, the reigning Miss Georgia Southern, is a junior communication arts major from Metter, Ga., who began her college career at Brenau College in Gainesville, Ga.

Tau Sigma is designed specifically to recognize and promote the academic excellence and involvement of

transfer students.

Members are active at their universities in on-campus recruiting events for prospective transfer students. They assist in transfer student orientation, community service projects, the recruitment of prospective transfers at junior colleges, and they participate in intramural sports and socials that allow them opportunities to fellowship with one another and to make new friends.

# Music students on cutting edge with new lab

New technology is music to the ears of University music students.

Thanks to an upgrade in the piano laboratory, students are learning and practicing on the latest in digital instruments.

The music department recently expended student technology fees to purchase 17 new digital keyboards, placing its students on the cutting edge of music technology.

According to music professor Thomas Pearsall, the field of music is becoming increasingly technological. It is common practice now to integrate technology into music studies as teachers, performers and composers take advantage of the many benefits it can offer.

"With these new instruments, we are able to integrate lots of creative activities into the classes," said Pearsall. "This lab is larger and nicer than the digital keyboard labs available at many other schools."

With new advances in technology, digital keyboards do an outstanding job of

replicating the sounds of other instruments and are being used more and more in homes and churches as people discover the many fun things they can do with them, Pearsall said.

A control center allows Pearsall to instruct students over headsets as a group or individually, and it lets them work together on group projects like ensembles.

"The new digital pianos allow a lot of flexibility in creating music," said junior music education major John Gleissner. He pointed out the one-touch settings that allow students to save styles, tones, sounds, and rhythms, even after others use the instrument.

"You can customize sounds and accompaniment styles and record onto midi disks, smart media cards or flash drives," said Gleissner. "This upgrade tells me that the music department wants to give its students the best opportunity to develop their talents."



*Music professor Thomas Pearsall instructs student Scottie Brown on the use of the new digital keyboards.*

## Franklin named new vice president for business and finance

Joe Franklin, has been named Georgia Southern's new vice president for business and finance.

Franklin, who has served as interim vice president since 2004, was selected after a nationwide search. He has 23 years of



management experience at Georgia Southern, including service as director of Auxiliary Services and manager of the University Store.

"Georgia Southern will continue to benefit from Joe's leadership, and I am delighted that he has accepted our call to this post," said President Bruce Grube.

"Much of the impact made by Joe and his team is on the physical learning environment that has made our campus a jewel of the

Southeast. Our student housing, classroom, office and recreational facilities, for instance, are on par with the best in the nation, and we look forward to their ongoing development under Joe Franklin's continued guidance," Grube added.

The Business and Finance Division includes Athletics, Public Safety, Human Resources, Auxiliary Services, Physical Plant and the Controller's Office.

## Top senior of 2006 honored



Senior English major Amber Johns received the University's top student award at Georgia Southern's 2006 Honors Day Convocation.

The Waynesboro, Ga., native received the Alumni Association Award, presented annually to the graduating senior or seniors who have applied for graduation, completed all course work in residence and attained the highest grade point average (GPA).

A senior computer science major from Kingsland, Ga., Joseph Rose, received the University System Academic

Recognition Award, given annually to a Georgia resident at each institution on the basis of outstanding academic achievement.

Johns also received the Academic Success Center Tutorial Scholarship Award, an Excellent Scholarship Graduating Senior with a GPA of 3.9 or higher, the Lee and Rebecca Davis Pre-Law Scholarship and she is listed among *Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges*.

Rose also received an Excellent Scholarship Graduating Senior with a GPA of 3.9 or higher.

# Georgia Southern joins statewide customer service initiative

Georgia Southern is launching an initiative this month to improve its customer service throughout the institution in coordination with the University System of Georgia's (USG) effort to provide faster, friendlier, more efficient service to USG customers, including all students.

USG Chancellor Erroll B. Davis Jr. asked Georgia Southern to take part in the project in coordination with Gov. Sonny Perdue's new "Customer Service Improvement Initiative" in which all state agencies have united in an effort to make Georgia the best-managed state in the country.

"We welcome this opportunity to serve our students, who are our most important assets," said Teresa Thompson, Georgia Southern's vice president of student affairs and enrollment management and the University's designated "Customer Service Champion." "As we continue to enjoy



expanding enrollment and the rising caliber of academics and research at Georgia Southern, it is crucial that we redouble our efforts to serve our students as valued customers," Thompson added.

"Each Georgia citizen who walks through our door for a government service is an opportunity," said Gov. Perdue. "It is my intention that Georgia government employees will take advantage of those opportunities, showing citizens that we respect and value their time."

Chancellor Davis said he expects to see a culture shift across USG campuses.

"In line with the governor's goal of achieving the best-managed state government, we intend to provide a model of service unparalleled in public higher education. Many of our faculty and staff already place our students' needs first, but we need to institutionalize this practice and really own it," Davis said.

This past spring, Davis named Jim Flowers, special assistant to the USG's chief information officer, to serve as the University System's representative on the Governor's

Customer Service Team. Campus customer service champions, including Thompson, will work closely with their presidents.

"The campus plans developed by our champions in recent months had to incorporate the input of customers and employees," Flowers noted. "They also have to outline clear and measurable ways to track the campus' progress toward improved customer service. Accountability is a big part of this initiative."

"In August, the USG launched a Web site, [www.customerfocus.usg.edu](http://www.customerfocus.usg.edu), that allows faculty, staff, students and taxpayers alike to monitor the progress being made with customer service improvements, and to view the customer satisfaction scores of USG campuses," Flowers said.

He added that visitors to the Web site are also able to submit their suggestions and criticisms via an online comment tool.

"The outcome we're expecting from our efforts is to have customer-focused institutions making a continuous effort to provide faster, friendlier and easier services to our constituents," Flowers said.

## Biology professor to coordinate statewide effort to digitize plant info

Georgia's Coastal Plain is one of the most ecologically diverse regions in the United States and is well-represented in the Georgia Southern Herbarium – the largest collection of Coastal Plain flora in the world.

Thanks to a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the work of biology professor Michelle Zjhra, the herbarium will be accessible to more people than ever before.

The NSF Research Coordination Network grant for \$498,887 was issued to a group of scientists in 15 states who will help develop a digital system for sharing information with each other.

Zjhra is representing the state of Georgia in the project, the Southeast Regional Network of

Expertise and Collections.

"The aim of the project is for all of the herbaria to work together so that we can make our incredible, but underappreciated, resources available to a wider audience, including federal and state agencies, researchers and teachers," Zjhra said.

Eventually, information on the plants will be accessible to anyone in the world.

"We plan to make this material broadly available via the construction of a Web site," Zjhra said. "We hope to create digital images of our collection in order to let others have access to what these plants look like."

The herbarium is valuable because it contains a record of what plants have lived in this region over time, where they were and

what they looked like, Zjhra said. "From this information, we can reconstruct the past, see how our environment has been transformed, and track extinctions as well as the movement of foreign and invasive species.

"We can also track plants and examine how variable they are over time and space."

In addition to Georgia, the Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections will include 116 herbaria in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

"We want this to be a model for the nation in how herbaria can work together for greater impact and accessibility," Zjhra said.

# University joins SW Georgia cancer fight

The University's Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health and the Southwest Georgia Cancer Coalition (SWGCC) have partnered to fight cancer by strengthening health education and practice.

A collaboration of organizations and individuals in 33 counties, the SWGCC is working to advance the understanding of cancer in the region, to mobilize communities, and to build or strengthen the networks needed to provide 100 percent access to cancer care for everyone in Southwest Georgia.

"The incidence of cancer in Southwest Georgia is 35 percent higher than for the state overall, so communicating the need for good health practices to the rural population is an important challenge," said Diane Fletcher, the SWGCC's CEO. "One of our first projects with Georgia Southern is a pilot study to test the effectiveness of a proposed health communication tool titled 'Ten Commandments of Good Health.'" a

Developed by a group of ministers and health care providers, the faith-based tool is designed to encourage good health practices and healthy lifestyle choices. In addition to providing initial testing and refining, researchers in the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health are providing the public health

*"The incidence of cancer in Southwest Georgia is 35 percent higher than for the state overall, so communicating the need for good health practices to the rural population is an important challenge,"*

**Diane Fletcher,  
SWGCC's CEO**

evidence necessary to support the "Ten Commandments."

"We want to plan programs that meet the health needs of Southwest Georgia," said Fletcher, "but some critical county-specific baseline information about the current health status of the population has never been gathered. We need to collect evidence that shows whether the health care needs of Southwest Georgia residents are being met."

Robert Vogel, director of the Karl E. Peace Center for Biostatistics in the College of Public

Health, began a pilot study in Baker County this spring to assess the population's health care practices and needs. Funded by the Georgia Cancer Coalition, Vogel and a group of researchers will analyze the data, review the results and determine the next steps.

The partners are also developing a proposal to bring the SWGCC, Georgia Southern and the regional office of the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service together to apply for funding from the Institute. With biostatistics professor Karl Peace of the College of Public Health as primary investigator, the partners propose to bring free information for professionals and the public to Southwest Georgia.

Stuart Tedders, director of the University's Center for Rural Health and Research, and Anthony Parrillo, associate professor of community health and health behavior, will serve as co-investigators with Peace on the project.

"We are continually exploring ways to reach the underserved populations," said Fletcher. "This proposal targets eight counties that are our poorest and most rural. If it is funded, primary care physicians and nurses will be able to obtain timely and accurate information for their patients."

## University asthma study could lessen disease's impact

Asthma is the third-leading cause of hospital visits for children, the leading cause of school absenteeism, and has an annual economic cost of \$3 billion nationwide.

With such a tremendous impact on public health, researchers at the University's Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health were pleased to accept an invitation from the Georgia Department of Community Health to evaluate the Rural Asthma Initiative (RAI), an integrated model for managing asthma among children.

"We believe that hospital visits for asthma could be avoided or markedly reduced with effective asthma education," said community health professor Anthony V. Parrillo. "That would reduce school days lost, parents' work

days lost, and ultimately, reduce the cost of asthma to Georgia's economy."

For their recent article in the *GAHPERD Journal*, Parrillo and his fellow researchers – Stuart H. Tedders, assistant professor of epidemiology, Catherine Reavis, associate professor of nursing, and Andrew Hansen, instructor in exercise science – studied the RAI, which included schools, community health providers and parents in three rural counties in South Georgia. In their evaluation, the group developed a reliable set of baseline measures for use with future research in the state and the region.

The RAI planned several types of intervention: developing asthma action plans, a series of three personal contact visits, in-

school education, Asthma Day Camp, a Childhood Asthma Symposium for daycare workers and parents of asthmatics, and four Asthma 101 workshops for nurses, teachers, administrators and others concerned with asthma management in the school system.

In their discussion about the RAI's effectiveness, the researchers pointed out that some interventions proved more successful than others. Setting up personal contacts with children and their families proved a challenge, and younger children were more likely to participate in Asthma Day Camp and other activities than older children. However, in-school classes were well-received, and Asthma 101 workshops were an effective teaching tool for adults in the school system.

## Tee it up!

### Contributors make major commitment to Eagle golf program with practice facility

What inspires a generous gift? Commitment, undoubtedly. Leadership, for sure.

“Having the stars in proper alignment helps, too,” said a smiling John Mulherin, president of Southern Boosters Inc., as he talked about the University’s new \$1.8 million Bennett-Ramsey Golf Center.

“Although Georgia Southern’s golf team is one of the top 25 in the U.S., we knew that improvement would require a great facility to attract the most talented student athletes,” said Mulherin. Over the past five years, he and golf coach Larry Mays shared their dreams of a state-of-the-art golf center with Southern Boosters supporters. From those shared dreams, along with the generosity, commitment and leadership of Robert Baker, Christian Bennett, Arthur Howard and Holmes Ramsey, Georgia Southern’s new golf center was created.

Howard, an alumnus and long-time supporter of the golf program, gave the recently completed clubhouse that will serve as home base for the team. He echoed Mulherin’s comment, agreeing that this project came together when the time was right.

“A few years earlier, when John Mulherin and Larry Mays first talked with me about a new golf facility, the scope and location of the project were not as they should be,” said Howard. “But this time around, the new location that’s a short distance away from the campus is just right. Along with that, the Howard family recently set up a charitable lead annuity trust that allowed us to help with the project.”

