The role of Research

Student-faculty research partnerships add new energy to the University’s collaborative and experiential learning atmosphere.
To Our
ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

Recent coverage of the quarterly national and statewide economic outlook that appeared in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution and several other publications included information of particular importance to Georgia Southern. It wasn’t the prognostications themselves, but that the source of the story was the Georgia Retail Index, a new product of the Center for Retail Studies in our College of Business Administration.

Major news emanates from campus with increasing frequency, so that’s not the reason for excitement. The point of pride here is that the Georgia Retail Index is among many emerging examples of our redoubled commitment to student-faculty research that advance our value of the student-centered learning environment that is Georgia Southern.

The Retail Index comes from Professor Kathleen Gruben’s Retail Management class and it showcases the work of several talented students who assisted with the survey. Presented in partnership with the Georgia Retail Association, the Index promises to become a fixture for economists, government leaders, and consumers alike.

In the College of Science and Technology, Associate Dean Bret Danilowicz has overseen the awarding of the first Paulson Scholarship Awards that support research being carried out by undergraduates side-by-side with faculty mentors.

With support from our McNair Achievement Program, junior chemistry major Trianna McCall, of Albany, Ga., has seen her undergraduate research begin to pave the way for her continued academic and professional success. She’s recently been awarded the United Negro College Fund-Merck Undergraduate Scholarship. It’s a $25,000 prize that includes two internships with Merck Pharmaceuticals. Hats off to Trianna and her mentor, Dr. Michele McGibony, for this terrific accomplishment!

The Office of Research Service and Sponsored Programs this year is managing the first round of 15 grants to support student-faculty research projects. The range of endeavors includes senior history major Emily Dabney’s work with professors Charles Crouch and John Steinberg in tracing Nazi real estate confiscations against Jews in Paris. Emily, who is from Martinez, Ga., will travel to France to conduct primary research.

Graduate English student Amanda Holmes, of Ludowici, Ga., will use her research grant to travel to Oxford, England to begin to transcribe the works of Mary Steele, a recently discovered poet and writer of the 18th and 19th centuries.

Of course, several other excellent projects from multiple disciplines are underway closer to home and all with the intention of bettering our region, our state, and ultimately contributing to Georgia Southern’s ongoing objective of national distinction. The cover story in this, the newly redesigned Georgia Southern magazine, provides a closer look at the opportunities for significant, hands-on research we’re providing to more and more of our students.

As always, I thank you for your interest in, and support of your Georgia Southern.

Bruce Grube, president
Significant funded projects and an evolving infrastructure for start-up and sustained support are fueling Georgia Southern’s rise in research. At the heart of it all is the connection between the teaching and research missions. It’s leading more students to even stronger connections between the classroom and the real world.

Georgia Southern has begun construction of a new fieldhouse at Paulson Stadium, thanks to major support from Gene Bishop, former Southern Boosters Chairman of the Board.

Professor Michael Kelly went south for the winter – all the way to Antarctica in search of meteorites. He was a member of a scientific expedition to identify and collect the bits of interplanetary material.
Georgia Southern’s School of Public Health has been elevated to college status.

The Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health continues both the name and the endowment given by University biostatistics professor Karl E. Peace, to honor his late wife, Jiann-Ping Hsu. Peace’s endowment created the first school of public health in the University System of Georgia.

The impact of the new college on public health education, research and service is expected to improve the overall health of rural and underserved communities in the state.

“This announcement is not only exciting for the University,” said Georgia Southern President Bruce Grube. “It’s an important step toward better health for communities in Southeast Georgia and other areas of the state. Evolving to the next phase of development in public health education and research will allow us to better serve our students and our state.”

“The move to college status assures that our organizational structure is in line with accreditation criteria of the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH),” said Provost Linda Bleicken. “Currently, there are only 38 accredited colleges of public health, and this move sets us on a course toward becoming a member of this nationally recognized group of institutions committed to education, research and service in the growing field of public health.”

Unlike clinical health professions, which focus on the health of the individual, public health focuses upon health promotion and disease prevention in larger populations.

The five core areas of knowledge in public health include: biostatistics; environmental health; epidemiology; health policy management and service administration; and community health, including social and behavioral sciences. In addition to having the appropriate organizational structure, CEPH accreditation requires that the professional practice degree, master of public health, be awarded in each of these five areas. CEPH accreditation also requires that the terminal degree, doctor of public health, be awarded in at least three of the five core areas.

Currently, the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health offers the Master of Health Services Administration (M.H.S.A.) and the Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degrees, with emphases in biostatistics and community health. Plans are underway to add concentrations in environmental health sciences, epidemiology, and health policy and management. Plans to offer the Doctor of Public Health Degree will take shape over the coming year.

In addition to its degree programs, the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health also houses two academic centers. The Karl E. Peace Center for Biostatistics functions as a focal point for biostatistical consulting, education and grantsmanship for the College, University and community. The Center for Rural Health and Research engages in activities designed to improve the health status and quality of life among residents of rural Georgia by creating successful partnerships with governmental agencies, business and industry, community-based organizations, faculty and students.

The College has established several partnerships including the Biopharmaceutical Applied Statistics Symposium (BASS), Georgia Cancer Coalition (GCC), Southwest Georgia Cancer Coalition (SWGACC), and the Georgia Center for Oncology Research and Education (GACORE).

To carry out its mission, the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health has embarked on a deliberate and sustained recruitment effort. During the next three to five years, more than 20 graduate faculty will be added to the current roster of professors, and students will be recruited across Georgia and the nation.
Eugene M. Bishop funds new fieldhouse

Georgia Southern has begun construction of a new fieldhouse at Paulson Stadium, thanks to major support from Gene Bishop, former Southern Boosters Chairman of the Board.

Bishop committed to funding the new multi-purpose facility, and construction recently began in the west end zone of Paulson Stadium. The fieldhouse will be 13,600 total square feet and includes new locker rooms and meeting and hospitality space. The home locker room can accommodate 90 players while the visitors’ locker room has room for 75 players.

The University administration has submitted a request to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia for the fieldhouse to be named in honor of Bishop. With his generous contribution, Bishop now holds the distinction of being the single largest contributor to Georgia Southern Athletics.

In addition to his generosity toward Eagle athletics, Bishop has made other substantial donations to Georgia Southern. He helped fund the Academic Support Center in the Kennedy Complex and the conference room in the College of Business Administration (COBA) building. Bishop is also a key contributor in the Welcome and Alumni Center which is currently under development.

“We are grateful for Dr. Gene Bishop’s outstanding commitment to Georgia Southern. The new fieldhouse at Paulson Stadium will represent a major upgrade within our athletics facilities,” said University President Bruce Grube. “His gift will also help fund our new alumni house, which will become the place where we say “welcome home” to countless returning graduates and other visitors for decades to come. Gene understands that Georgia Southern is a special place, and we thank him for his generosity as we continue to prepare the University for its second century of service.”

Bishop, from Dahlonega, Ga., was awarded the Honorary Doctor of Letters in 2000 to honor his service, support and contributions to the University. He received the 1997 Friend of the University Award from the Alumni Association. Bishop, who has also recently been named to the Georgia Southern Foundation Board of Trustees, has served on the College’s Business Advisory Council and is a past chairman of the Southern Boosters Board of Directors.

Bishop, is owner and president of Health Care Centers, Inc., a multi-facility corporation that owns long-term healthcare facilities, acute care hospitals and pharmacies. He has served as president of the Georgia Health Care Association and also worked extensively with the American Health Care Association.

Doctoral program sought in psychology

The University’s Department of Psychology has begun the process of gaining Board of Regents’ approval for a Doctor of Psychology (Psy.D.) program within the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

Psychology faculty members led by professors Edward Smith and John Murray, have been working with the College of Graduate Studies to develop the program, a practical doctorate designed to meet the urgent mental health needs of rural Georgia.