In searching for just the right location, Mulherin and Mays found that Ramsey, a longtime advocate for Georgia Southern golf, had a piece of property that just might work. Ramsey and his business partner, Bennett, got the project underway with a contribution that allowed Georgia Southern to obtain the property at a greatly reduced price.

Bennett, who competed internationally on the PGA’s Australasian Tour and nationally on other tours for four years, gave resounding approval to the design of the new Bennett-Ramsey Golf Center. “At this facility, each golfer will be able to practice every conceivable shot they could find on any course in the world,”



*The C. Arthur Howard and Carol H. Howard House is the 6,000-square-foot home base for Georgia Southern’s golf team. Built by Lavender and Associates, it features a players’ lounge, a carpeted locker room, an indoor putting lab, a club repair room, meeting space, offices and a classroom. It is one facet in gem that is the new Bennett-Ramsey Golf Center, a \$1.8 million practice facility for the University’s golf program. Pictured are, l-r, Christian Bennett, Arthur Howard, Holmes Ramsey and John Mulherin.*

said Bennett.

“Projects like this don’t just happen,” said Ramsey. “The community has to get behind an effort like the golf center to make it happen.”

With the property in place, the next step was Baker’s. Owner of R.B. Baker Construction and a Southern Boosters board member, he had already pledged to do the “dirt work.” He and his crew cleared the site, designed the course layout and elevation changes, rough-graded the site to match the design, installed the drainage and irrigation system, constructed the tee and green complexes, then fine-graded the course and planted grass.

“A good friend of mine, Gene Sauers, played golf at Georgia Southern and later on the PGA Tour. He reminded me about the glory days of Georgia Southern golf,” said Baker.

“This first-class practice facility is the key to luring the kind of players we need to regain

that position.”

“With the work of Robert Baker and his crew, and with the collaboration of Paul Massey of Tifton Turf Farms, another longtime Georgia Southern golf supporter, we were able to sculpt a practice facility that is easily one of the top three in the country,” Mulherin said. “This has been a great collaboration among a group of leaders who really value the tradition of Georgia Southern golf.”

Howard summed up the group’s commitment to the project.

“I’ve met many young men who were on a golf scholarship at Georgia Southern,” said Howard, “and they were all good guys. I took part in this project because this golf program, and the improvements that will come from the golf center, will be good for these young men.”

“And very good for Georgia Southern golf,” added Mulherin.

# Foundation preps for 2006 A Day for Southern drive

The 2005 edition of *A Day For Southern* was a day to remember for Georgia Southern University, with a record \$1,203,748 raised. The 2006 edition promises to have a special flavor all its own.

The 32nd annual one-day Bulloch County fund drive topped the \$1 million mark for the eighth consecutive year. Contributions from Bulloch County's business and professional community to the Georgia Southern University Foundation and Southern Boosters helped to build the University's "margin of excellence" in academics and athletics.

On September 12, some 200 volunteers will solicit donations from approximately 1,100 members of the Bulloch County community as Georgia Southern nears a year-long celebration of its 100-year anniversary and the end of the five-year Campaign for National Distinction. The Campaign goal is \$40 million.

*A Day for Southern* is a 33-year-old tradition of the community and the campus working together for the advancement of Georgia Southern, said Foundation Annual Giving Director Beth Mathews. In fact, the theme for this year's campaign is "Together We're Better."

"The support that Georgia Southern continues to receive from its volunteers and in financial backing from the community are simply outstanding and rare when you look at other 'town-gown' relationships across the country," said Mathews. "We continue to be humbled and so very grateful for the support



we get from residents of our area."

The Foundation uses a significant portion of *A Day for Southern* proceeds to help pay for the scholarships that are necessary to attract gifted students to campus.

Funds are also used to support cultural and educational attractions like the Botanical Garden, the Georgia Southern Museum, the Performing Arts Center, and the Center for Wildlife Education and the Lamar Q Ball Jr. Raptor Center.

*A Day For Southern* benefits Southern Boosters, too. The organization manages money for student-athlete scholarships and supports the athletic department, which fields teams that compete in 15 varsity sports at the NCAA Division I level.

"Our family has loved living in Statesboro for the past quarter-century, and one of the reasons is Georgia Southern," said The Rev. Bill Perry, who is chairing the 2006 *A Day For Southern*. "What a positive impact GSU makes! I'm glad *A Day for Southern* gives the residents of Bulloch County an opportunity to show our support and raise finances to strengthen our university."

## Capital Campaign nears completion

There is still time to join the Campaign for National Distinction and help lift Georgia Southern toward its goal of becoming one of the top comprehensive universities in the nation.

The goal is \$40 million for scholarships, new initiatives, support of existing programs and acquisition of new technologies.

"Private dollars raised in the Campaign for National Distinction will supplement the state budget allocation," said President Bruce Grube. "Even in good fiscal years, state funding underwrites only the fundamental educational programs, operating expenditures and capital projects. But it does not afford the value-added resources that enhance academic quality. Funds raised in the Campaign do that.

"Private dollars give the University the flexibility to recruit top students, develop new initiatives, augment promising programs and acquire the latest teaching technologies," said Grube.

The Campaign concludes in December. Please support your university by enclosing a special gift in the magazine's alumni reply envelope, by calling 912-681-5253 for information or by visiting the Campaign Web site at [www.georgiasouthern.edu/capitalcampaign/](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/capitalcampaign/).



## Recent Endowments

The Georgia Southern Foundation endowment was created to support University students, faculty and programs. For further information on scholarships, lectureships or professorships, visit <http://welcome.georgiasouthern.edu/foundation>.

### Recently funded endowments include:

Allen E. Paulson Endowed Chair in Technology

Allen E. Paulson Faculty Research and Development Endowment

Allen E. Paulson Undergraduate Student Programs

Billy J. Lamb and Curry Colvin Math Education Scholarship

Ernie Gadzoz Percussion Music Scholarship

Gene and Jan Jernigan University Honors Program Scholarship

Goizueta Foundation Scholars Fund II

Jim Spence Ornithology Scholarship

Stafford Scholars University Honors Program Scholarship

Terrell T. Reddick Rotary Honors Scholarship

# Whole new ball game

Curtain rising on Brian VanGorder era as he prepares Eagles for 2006 football season

Brian VanGorder walks into the Dan Parrish Sr. Football Center at 8:15 on a Thursday morning in May.

Pausing at the front desk, the new head coach of Georgia Southern's football team asks, "So, where am I going today?"

"Augusta," replies secretary Lisa Kingery.

Forty-five minutes later, VanGorder is on the road – again. On this particular trip, he is scheduled to make an appearance at a charity golf tournament.

It is merely the latest stop on a springtime tour of Georgia that could be dubbed "BVG Live." The pace has been hectic enough to make the coach long for the relative calm of two-a-day practice sessions in August.

"The volume of requests for my time has been much more than I anticipated," VanGorder admitted. "You really have to keep your priorities straight, because ultimately we have to prepare for football season, and that takes a lot of effort, even in the off-season."

"But I've tried to make myself as accessible as I possibly can. As the new coach at Georgia Southern, I feel like it's important for me to get out and meet people so that they can put a personality with my name and understand the vision we have for our program."

Personal appearances aside, VanGorder has already put his stamp on the Eagles, scrapping the team's trademark triple-option offense for a system that will emphasize the passing game.

"The triple-option has served Georgia Southern very well," he said, "but I'm not a triple-option coach. First and foremost, I'm a defensive coach, and I firmly believe that you can't teach good defensive football when you're working against an option team during your key fundamental practice periods in the spring and in the preseason."

Despite the 180-degree shift in philosophy, VanGorder said the offensive players have embraced the new system and believes that the change will allow the program to expand its recruiting base.

Georgia has always been a recruiting hotbed, and that's one of the reasons VanGorder was interested in coming to Statesboro from the



*New Eagles head coach Brian VanGorder and his family have completed their transition to Statesboro. All that awaits is the first kickoff of the VanGorder era of Georgia Southern football. Pictured are, l-r, Montgomery, Morgan, VanGorder, Malone, Pollie, Molloy and Mack.*

NFL's Jacksonville Jaguars.

"From a professional standpoint, this is a great part of the country to work in," he said. "There is so much high school talent in Georgia, and we're just two hours from Florida, which many people believe is the best state in the country for football talent."

"The Georgia Southern job was appealing from a personal standpoint, too. My wife and I have five children between the ages of 4 and 17, and we were looking for some stability in our lives. We just felt like Statesboro would be a great place to live and raise a family."

VanGorder wants to build a sense of family among his players and coaching staff as well. In an effort to promote that kind of atmosphere, the team has spent the summer building a

Habitat For Humanity home in Statesboro.

"Of course, we want them to develop as football players, but that's only one of the terms of the agreement," he said. "We let them know on a regular basis that their first priority is to get a degree. We want them to be enthusiastic about learning and gaining knowledge and positioning themselves to be productive members of society."

"We also want them to develop socially. To me, that means spiritual development, learning something about community service and being a part of the campus community. We want them to understand that you can't get your college years back, so you need to make every effort to make the most of them while you can."

# On the air

## Blair on steep learning curve for inaugural season as new 'voice of the Eagles'

When the Georgia Southern football team visits Furman in November, two things may be at stake: the Southern Conference championship, and the marital bliss of the Chris Blair family.

You see, Blair is the new voice of Georgia Southern sports, but his wife, Amber, is a graduate of Furman and a devout fan of all things purple.

"Yeah, it should be interesting," Blair said with a laugh as he contemplated his home life in the week leading up to the annual gridiron grudge match between the Eagles and the Paladins.

In the meantime, figuratively speaking, Blair has been immersing himself in Beautiful Eagle Creek and everything else related to Georgia Southern. He was hired in May by Staton Broadcasting, which purchased the radio broadcasting rights to

the University's sporting events.

"I've been reading everything I can find on the Eagles," said Blair, who grew up in Pikeville, Ky., and Greenville, S.C. "I asked (Sports Information Director) Pat Osterman to give me every yard and every tackle that's ever been tabulated, and I've been burning up Yahoo and Google.

"I'm trying to learn not only the names and the records, but the traditions, like Beautiful Eagle Creek and the yellow school buses. Having knowledge of all of those kinds of things are essential to being part of such a proud program."

As the play-by-play man, Blair will be assisted by color commentator Terry Harvin and sideline reporter Ryan Chambers. A former Eagle punter who was a part of three national championship teams, Harvin is the host of "The

Hometown Sports Show," a local talk radio program on ESPN 105.5 in Macon. Chambers produces and co-hosts "The Hometown Sports Show," handles play-by-play duties for the station, and covers high school sports for Macon's NBC television affiliate.

"I think having a guy like Terry as part of our broadcasting team will give us legitimacy with Georgia Southern fans," Blair said. "First and foremost, he's an outstanding broadcaster, but he also has the knowledge of the game and the knowledge of Georgia Southern that will be invaluable."

The Georgia Southern Radio Network will be bolstered by the addition of an Atlanta affiliate. Day games will be broadcast over 1160 WCFO-AM while night games can be heard on 1690 WMLB-AM.



Play-by-play announcer Chris Blair, his wife Amber, and their son, Crafton



Color commentator Terry Harvin



Sideline reporter Ryan Chambers

## Instant Replay: reviewing spring and summer sports news

**BASEBALL:** Junior pitcher **Dustin Evans** was taken by the Atlanta Braves in the second round of the amateur draft in June. He is the program's highest draft pick since pitcher **Joey Hamilton**, who was a first-round selection of the San Diego Padres in 1991 ... Junior pitcher **Everett Teaford** was taken by the Kansas City Royals in the 12th round and senior first baseman **Greg Dowling** was taken by the Oakland A's in the 19th round ... Teaford and Dowling were named to the All-Southern Conference first team.

**SOFTBALL:** The Eagles earned their first-ever berth in the NCAA Tournament ... Senior outfielder **Shanita Black** became the first player in school history to be named Southern Conference Player of the Year ... Junior first baseman **Heather Smith** and sophomore pitcher **Melissa Laliberte** were named to the all-conference first ... Senior **Carolynn Chin** was named to the Arthur Ashe Jr. 2006 Sports Scholars List by Black Issues in Higher Education magazine. The list honors undergraduate student-athletes of color who exemplify the standards set by Ashe.