“Rural mental health has been identified as a major focus of need throughout the United States and the U.S. Public Health Service lists Georgia as number eight in the list of states needing mental health practitioners,” said Murray. “The dearth of such programs in the Southeast, and in this region in particular, makes the need for this applied program clear.”

CLASS Dean Jane Rhoades Hudak said the need for a clinical setting in which to train master’s and doctoral candidates is “equally critical.”

To develop a clinical setting, students and faculty will collaborate with other CLASS departments and centers, most notably the Center for Latino Outreach and Research Services and the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.
NASA is planning a human habitat on Mars. What will they eat when they get there? Robert Cook, professor of computer sciences, is experimenting with Earth plants that can survive on Mars in his office. His goal is to seed life on the surface of Mars and to move toward robotic greenhouses that will provide food plants for future astronauts.

In 2004 and 2005 Cook served as a faculty fellow with NASA. He wanted to encourage middle and high school students to do science or school projects on the Mars mission. “The trick is that whatever I came up with, it had to be something a middle or high school student could realistically do safely and maybe with school equipment and not too expensive,” he explained.

We do have plants that exist in cold, dry conditions, such as cacti and lichens, but we don’t necessarily have a duplicate of the type of atmosphere you’d find on Mars,” Cook said.

Cook decided to use a vacuum Bell jar because it is part of almost every high school’s science equipment. He added carbon dioxide using a bicycle flat tire kit, then added cactus from Wal-Mart and pumped the atmosphere to a low pressure. “The missing ingredient is a low temperature,” he said.

In recent months, Cook has visited a high school and an elementary school on Hilton Head Island, S.C., where he gave invited talks on the topic. “After visiting the schools I received responses from teachers saying they were going to start a Mars garden,” he said.

Students graduating from Georgia Southern University’s Logistics and Intermodal Transportation program have been granted “Certified in Transportation and Logistics” (CTL) designation through a waiver based on the strength of the University’s coursework.

Granted by the American Society of Transportation and Logistics (ASTL), the waiver allows Georgia Southern graduates to be certified without having to go through the usual testing process.

The CTL designation tells employers that the students have successfully completed the most rigorous and diverse training available, said Logistics and Transportation professor Jerry Wilson.

“The waiver program is for colleges and universities that have programs in logistics and transportation,” said Wilson, “and the board of examiners of ASTL has taken a rigorous look at the program of study and has decided that the program of study is sufficiently rigorous and diverse to qualify graduates in the program to receive the CTL directly, without having to go through the usual testing process.

Students coming from a CTL-certified school are considered a step ahead of their peers. “It’s something that sets apart potential employees from the market quite distinctly,” Wilson said. Even though this program has been in existence for many, many years, there are only a few thousand people at any given time that have CTL designation.”

The 2005 edition of Princeton Review’s 237 Best Business Schools identifies Georgia Southern’s graduate degree programs in business and accounting with very favorable reviews by students and alumni.

The Princeton Review annually publishes more than 190 guides and references books used by prospective students worldwide. The Review is widely regarded as an authoritative, credible source of information about university degree programs around the world.

In making its evaluation, the Princeton Review invites students and recent graduates to offer anonymous feedback to them regarding programs, academics, career placement, student life and learning environment. In the 237 Best Business Schools, former Georgia Southern students praised the University for “having smart classrooms, promoting and offering solid preparation in teamwork, communication and interpersonal skills.”

Similarly, Georgia Southern’s relatively low student-to-faculty ratio received high marks along with its professors, including observations the “professors are interesting” and “professors are accessible.”
iNet gives international perspective to future educators at Georgia Southern

Future teachers learning their profession at Georgia Southern will gain an increasingly international perspective on teaching and learning, thanks to the College of Education’s membership and participation in the International Network for Educational Transformation (iNET).

Georgia Southern is the first U.S. university invited to join iNET, which includes schools in the United Kingdom, Australia, Chile, China and South Africa.

The invitation to become a part of iNET resulted from another College of Education partnership, the International Learning Community (ILC). ILC partners include Georgia Southern ‘the only U.S. partner’ and the Universities of Derby, Sheffield, Oxford Brookes, Cambridge and East London, along with their partner schools.

Following its formation as a learning community in 2000, the ILC’s international efforts came to the attention of the United Kingdom’s Specialist Schools and Academies Trust. The Trust forms the core of a network of more than 2,900 schools in the UK sharing practices and supporting excellence in education, and it works internationally through iNET.

“Georgia Southern has been a lead partner in developing the ILC,” said Cindi Chance, dean of the College of Education at Georgia Southern. “We’re building strong relationships with our ILC partners as we focus on the group’s primary goal of improved teaching and learning at all educational levels. We expect that our students will benefit from international travel, conferences and student teaching experiences as they interact with our ILC partners and with iNET affiliates around the world.”

To bring the international focus on improved teaching and learning to the U.S., Georgia Southern’s College of Education will host iNET’s annual conference of education professionals from around the world, April 23-27 in Augusta, Ga.

Thompson named student affairs vice president

Teresa Thompson has been named vice president for student affairs and enrollment management.

Thompson was selected after a national search, which yielded several exceptional candidates.

A Columbus, Miss., native and 1981 graduate of Mississippi University for Women, she has served as an interim vice president since July 2004. She came to Georgia Southern in 2000 as director of admissions, and was named associate vice president for enrollment management in 2003.

During her tenure, she has developed the University’s strategy of attracting high-ability students.

Georgia Southern once ranked in the bottom quarter of entering freshmen SAT scores among Georgia universities, but now consistently draws from the top 25 percent of students in the state.

In addition to leading the University’s admissions and enrollment management programs, Thompson will oversee student support services.
Students’ enthusiasm was strong and vocal for the University’s Recreation Activity Center (RAC) when it opened in 1998 – strong enough for the Student Government Association (SGA) to approve the levy of a special fee to fund the RAC’s construction.

The enthusiasm has been re-energized for a new generation of students as the RAC readies to open its latest addition to campus recreation amenities. A major expansion of the RAC, which will add aquatics and even greater flexibility to the existing facility is scheduled to be completed in December.

The RAC expansion will add 120,000 gross square feet, and will include additional indoor basketball and racquetball courts, weight/fitness rooms, indoor pools and other specialized spaces. The project will also include expansion and upgrade of the outdoor fields.

As it was with the initial RAC construction back in 1998, funding was provided by a recreation fee approved by the student government.

Georgia Southern construction team finishes fourth in nation

A six-student Georgia Southern team scored a fourth-place finish in the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) Residential Intercollegiate Construction Competition.

Building and Construction Team members from the University’s School of Technology Tom D’Aleo of Marietta, Ga., Daniel Hall of Newington, Ga., Barry Fransen of Savannah, Ga., Scott Mathis of Winchester, Va., Matt Schultz of Marietta, Ga., and Justin Strickland of St. Marys, Ga., faced off against national competition, with each team representing a fictional local operating division of a large national home building company. Simulating the real world where companies compete for construction projects, the construction management teams competed with other universities’ teams who represented operating divisions within the corporation for project approval and funding.

This project involved the development of a residential property in Addison, Texas, named “The Townhomes of District A, a Condominium Community.”

The competition, sponsored by Centex Homes, gave students the opportunity to apply the skills learned in the classroom to a real construction project.

Among the universities competing were: Arizona State University, Auburn University, Brigham Young University, California Polytechnic State University, Michigan State University, Oklahoma State University, Penn State University, Purdue University, University of Florida University of Washington and Virginia Tech University.

Huggins joins Atlanta alumni office

Angelia Huggins (‘91) has been named the new associate director of development for the Atlanta area.