## Sam Says

### Need evident for greater alumni involvement in the University's athletics programs

Because this magazine is published primarily for our alumni, I would like to talk about one of the great challenges that the athletics department faces: how to captivate and sustain the interest of our alumni.

When I arrived at the University of Oregon in 1983, my boss, Bill Byrne, said we needed to tour the state and transform those who were mad about the state of Oregon athletics and make them neutral; take those who were neutral and make them fans; and make the fans fanatics.

It appears to me that many of Georgia Southern's alumni are in neutral right now. When I am out on the Eagle Club tours every spring, it always astounds me how many alumni tell me they have not been on the campus in 10 or 15 years.



Think about all they have missed! Just a simple stroll down the Pedestrium demonstrates the physical growth of the University. That same growth has been in athletics, too. In just the last two years, athletics has:

- Paid off the Paulson Stadium revenue bonds
- Used that money along with donated funds to completely renovate J. I. Clements Stadium into one of the finest on-campus baseball facilities in the country; renovate the Iron Works to benefit the strength and conditioning programs of over 360 student-athletes; and build the Track/Soccer Stadium
- Developed the \$1.8 million Bennett-Ramsey golf facility

Our biggest current project is the construction of a new facility – the Gene Bishop Fieldhouse – in the west end zone at Paulson Stadium to replace the outdated Lupton Building. The Bishop Fieldhouse will significantly enhance not only the aesthetics of the stadium, but the game day experience for our fans.

Of course, I speak with enthusiasm for the athletics program. But I know that no one on this campus is stuck in neutral with their passion for their work at Georgia Southern. The faculty and staff of this university see progress every day in reaching the goals that Dr. Grube has set for the development and growth of the institution. The greater the academic visibility of the institution, the easier it will be for us to recruit outstanding student-athletes.

I invite you to join us on campus this fall to come and be a part of Brian VanGorder's first year at the helm of our football program – or to just walk through the campus and see how your university is maturing as it enters its centennial year.

Go Eagles

## Bishop Fieldhouse construction continues as season approaches

The construction of Bishop Fieldhouse at Paulson Stadium is progressing and is expected to be ready for the 2006 football season.

The fieldhouse will comprise about 13,600 total square feet and will include new locker rooms and meeting and hospitality space.

It is named for former chairman of the Southern Boosters Board of Directors, Gene Bishop, who funded the project.



## Instant Replay: Review of spring and summer sports news

**MEN'S BASKETBALL:** The Eagles earned a trip to the National Invitation Tournament, the program's first postseason berth in 14 years ... Senior **Elton Nesbitt** became the first player in school history to be named Southern Conference Player of the Year.

**WOMEN'S BASKETBALL:** Seniors **Lee DuBose** and **Leslie Spoon** were named to the Southern Conference all-academic team for Winter 2006 ... Senior **Nicole Newton** was named to the all-conference first team ... **Ashley Melson** became the first player in school history to be named to the conference all-freshman team.

**GOLF:** The Eagles won their second Southern Conference championship in four years and earned an invitation to the NCAA Regionals for the sixth year in a row.

**MEN'S TENNIS:** Senior **Vincent Patry** was named to the All-Southern Conference second team.

**VOLLEYBALL:** **Nicole McCray** was hired in February as head coach of the Eagles. A former assistant at the University of Georgia, she replaces **Kerry Messersmith**, now head coach at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

# Pair honored for academic achievements

The men's and women's tennis programs served up a pair of aces at the Department of Athletics 2006 Student-Athlete Academic Honors Banquet in April.

Heather Reynolds was named Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year and Vincent Patry was named Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year. Reynolds shared the female award with softball player Carolynn Chin.

A native of Fredricksburg, Va., Reynolds played No. 5 singles and No. 2 doubles for the women's tennis team. She compiled a 3.97 GPA and needed just three years to earn a bachelor's degree in sports management.

"I had credit from AP classes in high school, and I took six hours of credit during each of the last two summers," said Reynolds, who led Georgia Southern's women in singles victories. "It's been a lot of hard work, but I've still had plenty of time to enjoy myself."

She will continue to play tennis while she pursues an MBA with an eye toward law school.

Patry arrived at the University from Paris, France. In addition to playing No. 1 singles and No. 2 doubles for the men's team, he carried a 3.72 GPA and graduated with a bachelor's degree in computer science.

"Coming to the U.S. gave me the opportunity to go to school and play tennis at the same time," Patry said. "The location, the academic program and the level of tennis is what brought me to Georgia Southern."

Patry plans to return to Paris to pursue his master's degree, but he may return to the States for his Ph.D. He has already been accepted at Cornell University.

Chin is a native of St. Petersburg, Fla., who was also the Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year in 2005. She had a GPA of 3.95 en route to a bachelor's degree in chemistry.

A total of 150 student-athletes were recognized at the banquet for maintaining a cumulative 3.0 GPA or for having at least a 3.0 GPA during the Fall 2005 semester.

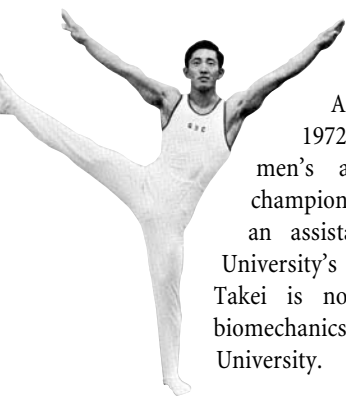


*Female Scholar-Athlete of the Year Heather Reynolds*



*Male Scholar-Athlete of the Year Vincent Patry*

## Georgia Southern athletes . . . Where are they now?



**Yoshiaki Takei** ('73), was the 1970 AAU and 1971 and 1972 USA Gymnastics men's all-around national champion. He served as an assistant coach for the University's gymnastics squad. Takei is now a professor of biomechanics at Northern Illinois University.

**Pete Pasquarosa** ('78), baseball, teaches at Franklin High School, Franklin, Mass.

**Pamela Hoover Sutherland** ('79), basketball, teaches at Hancock Day School in Savannah.

**Peggy Ann Johnson** ('83), softball, is a teacher at Savannah Arts Academy.

**Jorge Lezcano** ('86), baseball, owner of Business Sound & Music Inc., San Juan, Puerto Rico.

**Herman Barron** ('89), football, is a

product engineer with Amada America, Stone Mountain, Ga.

**Chris Wright** ('91), football, is owner of Tanden LLC project management and leadership consulting firm in Raleigh, N.C.

**Reed Haley** ('95), football, is owner of Spokes Cycling & Fitness in Maitland, Fla.

**Charlton Young** ('94), is an assistant basketball coach at Georgia Tech.

**Marty Pevey**, baseball, is first base coach for the Toronto Blue Jays.

## Instant Replay

**INDOOR TRACK & FIELD:** Senior **Brittney Jett**, juniors **Nicole Brown** and **Jessica Kerzie**, and sophomore **Brittney Brown** were named to the Southern Conference all-academic team for Winter 2006.

**OUTDOOR TRACK & FIELD:** **Shaun Meinecke** was named Southern Conference Coach of the Year for the second year in a row . . . Seniors **Rashedah Arnold** and **Mandi Phillips**, juniors **Brittany Chase**, **Nicole Brown** and **Lauren Jacobs**, sophomore **Dominique Thurman** and freshman **Tierra Watts** qualified for the NCAA Regionals.

**SWIMMING AND DIVING:** Juniors **Ali Lota** and **Haley Newton** and sophomores **Amanda Gerdeman** and **Kimberly Morris** were named to the Northeast Conference all-academic team . . . Morris, sophomore **Patrina Best**, and freshmen **Katie Creighton** and **Nicole Hutchinson** were named to the all-conference team.

**MISCELLANEOUS:** **Brent Jones** was hired in May as director of athletics marketing. He spent the last two years at the University of Mississippi, where his duties included the coordination of promotional events for basketball and baseball games. Jones replaces **Ricky Ray**.

# ALUMNI

IT'S HOME TO  
THOUSANDS OF  
**alumni**

THE LEADING  
PROVIDER OF  
**students**

THE CENTER  
OF STATE  
**power and  
influence**

# Atlanta



## Atlanta is the focus of strategies driving the growth-mode University.

**T**  
By Stephen Ward

Photos by  
Frank Fortune  
and  
Suzanne Oliver

To see Bill Golden work the corridors of the state capitol, you'd think they named the dome for him.

After 48 years of relationship building in higher education and public service, the high-volume hand shaking and shoulder squeezing keep Golden's motor humming. Schmoozing lawmakers and bureaucrats is central to his job as Georgia Southern's director of governmental relations. Bringing home to Statesboro a little more than the University's fair share of state funding is his annual objective.

"Any time you can get funding above the regular level is a good year," Golden said.

"We've been very fortunate for the past 15 years, in that we're approaching \$200 million in capital improvement funding, above the regular state allocation. We have done really well."

This year the General Assembly delivered the University an extra \$5.7 million, the bulk of which is to support work on the Foy Fine Arts Building. That's on

top of state formula funds of \$84.7 million, which represents more than half of Georgia Southern's annual operating budget.

The stakes are rising fast, though. The University faces an intensifying challenge to win support at the level necessitated by progress back on campus. Georgia Southern's recent classification as a national research university by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is expected to lead to more and higher profile opportunities in research. Aggressive growth in graduate enrollment is anticipated, and the University just added another doctorate, in psychology. Academic programming in emergent colleges like Public Health and Information Technology are in front of national demand.

The developing story is this: in a region south of Atlanta to well into Florida, Georgia Southern has begun to stand alone as the doctoral research university and an economic driver for a swath of the Coastal





Southeast. More high academic caliber students are choosing to be a part of it, and the University plans to maintain its course, in large part, by targeting Greater Atlanta. For within its sprawl lies Georgia Southern's largest concentrated sources of enrollment and financial support.

Telling the Georgia Southern story to policymakers is crucial, but pushing the University's reputation to the next level within the state's power center promises to be tough, particularly in the wake of the recent sea change in Georgia politics.

"The Democrats were in control for a hundred years, and now the Republican leadership [which took control after the 2002 elections] has had to come up to speed," noted Golden. "It put a great deal of pressure on people like me, to be sure they understand higher education and the role it plays in the state, and the role state government plays in higher education."

The GOP in charge is something Golden wouldn't have foreseen earlier in his career, which included agricultural economics faculty posts at the University of Georgia and Clemson and later heading up UGA's regional extension office on the campus of what was then Georgia Southern College. Golden's second, and current, career began after his retirement from UGA in 1989, when he answered a call from Georgia Southern to build on his vast contacts and take charge of corporate fundraising, then University development, and eventually, governmental relations.

Golden's family farming roots influenced his career and still shape his outlook today.

"What you're doing in governmental relations is planting some seeds; you're sharing some information with statewide officials. You cultivate that planting and eventually hope that you'll have a fruitful relationship."

Now, as he focuses on the harvest, he credits GOP lawmakers and Gov. Sonny Perdue's administration with doing their homework.

"They're very diligent and hard working. They've looked at a lot of data and they're making a lot of effort to understand higher education," Golden said. "There is a tad of difference between the Republican and Democrat philosophy. The Republicans are more attuned to the corporate world, in terms of how you run any organization. I think you're going to see a tendency to encourage higher education to be more like corporate

*With farming in his blood, Bill Golden cultivates the University's key relationships in the state capitol.*

I think you're going to see a tendency to encourage higher education to be more like corporate America in efficiency and accountability.

Bill Golden

America in efficiency and accountability."

That encouragement is already being voiced by the University System of Georgia's new chancellor, Erroll B. Davis Jr. The former energy executive assumed his position in February and has been paying information-gathering visits to each system campus. Three weeks into the job, Davis met with a small group of faculty members and administrators on Georgia Southern's campus. Running the state university system, he told them, will be like running a \$5 billion private enterprise. Quality assurance and the bottom line are keys.

"What I hope that means is that we're going to work to spend our money on things that make the business—higher education—better," said Rep. Chuck Martin (R-Alpharetta).

Martin, who serves on the higher education subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, said Georgia Southern is seen in the capitol as having done a good job of making things happen for itself, particularly in securing major private gifts to accompany the state's capital improvement dollars. The University, he says, is a leader among growth-mode institutions out to redefine themselves.