Huggins will solicit gifts, plan and coordinate Eagle Club and other alumni activities in the greater Atlanta area, and organize new clubs in the region.

“I’m really looking forward to working with the alumni and development groups and promoting Georgia Southern in the Atlanta Area,” she said.

Huggins has been active in the Atlanta Eagle Club and has served on its executive board for the past 10 years. She has planned events, managed the Club’s Web site and sent out e-mail updates on a regular basis.

Huggins has also served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors, the executive board of the alumni board and the College of Business Administration’s Business Advisory Council.

In April 2002 she received the Alumni Association’s Young Alumna of the Year Award.

Huggins can be reached at her office at 14 Lenox Pointe, N.E., by calling 404-231-2092 or via e-mail at aahuggins@georgiasouthern.edu.
Georgia Southern couple participates in national minority Ph.D recruitment program

This time next year, Angela Leverett and her husband, Christopher, will be stepping out of their respective comfort zones to embark on a huge career move.

The Leveretts, both University employees holding master’s degrees, will be leaving steady jobs and committing themselves to a three- to four-year business doctoral degree program with the ultimate goal of becoming tenured college professors.

In a rare honor accorded by invitation, the couple will participate in the Ph.D. Project, an acclaimed program to boost the number of minority professors at colleges around the nation.

Angela recently attended the Project’s three-day national conference in Chicago – an information clearinghouse for underrepresented minorities who want to become business school professors. Christopher attended in 2004.

The conference provided a rare networking opportunity, said Angela. She was able to get information on the basics of applying and gaining acceptance to a Ph.D.-level program, the cost and time involved in seeking the higher degree, and learn how the Project helps support aspiring professors.

Only about half of all applicants to the Project are accepted, she said.

The Project was founded in 1994 by KPMG, one of the country’s largest accounting firms, to increase the diversity of business school faculty by attracting African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans and Native Americans to business doctoral programs, and providing a network of peer support throughout the programs. According to the Project’s Web site, there were only 294 minority business professors in the nation in 1994. Since the Project began, that number has more than doubled to 746.

While the Project does not offer direct funding to doctoral students, its corporate sponsors, including KPMG, Ford Motor Company, Abbott Laboratories and JP Morgan Chase, have invested more than $15 million in the program to help with expenses incurred in the course of study, like travel to professional conferences.

The couple has narrowed their choices to two schools: Auburn University and Florida State University.

Angela, originally from Michigan, and Christopher, from Augusta, Ga., both received their undergraduate and master’s degrees from Georgia Southern, and hope to one day return to teach at their alma mater.

“We’re trying to go under the idea of ‘grow your own Ph.D.,’” she said. “We’re here at the University. We like it here. We’d like to come back to Georgia Southern.”

Campaign for National Distinction concludes in December

Join us as the Campaign for National Distinction nears its conclusion and we lift Georgia Southern toward its goal of becoming one of the top comprehensive universities in the nation.

Our goal is $40 million for scholarship, new initiatives, support of existing programs and acquisition of new technologies. 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.
‘House Calls’ reaches first-year students

Goal is enhancement of student retention rate

Each semester they move into their residence halls and get up for the first day of class, but that’s just the start of getting off on the right foot.

To help ensure students don’t have lingering questions or apprehensions, fall and spring semesters the Department of University Housing made “house calls,” a program designed to help first-year students become more comfortable in their on-campus homes.

More than 50 administrators, faculty and staff from across the University spectrum volunteered to visit the new students in their residence hall rooms one evening last fall and again when students returned from the holiday break in January.

“The purpose of the program is to welcome residence hall students to the campus community and provide them with an opportunity to interact with faculty members and administrators on a personal level,” said Allison Williams Scott, the interim academic enhancement coordinator in University Housing.

“Research indicates that developing a relationship with a faculty or staff member can have a significant impact on students and increase retention,” she said. “Consequently, this program is a valuable asset to the Georgia Southern campus and our goal of being a student-centered institution.”