"If you ask someone in Oregon to name the top schools in the University System of Georgia, for now and the next number of years the first two that are going to roll off their lips are Georgia Tech and UGA," Martin said.

"But it's a new day in Georgia, and Georgia Southern isn't the same school it was 30 years ago," he added.





# Atlanta

Martin's son was among 430 graduates of Fulton County's Milton High School this past spring. The school has been cited by Newsweek and U.S. News and World Report as one of the best high schools in the nation. Many of his son's classmates, Martin said, picked Georgia Southern as their first choice for college. He said a surprising number were forced to take their second choice, though, because of the University's higher entrance standards.

According to the architect of enrollment strategies, it will take a few more years before the realities of Georgia Southern's story catch up with long-held perceptions.

"Not everyone wants to go to UGA. Georgia is a big state, and the Southeast is a big region. There are plenty of opportunities for all of us to shine," said Teresa Thompson, vice president of student affairs and enrollment management.

Last fall, 43.3 percent of Georgia Southern's freshman class came from Greater Atlanta, according to Georgia Southern's Office of Strategic Research. Greater Atlanta is defined as the area that spreads from the city proper over 11 counties. That percentage of enrollment, now the highest ever from Greater Atlanta, has grown steadily as Georgia Southern has multiplied in size since university status was granted in 1990. In that year, the percentage of Greater Atlanta freshmen was 29.8.

Although more than half of the University's enrollment still comes from other areas of Georgia and beyond, Greater Atlanta provides the largest population base from which to draw freshmen whose academic profiles, including SAT scores and grade point averages, meet the rising standards in Statesboro, according to Thompson.

"It's just smart business sense to make Greater Atlanta one of our key markets," she said.

One of the reasons Atlanta-area students are drawn to the University is the change of scenery it provides. Junior Jonathan Simpson from Kennesaw is a logistics major in the College of Business Administration. He came to campus, in part, for the quiet, but still figured he would spend a lot of time in Savannah on weekends.

*Ready to focus advancement efforts among alumni and friends in Greater Atlanta, Angelia Huggins ('91) and Greg Brett ('84) are at the reins of the University's Atlanta Regional Development Office at 14 Lenox Pointe, NE.*



*Georgia's new-era GOP leadership headed by Gov. Sonny Perdue, who addressed the University's graduating class of 2006, is credited with doing their homework on the state's higher ed system.*

"But I soon discovered all the activities at Georgia Southern and that there's a lot to do," Simpson said. "I don't have time to get over to Savannah very often."

The Student Government Association and Baptist Student Union are two of the outlets for Simpson's extra time. He was also chosen to serve as the undergraduate representative on the University-wide Strategic Planning Council, working alongside faculty members and administrators.

Last fall, he said he gained more perspective on his alma mater while on a fact-finding trip to Athens. Simpson was developing a weekend hotline shuttle service for partying students and organized a visit to the UGA campus to observe a successful model there. Georgia Southern's dean of students Georj Lewis accompanied Simpson and his student colleagues.

"They didn't have enough volunteers that night, after a football game, so we got to run one of the Watchdogs vans. It was funny," Simpson observed, "Georgia Southern's dean of students driving people home until 5 a.m. on the UGA campus. But I totally wasn't expecting what I saw---people shoulder-to-shoulder, the streets filled with people, lines to get into the bars and people climbing over barricades."

Simpson said he brought back some good ideas to

apply to a future Statesboro ride service, along with a bit more puzzlement over the relationship between perception and reality.

"You hear from your friends around the state that Georgia Southern must be a lot of fun. That we're supposed to be the party school. We do have our times when it can be rowdy, but what I like about the school is that you're not forced to be around any particular kind of atmosphere. I like football Saturdays, but sometimes I like to sit under a tree and study, and I find that quite doable here," Simpson explained.

Today, with four out of ten freshmen from Greater Atlanta, it's easy to connect with people during the often-challenging first year, Simpson noted.

"On campus, one of the questions that starts conversations is, 'Where are you from?'" Simpson said. "A lot of students from my high school and rival schools around Greater Atlanta came for the same reasons I did. There are good programs here and you can get away from Atlanta. This is a first-choice University."

While Simpson envisions the port cities of Savannah or Charleston as good fits with his logistics degree, Georgia Southern has been sending large numbers of graduates into Greater Atlanta careers for years.





*From suburban Kennesaw to Statesboro, logistics major Jonathan Simpson continues the trend of Greater Atlantans choosing Georgia Southern.*

## Atlanta

As of 2005, there were 12,476 Georgia Southern alumni in the 11-county Greater Atlanta. Alumni and donor outreach efforts cover even more alums in an Atlanta Region that includes 21 counties heading farther north, and west to the Alabama line.

Whether those alumni are fully engaged in the progress of their University is another question. Like many similar public universities, the percentage of all Georgia Southern alumni who contribute financially to the institution hovers near 10 percent from year to year. President Bruce Grube and his leadership team have challenged the University to move that needle upward. In part, increased private support will advance Georgia Southern's ambitions, and it's also a measure by which national-caliber schools are judged.

"We've got to have a clear understanding from our alumni and supporters that, if a margin of excellence is going to be achieved, it's through private dollars. We have to move our image with many of our alumni," said Thompson.

Like Enrollment Management, University Advancement, which includes alumni relations and development, sees Greater Atlanta as fertile ground. Earlier this year the University established the Atlanta Regional Development Office on the edge of Buckhead, with space donated by alumna Margo Dawkins ('76). Greg Brett ('84) and Angelia Huggins ('91) are director and associate director, respectively. Their objective is straightforward, but similar to Bill Golden's situation at the Capitol, cutting through the clutter of information and overcoming the chokehold of traffic that come with the territory are tough challenges.

"We should always have people on the ground. Angelia and I are here to take Georgia Southern's business to the people," said Brett, who started in his role two years ago, working from his home office in Douglasville.

"I think Georgia Southern thought for years that the integrity of the academic degree was enough to sustain loyalty and support for the institution. But in today's society, we're dealing with a mindshift," Brett said. "Certainly many universities are reaching out to their alumni and friends in Greater Atlanta—the Georgia schools and the big boys from out of state, like Auburn and Florida. I don't know that we're at all behind them in our successes, but the challenges in this market only

grow with the population.”

“Keeping people aware and interested in what’s going on back on campus is a difficult challenge up here, but I’m not at all willing to say ‘no,’ and forget about the endeavor,” said Don Howard (’73), CEO of the Bank of North Georgia and regional CEO for Synovus.

“Not everyone follows athletics, so the more we give alumni other reasons to come together, the farther we’ll go,” Howard noted.

That’s precisely the line of thought behind Huggins’ plans for developing alumni affinity groups. New subsets of alumni will be organized, for instance, by colleges, degree programs, or sports teams.

“We hear, point blank, ‘What are we doing in Atlanta, when is it going to happen, and when can I get involved?’” Huggins said, noting that her current goals include the establishment of six Atlanta area affinity groups, plus two or three new Eagle Clubs.

Eagle Clubs, Huggins observed, are great building blocks for further alumni engagement and also for more focused involvement in affinity groups.

Focused outreach has also been undertaken by some of the University’s colleges. The College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, for instance, in May held a prototype annual gala at Georgia Public Broadcasting’s downtown headquarters.

“If more alums are invited to activities, they’ll get fired up about Georgia Southern,” said Steve McClelland (’85).

“The reason I go to Eagle Clubs in addition to staying on top of what’s happening on campus is because I might just see that person I haven’t seen for ten or 20 years.”

An AXA Advisors financial consultant with 5,000 clients, McClelland said not a day goes by that he doesn’t have a conversation about Georgia Southern, either with alumni or parents of students.

“I think there absolutely is an opportunity for people to move their perceptions of Georgia Southern. I’m proud of the institution. They’ve raised the bar so high now, I don’t think I could get in today, but it makes my degree all the more valuable,” McClelland said.

With its convergence of qualified students, high percentage alumni and friends of Georgia Southern, and pivotal state dollars, University leaders say Atlanta will remain integral to the institution’s future.

If nothing else, success in the Capital of the South will help inspire bigger visions. Budding growth strategies target other markets throughout the Coastal Southeast. According to Thompson, the University could draw from Atlanta down to Jacksonville, and beyond, and from the I-95 corridor into the Carolinas and Virginia.

While it all might make for an ambitious agenda now, the University’s evolution over its first century has inspired its believers. The strength and continued potential of Georgia Southern’s two-way relationship with Atlanta today seems a solid indicator that anything is possible.



*With the University among his first campus visits as USG Chancellor, Erroll B. Davis Jr. told faculty members and administrators in February that quality assurance and the bottom line are among the keys to success.*

“We’ve got to have a clear understanding from our alumni and supporters that, if a margin of excellence is going to be achieved, it’s through private dollars.

Teresa Thompson

Every year, outstanding Georgia Southern alumni are recognized by the University and the Alumni Association. Introducing the 2006 alumni of the year.

## 2006 ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

**James W. Kennedy**

*Kennedy Space Center director, Titusville, Fla.*

James Kennedy ('77) oversees day to day operations at the nation's primary launch site for space exploration. Kennedy has served as project manager for the X-34, DC-XA and for the Marshall Space Flight Center Space (MSFC) Shuttle Projects Resident Office. He managed the Solid Rocket Booster Project at George C. Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Ala., and was deputy director of science and engineering and director of engineering for MSFC. He also previously served as deputy director of MSFC (Agency's Propulsion Center of Excellence). Kennedy has earned the MSFC Leadership Award; NASA's Silver Snoopy Award; a Distinguished Service Medal; Meritorious Rank and Presidential Rank Awards; a Group Achievement Award and several Special Service and Performance Awards; and the 2003 National Space Club's Astronautics Engineer Award. Kennedy holds a bachelor's degree in engineering from Auburn University and a master's in business administration from Georgia Southern.



## YOUNG ALUMNA OF THE YEAR

**Lea Anne McBride**

*press secretary, vice president of the United States Washington, D.C.*

Lea Anne McBride ('96) is chief spokesperson for the vice president of the United States. She previously served as communications director for the Department of Homeland Security; as a staffer for the U.S. House Government Reform Committee; as press secretary for the National Republican Congressional Committee; as press secretary for the Quayle 2000 Presidential Campaign; and as deputy communications director and press secretary for the late Sen. Paul Coverdell's successful re-election campaign in 1998. McBride earned a bachelor's degree in communication arts from Georgia Southern.



## FRIEND OF GEORGIA SOUTHERN

**Lamar Hennon**

*CEO, Carpets of Dalton/American Home Showplace, Dalton, Ga.*

A graduate of Lincoln Memorial University in Harrogate, Tenn., Hennon has supported Georgia Southern baseball with contributions for the construction of batting cages, the refurbishment of the Wiggins Building, field renovations and the construction of new J.I. Clements Stadium. He serves on Dalton Utilities Board; the Farm Board; the BB&T Board in Dalton, Ga.; the Lincoln Memorial University Board of Trustees in Harrogate, Tenn.; and is a trustee of the Georgia Southern Foundation. A former high school coach, Hennon built a training center on his property for youth leagues in Dalton.



## COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

**Charles W. Leggette**

*president, Leggette Actuaries Inc., Dallas, Texas*

In addition to directing his company, Leggette Actuaries Inc., Charles Leggette ('65) is a fellow of the American Society of Pension Actuaries (ASPA) and has been admitted to practice before the Treasury and Labor Departments by the Treasury Department Joint Board for the Enrollment of Actuaries. He was the ASPA representative on President Jimmy Carter's Committee on Pension Policy. He was appointed by the Department of the Treasury to the Joint Board for Enrollment of Actuaries Advisory Committee on Examinations; was elected president of the American Society of Pension Actuaries; and serves on the United States Department of Labor Regional Advisory Board. He earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Georgia Southern and a master's in business administration from Southern Methodist University.



## COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

### Chase Puckett

*2005 Georgia Teacher of the Year, Sylvania, Ga.*

Chase Puckett ('97) was named the top teacher in the state of Georgia for 2005. He co-directs the annual "A Walk Through Time" project; developed and coordinated a collaborative team project known as the "Sci Fi Project;" served as chair of the Reading and Language Arts Task Force; served as summer volunteer in American Samoa working with youth and children and volunteers as student mentor. He serves on Georgia Title I Committee of Practitioners and is member of the Georgia Teacher of the Year Association. Puckett earned bachelor's and master's degrees in education from Georgia Southern.



## COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SCIENCES

### Michael Scott

*nurse practitioner, department manager  
Nurse First Family Health Center, Seneca, S.C.*

Michael Scott ('85) is a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education and is a surveyor for the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education. He is a former assistant professor at Emory University School of Nursing and a former nurse practitioner and nurse manager at Chatham County Health Center in Savannah. He earned the South Carolina Palmetto Gold Award for Nursing Excellence. He is a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society and Phi Kappa Phi Honorary. Scott holds a bachelor's degree in history from Armstrong State College, and bachelor's and master's degrees in nursing from Georgia Southern.



## COLLEGE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

### Darren Bridges

*executive vice president, Safe Systems Inc., Atlanta, Ga.*

Darren Bridges ('86) company helps keep electronic financial transactions secure. He began his career at COIN Banking Systems, worked as a Network Engineer, and eventually managed the Technical Service and Engineering Department. In 1994, he joined two other Georgia Southern graduates as a partner at Safe Systems Inc., which has a focus on technology in the community banking industry. Bridges earned his bachelor of business administration degree from Georgia Southern in 1986.



## COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

### Richard Beene

*president & CEO, The Bakersfield Californian, Bakersfield, Cal.*

Richard Beene ('73) oversees the operations of *The Bakersfield Californian* newspaper. He has served in a variety of editing and management positions with the *Los Angeles Times*; the *Dallas Times Herald* in Mexico City; the Spanish News Agency EFE in Madrid; and for United Press International. He was also state manager for UPI in Miami and Birmingham, Ala., and editor on the UPI Foreign Desk in New York. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from Georgia Southern and completed the Northwestern University Advanced Executive Program.



## ALLEN E. PAULSON COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Stuart Rudikoff

*chief, Molecular Immunology Section, Laboratory of Cellular and  
Molecular Biology, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, Md.*

Stuart Rudikoff's ('67) research involves the human immune system and how its understanding can lead to advances in disease prevention and treatment. Rudikoff has served with the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and as a visiting professor at the University of Marseilles. He received an Outstanding Mentor Award at the National Cancer Institute and the Distinguished Alumni Award for Georgia Southern's Department of Biology. Rudikoff earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Georgia, a master's in biology from Georgia Southern and a Ph.D. from the University of Miami.



## DISTINGUISHED DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY ALUMNUS

### Anton D. Tucker

*staff scientist, Mote Marine Laboratory, Sarasota, Fla.*

Anton Tucker ('79) is a marine biologist who has served with the University of Canberra; a the U.S. Geological Survey in Guam; the Queensland Department of Natural Resources; the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service. Tucker received the Eugene P. Odum Award from the Southeastern Chapter of Ecological Society of America and the Meritorious Act Award from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Tucker holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Georgia Southern, a master's in zoology from the University of Georgia, and a doctorate in zoology from the University of Queensland.



## 1950s

**Lawrence Turner** ('56) lives in Tifton, Ga., and would enjoy hearing from old friends and college classmates.

**Louis "Doc" Green Jr.** ('57) lives in Harlan, Ky.

## 1960s

**James W. Dooley** ('68) is an aerospace physiology consultant. He is president of the Aerospace Physiology Society of the Aerospace Medical Association and a fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association. He and his wife, Deneal, have five children, and live in Yorktown, Va. He would enjoy hearing from friends at [james.dooley@langley.af.mil](mailto:james.dooley@langley.af.mil).

**A. Stanley Jones** ('63) retired from Woodmen of the World after 27 years of service to the organization. He and his wife, Mary, reside in Gray, Ga.

**William Muller III** ('66) is a retired public library director. "Now I'm devoting my time to church, volunteering at the local library and spoiling my grandchildren," he writes. Bill and his wife, Pamela, reside in Murfreesboro, N.C. He would enjoy hearing from friends at [unclebillm@yahoo.com](mailto:unclebillm@yahoo.com).

**Stephen Cope** ('68) is retired and lives in Gainesville, Ga.

## » ALUMNI BOARD SPOTLIGHT

### Thornton wants to build enthusiasm

Dennette Thornton's No. 1 goal is to create excitement among Atlanta Braves fans in the stands.

"I make sure that everyone enjoys the game and has a wonderful experience – no matter the outcome of the ball game," said Thornton ('01).

As an account executive with the Braves' Ticket Department, Thornton is responsible for all 60 executive suites, six pre-game patios and three conference rooms at Turner Field. In 2005, her ticket sales totaled more than \$2 million.

"During the season and post-season, we work really long hours. Some days, I come in at 8:30 a.m. and don't leave until almost midnight; then it is back up and at it the next day," Thornton stated. "But being a part of the Braves organization and helping companies and families plan memorable events makes it worthwhile."

Thornton said she plans to bring the same passion to her new role as a member of the University's Alumni Association Board of Directors.

"Georgia Southern is something that I love and cherish," said Thornton, who majored in sports management with a minor in business. "My time on campus really helped prepare me for life after college. I use something that I learned from classes every day, and I had the opportunity to be involved with large sporting events, such as the Super Bowls in Atlanta and Tampa and the Family Circle Cup held in Charleston. Working with those events prepared me for the demands of my current job."

As one of the newest alumni board members, Thornton is still learning about how she will contribute. But she views this opportunity as an important way to stay involved with the University.

"My mentor, Dr. Willie Burden, always encouraged us to network," stated Thornton. "He said put yourself out there because you never know who you might meet and who could help you in the future."

To aid in that effort, Thornton said she looks forward to helping the board plan exciting events that encourage alumni to attend and get involved.

"We just have to get the word out to alums that we are here to help them, get them involved and keep building those relationships," said Thornton.



## » ALUMNI NEWS

### ATTENTION! 1956 Graduates

Make plans to attend your 50-year reunion at Georgia Southern. You will be our guests at events during Homecoming Weekend, Oct. 20-21.

Watch your mail for more information or call the Office of Alumni Relations at 912-681-5691.



The annual T-Club Reunion was held on campus on Saturday, April 22. Baseball players, basketball players and cheerleaders from the late 1940s, '50s and '60s returned to Georgia Southern and enjoyed an afternoon of baseball and dinner at R.J.'s Steakery. The event was hosted by the University's Office of Alumni Relations.

## 1970s

**Mary Emily Smith** ('71) retired from Clayton County, Ga., schools in July 2005 after teaching for 34 years. She and her husband, Michael, have moved to Cambridge, England, to continue his work with Lockheed Martin. They plan to be there three to four years.

**Lydia Henderson Sparger** ('71) and her husband, Kevin, live in Jonesboro, Ga. After a career as an educator, she has stepped back to teaching part-time in the Early Intervention Program during the 2006-07 school year. She would enjoy hearing from friends at [kevinsparger@comcast.net](mailto:kevinsparger@comcast.net).

**The Rev. Douglas T. Simmons** ('73) is director of chaplaincy services with the Georgia Department of Corrections. He and his wife, Jan, have three daughters, Ansley ('04), Jana and Alea, and live in Cairo, Ga.

**Wesley Johnson** ('74) is the associate dean in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. He was elected second vice president of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, an international association fostering professional and scholarly activities in the field.

**Cathey Kite King** is a Coldwell Banker real estate broker in Valdosta, Ga. She and her husband, Gary, have an adult son, Gary Jr.

Cathey may be reached at [catheyking@valdosta-realtors.com](mailto:catheyking@valdosta-realtors.com).

**Leonard Collins** ('75) is a maintenance director with the Barnwell (S.C.) county government.

**Patrick and Susan (Busby) Thornton** ('79) of Brunswick, Ga., watched their son, Jon-Patrick, a University junior, help his Georgia Southern rugby team to the national finals this year. The team defeated Florida State, Ole Miss and Arkansas State to gain a bid to the playoffs. The elder Thornton helped to start the rugby club at Georgia Southern in 1978. Patrick is a senior parole officer with the state and Susan is an attorney with the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center.

## » ALUMNI PROFILE

# Education for life

## Florida Department of Health program manager Shameeka Akins battles a public health crisis

By Phillip Brown

As a public health professional focused on sexually transmitted diseases, Shameeka Akins deals with the realities of unsafe sex.

"Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are a major health crisis," said Akins ('98), who works with the Broward County, Fla., Department of Health. "There's great emphasis on prevention, but once a person is identified as having been infected, the focus needs to be on treatment and alerting others who are at risk for infection."



As program manager for the health agency's Sexually Transmitted Disease Department, Akins oversees a 25-member staff that provides services to the county's 1.7 million residents. The goal is to identify persons infected with an STD and track down their sexual partners to encourage them to be tested. To do so, her department must work with public and private health care professionals and other community-based organizations to ensure they adhere to Florida

*"There's great emphasis on prevention, but once a person is identified as having been infected, the focus needs to be on treatment and alerting others who are at risk for infection."*

**Shameeka Akins**

statutes and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines.

According to Akins, one of her challenges is overcoming a misperception of her department's role. Large segments of the community think "we are trying to get into their business," she said.

Nothing could be farther from the truth, said Akins. "Our role is to promote health and prolong life. If untreated, STDs pose serious consequences – infertility, neurological damage, even death."

Since being promoted to her current position, Akins has developed several initiatives to

broaden testing for at-risk populations. One program focuses on promoting STD testing to patrons of Broward County nightclubs; a second created new testing programs at jails and prisons.

Akins worked with county officials to begin testing all male and female prisoners during the intake process. Men are tested for syphilis; women for chlamydia and gonorrhea.

Prior to assuming her current role, Akins worked with the Miami-Dade County Department of Health as a disease intervention specialist and supervisor.

Although it's been eight years since Akins graduated, she credits Georgia Southern with sparking her interest in public health.

"Originally, I enrolled with the idea of being a physical therapist," Akins said. "But after taking courses with Drs. Joanne Chopak-Foss and Helen Welle-Graf, I discovered how managing public health benefited the community. Their classes were rigorous, but they were so passionate about their subjects."

Akins, who earned a bachelor's degree in health science at Georgia Southern, completed a Master of Public Health Degree from Florida Atlantic University in 2000. She and her 2-year-old daughter, Samari Rashon Randolph, reside in Miami-Dade County.

## 1980s

**Guy Foulkes** ('84) has been named chief of hand surgery for the Medical Center of Central Georgia in Macon. He is in private practice as a partner with Macon Orthopaedic and Hand Center. He and his wife, Lesley, have four daughters, Savannah, Caroline, Raine and Amelia. The family lives in Macon.

**Susan C. Dailey** ('88) has opened Dailey Marketing Solutions, an advertising and public relations consulting business. She can be reached at [daileymarketingsolutions@comcast.net](mailto:daileymarketingsolutions@comcast.net).

**Mark G. Reddick** ('89) is director of budgets and audits at DeKalb Technical College. He lives in Grayson, Ga.

## 1990s

**John Beard** ('90) is a plant engineer manager with Sylvania Yarn Systems. His wife, **Caroline** (Hembel '78), is self-employed with B&B Technical Services. The couple has five children and live in Millen, Ga. They can be reached at [bbtech@burke.net](mailto:bbtech@burke.net).

**Daniel Edenfield** ('90) was selected as Teacher of the Year at the Performance Learning Center in Statesboro. "Teaching is about taking the time to show students that they are important enough to be held accountable," he said. "It's about high standards and leading by example."

**Thomas Glover Jr.** ('90) has retired from his construction company and relocated from Washington to Ellijay, Ga. He can be reached at [thomasgloverjr@lycos.com](mailto:thomasgloverjr@lycos.com).

**Tracy D. Wright** ('90), is a middle school mathematics teacher in Dayton, Fla. She was chosen as Teacher of the Year for Holly Hill Middle School for 2006-07 and as Walmart Sam's Club #8138 2006 Teacher of the Year.

**Raleigh McKeever** ('91) opened RPM Muscular Therapies LLC-Relief for Muscle Problems. The Atlanta-based company specializes in addressing and correcting muscular dysfunction.

**Keith William Puskus** and his wife, Marissa, live in Cumming, Ga., where he is assistant vice president for claims with AIG. They have two children, Mersadi Ashtin, 6, and Maddux William, 4.



Chad Cork, left, and actor David Strathairn on the set of "We are Marshall."

### » ALUMNI PROFILE

## Labor of love

### Cork feels he's found perfect career in entertainment field

By Michelle Groover

Chad Cork didn't go for the money. His search for the perfect career took some time, but now that he's found it, he wouldn't change a thing.

Cork ('96) has worked as a location manager, field coordinator and unit manager on the reality TV programs "Renovate My Family," "Being Bobby Brown," "Trading Spouses," "The X Effect" and "Cheyenne." Currently he is casting extras for the film "We Are Marshall."

"The film is about the 1970 plane crash of the Marshall University football team and their passion and strength to rise from their town's huge loss to becoming a community that grows closer with the rebuilding of the new young Thundering Herd," Cork said. "The story alone is one that not many know about, but it is a really hard thing to wrap your brain around that in the blink of an eye an entire legacy of football is taken away.

"The cast and crew have done incredible jobs to date and the producers, writers, directors, as well as every single crew member, are all top-notch people," said Cork. "It makes me realize that I have picked the right path in my life and solidifies my love for the industry."

The Atlanta native was working as a stand-in for a film and had moved into production with extras casting when reality television

came knocking on his door.

"I was working on a film in Atlanta when I got a call to work on a Fox/RSL show called 'Renovate My Family,' hosted by Jay McGraw, in the Atlanta area," he said. "After three crazy weeks of working on the show, they asked me to travel with them to other cities, so I traveled with them for six months.

"Reality television is a different beast because you are going from city to city every three weeks, living in hotels, working long hours and really taking over the involved people's lives for weeks at a time," Cork added. "Then, we pull up shop and move on to the next city. It is a great way to tour the United States and see some incredible cities that you normally would not visit."

Now living in Los Angeles, Cork said that his current project has made the biggest impact on his career.

"I struggled for awhile after graduating to find what career choice was right for me, and I made some wrong turns, but I saw a dream and have followed that goal," he said. "I love every minute of my career.

"My advice to those trying to determine which path to follow is not to always go for the money," said Cork. "Go for what is going to make you happy in life – to wake up and really truly love your work – no matter how many hours you put in and how crazy it may get and still get up the next day to do it all over again."

» ALUMNI PROFILE

## Jane Whaley keeps an eye on Florida's wild creatures

By Michelle Groover

When astronaut meets alligator, it's never a good thing.

That's when they call Jane Whaley.

Whaley ('95) is a law enforcement officer in the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge, which encompasses 140,000 acres of the John F. Kennedy Space Center.



"I enforce federal and state game laws, as well as the conservation of our wildlife resources," she said. "Every day presents new challenges and changing priorities. I am also responsible for the safety of over one million visitors each year to our refuges."

Whaley patrols areas that are home to more than 146 state and federally listed endangered species of plants and animals, including woodland and migratory birds, deer, turkey, alligators, snakes, manatees and sea turtles.

"My refuge has been nicknamed 'The Eight Foot and Over Club' because you rarely see an alligator less than eight feet long," she said. "At Merritt Island, I have been called to relocate alligators that have found their way to a NASA

building or onto the shuttle launch pads, but so far everything has gone smoothly. Relocating a 12-foot alligator is not quite the same experience as you see on TV. It's better!"

Seeing first-hand how technology and wildlife sometimes cross paths is incredible, said Whaley.

"It's a common sight to see NASA astronauts flying touch-and-go missions at the shuttle landing facility, while alligators bask in the sun near the end of the runway."

Whaley is the only female full-time law enforcement officer in the southeast region of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. "It wasn't easy to convince a male-dominated field to even give me a chance," she explained. "But I think I have proven that I can hold my own."

Whaley has been with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for more than six years, first serving as a biologist for four-and-a-half years. "As a biologist, I spent a lot of time out on the refuge and would witness first-hand violations of the law," she said. "At the time there was only one law enforcement officer on the refuge, and he was being run ragged. I felt so strongly about getting involved that I began to ask to be sent

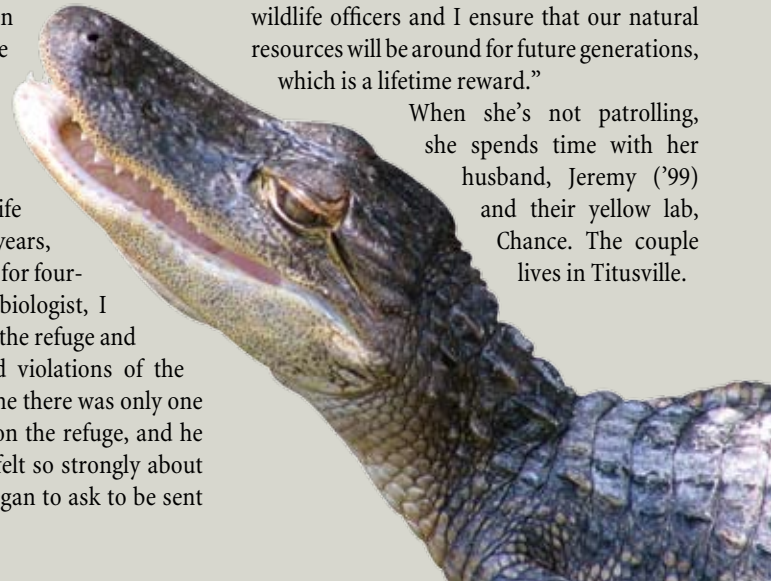
to over nine months of training.

When called to respond to a problem at 3 a.m., Whaley wonders what she was thinking. "But I wouldn't trade it for anything. I make my own hours and it is never the same day twice."

Although the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is her main responsibility, Whaley also patrols five other national refuges. "To say I spend a lot of time on foot and in my truck is an understatement," she said.

Ensuring the safety of animals living in the refuges is very important to Whaley. "The most rewarding part of my job is that I am on the front lines of defending wildlife and preserving our natural resources," she explained. "Other wildlife officers and I ensure that our natural resources will be around for future generations, which is a lifetime reward."

When she's not patrolling, she spends time with her husband, Jeremy ('99) and their yellow lab, Chance. The couple lives in Titusville.



**Brian K. Green** ('92) is a physical education teacher at Greer High School in Greer, S.C. He and his wife, Kathleen, have three children, Brice, Austin and Caroline and would like to hear from friends at [ballcoach36@yahoo.com](mailto:ballcoach36@yahoo.com).

**Pamela Moore Marsingill** ('92) and her husband, Donald, announce the June 2005 birth of their daughter, Piper Katelyn.

**David Nix** ('92) and his wife, Deborah (Veitch '92), announce the March birth of their daughter, Anna Kay. The couple also has two sons, Cole and Jackson. David is a materials manager with Rheem Manufacturing. Deborah is a homemaker. They can be reached at [d\\_nix@bellsouth.net](mailto:d_nix@bellsouth.net).

**Darren Lane Hoffman** ('93) is a general manager with Godley Group Holdings. He and his wife, Crystal, have a daughter, Abbigail, and live in Swansea, S.C. He can be reached at [lhoffman@pbtcomm.net](mailto:lhoffman@pbtcomm.net).

**Alasha McElroy Mikell** ('94) and her husband, Lee, celebrated the September birth of their daughter, Morgan. "I would love to hear from any old friends at [alasha\\_m@hotmail.com](mailto:alasha_m@hotmail.com)," she writes.



**Greg Pallone** ('94) is a news anchor with WJCL ABC 22/WTGS Fox 28 in Savannah. "My job as a journalist has taken me places I never thought I'd go," he writes. "I've been through hurricanes, on the frontlines with firefighters battling wildfires, interviewed Hollywood stars and on the field of major pro sports, just to name a few." He can be reached at [gpallone@wjcl.com](mailto:gpallone@wjcl.com).

**Heather McAdam Pomilio** ('94) is a special education teacher with the New York City Board of Education and last year started her own photography business. She and her husband, Steven, live in Massapequa, N.Y. "I would love to hear from friends at [www.spittenimage.com](http://www.spittenimage.com)," she writes.





## » ALUMNI NEWS

### New Alumni Association Board members

The Georgia Southern Alumni Association welcomed its new Board of Directors members recently. They will serve on the Board through 2008. Pictured are: front row, l-r, Dennette Thornton, Tina Brinson and Angela Walton. Back row, l-r, Hoke Reeves, Shaun O'Quinn, Sam Pathak and Mike Carpenter. Not pictured is Jerry Bilton, who is currently serving our country in Iraq.

## » ALUMNI PROFILE

# New York state of mind

## Bryant opts to pursue writing in the city, but cherishes her rural roots

By Phillip Brown

Salita Bryant could have stayed on the corporate ladder. Instead, she opted off the fast track to pursue her passion – writing.

That decision resulted in a journey of exploration taking the 1984 Georgia Southern alumna through the halls of academia from the University of Mississippi to New York University.

“After graduating from Georgia Southern, I moved to Mississippi, where I worked in newspaper advertising and sales,” Bryant explained. “In 1988, I was offered a job in Chicago, which forced me to make a decision. Stay on the corporate ladder or be true to myself.”

Bryant decided on the latter and enrolled at the University of Mississippi.



“When I arrived in Oxford, I intended to concentrate on fiction, but after taking a class in poetry, I fell in love with the genre,” said Bryant. “Writing poetry teaches you how to control language – it’s one of the hardest things I’ve ever done.”

After completing two master’s degrees – one in British literature, a second in counseling – along with a doctorate in American literature, Bryant decided to follow her poetic passions to New York.

She is completing a Master of Fine Arts in poetry at New York University while serving as a lecturer in the university’s Expository Writing Program.

“I couldn’t imagine living and writing anywhere else in the world except New York,” exclaimed Bryant, who is completing her thesis under the direction of Pulitzer Prize winner Yusef Komunyakaa, considered one of the top 10 modern American poets.

While New York may be the city that never sleeps, said Bryant, “Pockets of calmness and peace can be found. Plus, there’s a sense of

freedom to the city – you can walk or take a train anywhere.”

The city is the subject of Bryant’s “First Spring in New York,” which won top honors from *The Spoon River Poetry Review*, based at Illinois State University, in 2005. Although the work focuses on life in the metropolis, Bryant incorporates Southern themes in the work, especially images from nature.

“I’m writing about living in a city that I love, yet there’s a line where I lament the fact that a thousand miles away, magnolias are blooming without me,” she said.

Balancing writing, teaching and dating in New York is a struggle, Bryant admitted. She said her short-term goals are finishing her first book of poems and completing her MFA next May.

In the future, Bryant said she would like to combine writing with her interest in sociology, her undergraduate degree from Georgia Southern.

“At some point I’d like to practice ‘bibliotherapy,’ a technique to help clients work through emotional challenges using writing,” Bryant explained.

## » ALUMNI PROFILE

### Disney demands keep Robin Burkett on the run

Robin Burkett does a lot of running around. Sometimes it's for business. Other times, it's just for fun.

Burkett ('78) is the area manager for two Walt Disney World properties, the Caribbean Beach Resort and the Pop Century Resort.

"I take care of all the recreation cast members, lifeguards, chemists – those that take care of the pool – the custodians that clean up around the recreation areas, and I oversee an arcade," she said. "I also serve as the safety manager at both resorts."

Burkett recently completed her 239<sup>th</sup> road race – an activity that she says is both healthy and fun.

"I run a race every weekend somewhere in Central Florida," said Burkett. "I never train. I just run the races."

"I saw my sister-in-law run the Disney Marathon a few years ago and decided to do it. I have run marathons, half-marathons, 15Ks, 10Ks and 5Ks. I do pretty well for a 50-year-old!"

Having worked for Disney for the past 28 years, Burkett said the most rewarding aspect of her job is seeing her "cast members" – Disney's term for its employees – succeed.

"When I see one of my cast members move on to bigger and better things, it is so rewarding to me," she said. "Sometimes they'll send me a thank you card and that gets me every time!"

Burkett, a native of Douglas, Ga., chose Georgia Southern because of its size and its recreation program.

"I'm glad that I went to a smaller school because I feel if I had gone to a larger one I probably wouldn't have had as good an experience as I did. Plus it was closer to home," she said.

"This is a crazy place, and I love to go home and visit my parents and relax, but then I'm ready to come back," Burkett said. "So I guess I've had the best of both worlds. I grew up in a little town and got to come to the big city, and I enjoy both. I think about how lucky I have been to meet all these people and have a good job. I think I've really been blessed."

**Lisa Herendeen Hartman** ('95) is a buyer for Macy's. She and her husband, Brent, celebrated the birth of their son, Jacob, in April.

**Billy Artis** ('96) is a life support technician with the U.S. Air Force. He has twice been deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. He is in the process of becoming a candidate for Air Force Officer Training School. He and his wife, Tonya, have two children, Ariana and Anthony. They are stationed at Eglin AFB in Florida.

**Leighanne Walters Brown** ('96) is an IT solutions manager with UPS Supply Chain Solutions. She and her husband, William, have two children.

**Beth Beasley Freeman** ('96) is a regional accountant with Morris Newspaper Corporation. She and her husband, Steven, reside in Statesboro and can be reached at [bethfreeman@frontiernet.net](mailto:bethfreeman@frontiernet.net).

**Garry Spinks** ('96) is regional vice president of sales for United Healthcare. His sales territory is the Southeast. He lives in Smyrna, Ga.

**Jill Zittrouer Williams** ('96) was named Teacher of the Year for Mattie Lively Elementary School in Statesboro. She has taught for 10 years.

**Roberta Geraldo** ('97) is a network engineer with Philips Medical Systems. "I am currently pursuing my second-degree black belt in tae kwon do," she writes. Roberta lives in Atlanta and can be reached at [rgerald@comcast.net](mailto:rgerald@comcast.net).

**April Banks Jacobi** ('97) is an athletic trainer with WestCare. She and her husband, Toby, reside in Sylva, N.C.

**Michele Deneen Speer** ('97) and her husband, Robert Scott, have two children, Parker and Abigale. The family resides in Castorland, N.Y.



**Lisa Carter Acuff** ('98) and her husband, Chris, announce the June 2005 birth of their daughter, Amelia Layne.

## » ALUMNI NEWS



### Glynn County Eagle Club

Members of the Glynn County Eagle Club recently met at the home of Joan Harris on St. Simons Island, Ga. Pictured are, l-r, Matthew Harris, Joan Harris, Coach Brian VanGorder, Frank Inman, Carla Lee Yarbrough and Doree Avera

**Kevin Cannon** ('98) lives in Alpharetta, Ga., and works in operations for GATX Rail.

**Derrick Carter** ('98) and his wife, Michelle, live in Decatur, Ga.

**Alicia Cochran Cooper** ('99) is a language arts teacher at Berkmar High School. She was nominated by students for *Who's Who Among American High School Teachers* and is working on her master's degree in curriculum and instruction. This summer she is spending two weeks in Cuernavaca, Mexico, on a grant-funded trip to study Spanish. She and her husband, Kevin, live in Stone

Mountain, Ga. She would enjoy hearing from friends at [gsu1999@comcast.net](mailto:gsu1999@comcast.net).

**Libby Hull Malphrus** ('99) and her husband, Deak, announce the February birth of their daughter, Grace Elizabeth. The family makes its home in Ridgeland, S.C.



**Eva Millsap** ('99) is the community events coordinator with the Statesboro-Bulloch

County Parks and Recreation Department.

**Wendell Moore** ('99) is an assistant men's basketball coach at Florida Atlantic University. He previously served two years as assistant coach at Redlands Community College in El Reno, Okla., and five seasons at Wyandotte High School in Kansas City, Kan.



## » ALUMNI PROFILE

# Second chances

## Davidson restarts career as musician

By Rebekah Wilson

A 26-year journey has brought Jim Davidson full circle to where his dreams began – those of being a professional musician.

As a student at Georgia Southern, Davidson ('77) spent his summers playing music in the Savannah, Hilton Head and Bluffton, S.C., areas. "When at Georgia Southern I began hanging out with some of the great 'pickers' from this part of the country and I really began to blossom," he said.

After earning a bachelor's degree in business administration, Davidson "got a real job" and left his musical ambitions behind. He worked in sales and sales management with several Fortune 500 companies, supplying computer equipment to large clients like banks, manufacturers and government agencies.

Davidson's 26 years in the computer business took him all over the country, until he and his wife made their way back home to the Carolina Low Country. Turning his attention back to his love of music, Davidson found himself playing at the Quarterdeck Lounge and Patio in Hilton Head's Harbour Town, where he had played so many summers before.

The summer of 2003 was big for Davidson, ending his 26-year leave from playing the music he loved. "Things just exploded for



me that summer," Davidson said. "I am very lucky, but I believe that luck only happens when someone is willing to put a lot of effort into it, that's what I did. I've always been the kind of guy that when I put my mind to something I pour my heart and soul into it and really commit to it."

Last January, Davidson went to Nashville's famed Music Row to record his first album,

"Which Way From Here?" with Grammy-nominated producer Mike Bush and a team of some of Nashville's most sought-after session players. One song, "Fisher of Men," has found national recognition on the Contemporary Christian charts.

Davidson knows the reality facing a 51-year-old rock star with regard to touring. Instead, he is focusing his energy on songwriting and publishing. As a member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers and the Nashville Songwriter Association International, Davidson is writing music, being as creative as possible and finding his niche in the Nashville community.

Davidson's music, described as country at heart, yet steeped in the traditions of his Southern and folk-rock heritage, is gaining popularity in and outside his coastal South Carolina home. His bookings have grown so much in the past three seasons that his performance schedule is full. He hopes to return to Nashville to record his next album in the coming year.

"I'm just taking it one day at a time," he said, "putting one foot in front of the other and hoping that as time goes on and inspiration comes along I can continue to write and play as much as I can.

"I feel like after a full career I'm reverting back to my childhood."

**Morris Kelly O'Quinn** ('99) was promoted to project engineer at Rayonier Performance Fibers in Jesup, Ga.

**Naima K. Tinsley** ('99) is a hotel controller with Embassy Suites Hotel in Atlanta. "I am working on opening my own catering business. I can be reached at [karima76@yahoo.com](mailto:karima76@yahoo.com)," she writes.

**Jeannice Watts** ('99) is a communications specialist with Georgia Power Company. She lives in Atlanta, and would enjoy hearing from friends at [jwatts2@southernco.com](mailto:jwatts2@southernco.com).

## » ALUMNI NEWS

### Mark your calendar

Homecoming 2006

Oct. 20 & 21

Eagles vs. Appalachian State

### On the road!

Pre-game alumni receptions 2006

#### Saturday, Oct. 28, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Georgia Southern at The Citadel

Pre-game barbecue featuring

Big Bad Wolf

Joseph P. Riley Park - Doby's deck

\$8 per person. Time TBA

Courtyard by Marriott 843-722-7229

\$119 rooms released 9-27

La Quinta Inn 843-556-5200

\$99.89 rooms released 9-27

#### Saturday Nov. 11, noon – 2:30 p.m.

Georgia Southern at Furman

Pre-game Barbeque featuring

Big Bad Wolf

Furman Stadium,

behind visitors' stands

\$8 per person - time TBA

Hilton Greenville 864-232-4747

\$89 rooms released 10-27

*Please RSVP and purchase event BBQ tickets by calling the Office of Alumni Relations at 912-681-5691. For game ticket information call 800-GSUWINS or 681-0123. Please call hotels directly to make reservations. Room rates do not include taxes. When calling, ask for the Georgia Southern Alumni room block.*

## 2000s

**Allen Lee Combs** ('00) is a transportation analyst with Porsche Cars North America.

**Janelle Mahdi-Trammell** ('00) and her husband, Antoine, announce the July 2005 birth of their daughter, Jasmine Elizabeth.

**James McInnis** ('00) and his wife, Rachel, announce the February birth of their son, Noah James. He joins big sister Rory.

**Willard Phillips Jr.** ('00) is an assistant vice president with Bank of America Investments. He and his wife, **Alissa** (Smith '01), live in Brunswick, Ga.

**Amy Benton** ('00) lives in Marietta, Ga.

**Kate Channell** ('01) is assistant director of alumni affairs at the Medical College of Georgia. She resides in Martinez.

**Katie Mullis Bulmer** ('02) is an account executive with Northland Cable in Statesboro.

**Nancy Kerves Dart** ('02) and her husband, **Brian** ('03), announce the April birth of their son, Jackson Thurman. The family resides in Savannah.

**Denise Eckenrode** ('03) received a master's degree in forensic psychology from Argosy University in December 2005. She resides in the Washington, D.C., area.

**Chasity Bright** ('03) and Greg Roth Jr. were married in December 2005. Chasity teaches with the Rockdale County Board of Education and is currently pursuing her master's degree. She can be reached at [cbright@rockdale.k12.ga.us](mailto:cbright@rockdale.k12.ga.us).

**Jenny Kiefer Dykes** ('03) and her husband, **Dusty** ('03), are both teachers at Northside High School. Dusty also serves as wrestling coach. The couple lives in Bonaire, Ga., and would enjoy hearing from friends at [jennlyn\\_55@yahoo.com](mailto:jennlyn_55@yahoo.com).

**Erik Howard** ('03) is a multicultural adviser at University of Wisconsin-Green Bay. "It is a drastic climate change from the 'Boro, but I still keep up with the Eagles every chance I get," Erik writes.

**Elva Smith** ('03) is an activity director with the Douglasville Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. She lives in Lithia Springs, Ga., with

her son, Jamari, and would enjoy hearing from friends at [Elva\\_d\\_Smith@hotmail.com](mailto:Elva_d_Smith@hotmail.com).

**Jason Alicea** ('04) is the chief of response planning with the U.S. Coast Guard in Valdez, Alaska, where he has been stationed since completing officer candidate school. He works directly for the captain of the Port Prince William Sound.

**Jennifer Hickox Poff** ('04) is a member services coordinator with the Georgia Society of CPAs in Atlanta.

**Ansley Simmons** ('04) received a master's degree in fine arts in studio art-photography from Florida State University in April 2006. She will begin the arts administration doctoral program in the fall.

**Amelia Yarbrough** ('04) is the community director with the March of Dimes in Suwanee, Ga.

**Jaclyn D. Johnson** ('05) is a registered nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at the Medical University of South Carolina. She lives in Charleston.

**Kenith Threatte** ('06) began hiking the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine in June. "It will take me approximately five months, and I am going alone," he writes.

## In Memoriam

### ALUMNI

Don E. Beattie ('76), Palm Beach, Fla.

Louise Watkins Clarke, Statesboro

Julie Ann Tyson Davis ('63), Brunswick, Ga.

Al Gibson Jr. ('64), Statesboro

Robert "Reed" Harrington ('72), Augusta, Ga.

Frances Hughes Olmstead ('41) Westport, Conn.

Laura Starr Pollette ('56), Cordele, Ga.

Josephine Simmons Smith, Metter, Ga.

Bobby Oscar Teasley ('59), Commerce, Ga.

### FACULTY/STAFF

Sidney D. Deal, retired campus police officer

### STUDENTS

Teddy Craft, Hartwell, Ga.

## » ALUMNI PROFILE

# Eye in the sky

### Luber views news from above

By Phillip Brown

Denver citizens who want a bird's eye view on everything from traffic jams to missing persons to natural disasters rely on Georgia Southern alumnus Jayson Luber, their "eye in the sky" reporter.

After graduating from Georgia Southern in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in mass communication, Luber moved to Denver, taking a job with radio station 850KOA.

Becoming a helicopter reporter wasn't a niche area Luber sought. "It sort of found me," he said.

"The station general manager needed a backup helicopter reporter, and I was one of the few in the station who wasn't afraid to fly. After my first flight, I was hooked," Luber said.

He switched to television news in May, joining KUSA-TV9, Denver's NBC affiliate.

Luber admitted that "flying isn't for everyone, and flying on a daily basis is a challenge – especially in the Rockies. The weather is ever-changing and at times it's very windy, which makes for a bumpy ride."

Despite the challenges and personal peril, Luber emphasized it is the greatest way to cover breaking news.



"I'm the station's first responder to a news situation, and I can be on the air quicker than any other reporter," said Luber. "One afternoon, we covered a head-on crash, a house fire, a missing fisherman, and a construction-related highway closure, and reported on all the stories for the 5 and 6 p.m. broadcasts."

A winner of multiple Colorado Broadcasting Association and Associated Press awards for news reporting and producing, Luber credits his Georgia Southern years in helping move his career forward.

"Working at WVGS and local radio stations WMCD and WWNS gave me experience that helped move from one level to the next," Luber explained. "Also, interning at WGST Radio and the Georgia News Network helped. The internships gave me experience as to what the job would be in real life, not college life."

Luber said he's proud to be a Georgia Southern alumnus. "I wear my GSU sweatshirt and talk about GSU on the air as often as I can – even when they break my heart in the football playoffs."

### **Mason Clements**

University Athletics Hall of Famer Mason C. Clements ('50) died April 19 in Augusta, Ga. Mr. Clements was a Marine Corps veteran, having served in World War II, including at the Battle of Iwo Jima. His late brother was J.I. Clements, for whom the University's baseball stadium is named. As a student at then-Georgia Teachers College, Mr. Clements was a member of the baseball squad and was named to *Who's Who Among Students in American Colleges and Universities*. In 1960, he was named to the Georgia Southern Athletics Hall of Fame. He received recognition throughout his business and community life through his service as president of Ammons Grocery Company, the Georgia Wholesale

Grocers Association and the Exchange Club of Augusta. He was a past member of the Board of Governors of the Augusta Country Club, the Board of Directors of Wachovia Bank of Georgia and the Athletic Association Board of Georgia Southern University. Mr. Clements was a lifelong Baptist and a member of the First Baptist Church of Augusta for 52 years where he served on the Board of Deacons. He is survived by his wife, Fay Joyner Clements; two sons, Mason Carter Clements Jr. and James Bert Clements; a daughter, Beverly Fay Clements Dye; a brother; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

### **Sue F. Bell**

Mrs. Sue Floyd Bell, age 90, died May 27. The Chatham County native had lived in Statesboro since 1966 and was a member of the Statesboro First United Methodist Church. She was an avid bridge player and a long-time member of the Statesboro Garden Club. The University's Bell Honors Program was named in honor of Mrs. Bell and her late husband, O.B. "Red" Bell. She is survived by a sister, Vivian Floyd Dupin of Vero Beach, Fla., and several nieces and nephews.



» ALUMNI NEWS

## This old house

The 5,000-year-old Ziggurat of Ur was constructed by the Sumerians in what the Greeks called Mesopotamia, or “the land between the rivers” – the Tigris and Euphrates. Located in present-day Iraq, the 64-foot high ziggurat was part of a temple complex that served as an administrative center for the city of Ur, and it was also believed to be the place where the moon god Nanna, the city’s patron deity, had chosen to dwell. Located near An Nasariyah in southern Iraq, it is also known to Christians, Muslims and Jews as the birthplace of Abraham. A group of University alumni serving in Iraq recently took time out from their operational day to pose for a photo at the ziggurat. Pictured are, l-r, current student Second Lieutenant Nuir Hussein of Quincy, Fla.; Major John Davis ('93) of Waycross, Ga.; Col. Larry Dudney ('82) of Guyton, Ga.; Major Joe Rohrer ('89) of Ellabell, Ga.; and Captain David Casey ('93) of Macon.

### C.D. Sheley

Dr. Clayton D. Sheley ('39), 87, died June 24. He was a native of Screven County but made his home in Bulloch County for many years. Dr. Sheley was a World War II veteran, serving in New Guinea, Noemfloo Island, Philippine Islands and Japan. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Combat Infantryman's Badge and several Invasion Arrows. He attended South Georgia Teachers College from 1935 to 1939 and served as editor of the *George-Anne*. He earned a master's degree from George Peabody College for Teachers in 1946. Dr. Sheley was awarded the doctorate in school administration by the University of Georgia in 1962. He served as Georgia Southern Alumni Association president and as a charter member of the Georgia Southern Foundation Board of Directors. He also was named Georgia Southern Alumnus of the Year and selected Man of the Year by Hi-Y Clubs of Augusta Y.M.C.A. Dr. Sheley served as secretary-treasurer of the Exchange Club Augusta and the Exchange Club Fair for 10 years. He was the first male president of the Richmond Council of Parent Teacher Association and named as founder of state PTA. Dr. Sheley was a member of the First United Methodist Church and a member of the Crusaders Sunday School Class. He is survived by a sister-in-law, Grace Hester of Register, Ga.; a cousin, Grace Neiglinger of Thunderbolt, Ga.; a niece, Rebecca Coulter, and a great-niece, Casey Jo Coulter, both of Register, and a host of great-great nieces and nephews.

### Dr. David Ward

Professor Emeritus of History Robert David Ward, 77, died April 6. A native of Montevallo, Ala., he joined the Georgia Southern faculty in 1955 and retired in 1986. From 1968 to 1971, he served as head of the Department of History. He authored many articles and books including *Alabama: The History of a Deep South State* and two personal accounts of growing up in small-town Alabama, *Lamar and Me* and *Time Has Made a Change in Me*. Dr. Ward was a recipient of the University's Ruffin Cup for outstanding accomplishments in scholarship and teaching. Early in his career at Georgia Southern, Dr. Ward was honored by having the *Reflector* yearbook dedicated to him. He was a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and served as the University chapter's adviser until his retirement. Dr. Ward served as Georgia Southern's first intercollegiate tennis coach. He also was an accomplished ham radio operator, serving several years as director of Georgia's Navy-Marine MARS network, which provided private communications for military personnel in the era before cell phones became prominent. Dr. Ward is survived by his wife, Jane Harless Ward, of Statesboro; his daughter, Julia, and her husband, Gary Youngblood of Bettles Field, Alaska; a son, Robert David (Rob) Ward Jr., of Statesboro; a daughter, Susan, and her husband, Richard Turner; and a granddaughter, Jennifer Courtney Turner, of Helena, Mont.

» ALUMNI PROFILE

## Above and beyond

### Alumnus Garbee endures six days of Katrina's destruction

By David Thompson

A hurricane was coming, and neurologist Michael Garbee arrived at New Orleans' historic old Charity Hospital to lend a hand to his fellow medical residents in evacuating patients before Katrina's landfall.

It was Garbee's 38th birthday. He would be nearly a week older before again setting foot outside of the hospital complex.

"I had worked at Charity for the last year-and-a-half," said Garbee ('97), who is also a captain in the Army National Guard. "I was doing rotations in a hospital across town, but I had volunteered to come in and help them with their Charity patients.

"I've lived through several hurricanes," he said. "It was pretty scary. Sunday night late was when the hurricane came in, and that's when we lost our power. When you lose power, you lose it fully. Every convenience that we know as modern man is history."

Everyone now also knows it wasn't the fierce winds of the Category 5 hurricane that plunged New Orleans into disaster. It was the water – billions of gallons of it.

"The thing that was so damaging wasn't necessarily the hurricane, which can blow things around, but you've got to remember that the levees were breached overnight," said Garbee. "You wake up Tuesday morning and, I mean it looked like 'Waterworld.' You see five, six feet of water in the streets of a large metropolitan city down in the medical district... It was just amazing. I've never seen anything like it in my lifetime.

"That's when it sank in," he said. "We were going to be there for a while. I didn't know it was going to be six days, and I don't think anybody did, but we were just one building out of thousands in the city of New Orleans."

New Orleans in August can be incredibly hu-



photo courtesy of Virginia Commonwealth University

*"Charity Hospital is a hard-core place. It was a very old and famous hospital, and it was kind of bittersweet. It's never going to function again."*

**Michael Garbee**

mid. With the hospital's diesel-powered emergency generators flooded in the basement, the hallways were dark and stifling with no lights or air conditioning. Perishable food spoiled without refrigeration and what was left was in short supply; there was no clean water for basic hygiene; toilets ceased to function and medical equipment taken for granted in normal situations was useless.

In short, practicing modern medicine was impossible.

"We weren't practicing much of anything," said Garbee. "You've got to remember, the pharmacy ran out immediately. It has to be restocked daily. By day two, you don't have any food left... all we could really do was keep our patients comfortable. I had a 90-year-old patient who had just had a bleed in her brain – she had stroked out – there wasn't a thing we could do for her. She had come back to us from the Superdome, and you know what kind of circus that became.

"The most grueling thing, though, was just the physical labor of carrying patients down anywhere from two to 12 flights of stairs," Gar-

bee said. "We strapped them to X-ray doors, spine boards, anything we could find. It would take about six residents to carry one of them in the dark along with one guy with a flashlight.

"You're bleeding sweat and you're filthy. We hadn't had much to eat, either."

Late in the week, help at last began to arrive. "A lot of critical ones were either taken two blocks away to Tulane's helipad and evacuated," said Garbee, "or something like the Army National Guard trucks would come by, and we would just put them on that. It became an evacuation. There was nothing to do. You can't operate. There was no light, no power, no nothing."


On Friday, the hospital was finally emptied, he said. "There wasn't anybody left. I was the last one to leave." Even then, he and another physician nearly missed the last air boat to high ground. "I almost got stranded," he said.

"Charity Hospital is a hard-core place," said Garbee. "It was a very old and famous hospital, and it was kind of bittersweet. I mean, I really loved the place. It's never going to function again."

Nearly a year later, Garbee has moved on. He is completing his neurology residency at the Medical College of Virginia, adding to his experiences in New Orleans and an earlier surgical internship at New York's Einstein-Montefiore Medical Center. And, he is engaged to marry to a New Orleans native, actress Stephanie Claire Duplechin.

For his unselfish and valiant actions during Katrina, his undergraduate alma mater, the University of Richmond, awarded him its President's Medal and the American Academy of Neurology presented him the Presidential Scholarship.

# PARTING SHOT



Keyana Dickens mounts a crystal on the x-ray diffractometer which determines the structure of a compound. Dickens was a student participant in the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program, funded by the National Science Foundation. She conducted research with chemistry professor Allison Dobson.



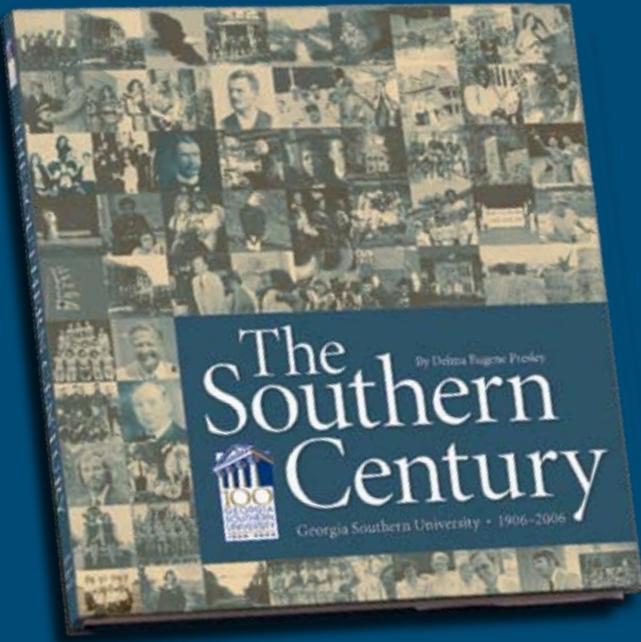
# The Southern Century captures university history

On the evening of December 1, 1906, a train whistle signaled the citizens of Statesboro and Bulloch County to gather at the S & S Depot. Returning from Savannah and representing the hopes and dreams of the community, the delegation of leaders was victorious in securing the First District A & M School.

Now, nearly a century later, the history of our institution will be told in an elegant 300-page hard-cover volume, *The Southern Century – Georgia Southern University 1906-2006*. In its first 100 years, our institution and its leaders have illustrated the strength, perseverance and pride that have transformed a small school on a dirt road to a nationally distinctive university.

Delma Presley, University historian and professor emeritus, has spent three years collecting interviews, stories, memories and images for this project. From academics and student life to the administration and community, *The Southern Century* captures the spirit of a progressive institution and the impact it has made on so many lives.

"We hope this book will be a treasure of information and insight for those who love the University and a visually rich introduction for those who wish to learn more about it," Presley said. "Because this is a limited edition, copies of *The Southern Century* may be reserved through the University Store at 1-800-861-7059 or [www.gsustore.com](http://www.gsustore.com). We expect the book will be ready to ship to customers in mid-November."



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