“The volunteers introduced themselves and asked the students if they had any concerns or issues,” Scott said. “Any concerns or issues were documented and, if the volunteers couldn’t answer a question, the University Housing staff followed up with the answer.”

Magazine honors art professor Christine Lemon’s artwork

The work of art professor Christina Lemon has been honored with a 2006 NICHE Award. Lemon’s enameled “Ocean Series” earrings took top honors in the annual competition held by NICHE magazine, the exclusive trade publication for retailers of American craft. Each year the publication honors the outstanding creative achievements of American and Canadian craft artists.

Lemon’s work has recently been included in two books, Contemporary Enameling: Art and Techniques by Lilyan Bachrach published in January, and The Art and Craft of Making Jewelry by Marthe Le Van, published this spring.
Students reach out to orphaned kids

By Ayanna Luke

Georgia Southern students are making a difference in the lives of Ugandan children.

Theresa Welford, a University professor of writing and linguistics, asked her students to participate in the Memory Project, an international non-profit effort to assist impoverished children.

The Georgia Southern students created 30 homemade books for Ugandan children who have been orphaned and many of whom have few or no possessions. They have often been exposed to extreme violence.

Northern Uganda, wracked by a brutal civil war, sees some 40,000 children flock to the cities every night, where they sleep in shelters or on sidewalks. Each morning, they walk miles back to their villages to go to school or work. Many of the children’s parents have also died as a result of the ongoing HIV/AIDS epidemic.

“I absolutely believe the project has been worthwhile in a number of ways,” said Welford. “For one thing, most of my students have been enthusiastic about it, and I think they are genuinely touched to know that something they’ve created in a writing class might actually make a difference in someone’s life. A number of them said that to me last semester, in fact. They also liked knowing that the book they created would actually be given to a particular child. In addition, they enjoyed having an opportunity to do something playful and creative in an academic setting.

“From a pedagogical standpoint,” Welford said, “I believe the project is immensely valuable. In writing classes, we generally try to get our students to think about rhetorical issues such as the intended audience, the language and writing style appropriate to that audience, the ‘ethos’ projected by the writer, the techniques that might help persuade readers, and so on,” she said. “However, it can be hard to get classes to think about these issues in meaningful ways; often, they’re asked to ‘pretend’ that they’re writing for one audience or another. With the children’s books, audience concerns like these became concrete and central.”

The Georgia Southern students were free to choose the subject matter of their books, the only requirement being that the books not contain messages of violence or sadness. English is the official language of Uganda, so there was no language barrier.

Student James Funk created an alphabet book using alliterative sentences and wacky words to grab the child’s interest. “A good book is one that will make them want to learn and will last a while,” said Funk.

ON THE WEB: Get the latest news, features and schedules online at www.georgiasouthern.edu

English professor David Dudley’s first novel earns award

English professor and Interim Department Chair David Dudley’s first novel, The Bicycle Man, has been selected as the winner of the 2006 International Reading Association’s Book Award.

Dudley won the Association’s Children’s Literature Award in the intermediate category. The Award is given for an author’s first or second published book written for children or young adults, ages birth to 17 years. Awards are given for fiction and nonfiction in each of three categories: primary, intermediate and young adult.

Set in Twin City, Ga., in 1927, The Bicycle Man is a coming-of-age tale about a spirited twelve-year-old and her friendship with a former slave in the segregated South.

The International Reading Association provides support for teachers of reading.

In the classroom, Dudley specializes in African-American literature and the Bible as literature.
By Urkovia Jacobs-Andrews

In her application for graduate school in California, England native Annette Laing wrote that she “admired historians who reached out to the public.”

Today, her students can say they admire her for the same reason.

Laing became increasingly concerned that a lot of educational programs for kids are “frankly dull.” It was then she hit upon a way to spark children’s interest in history.

“I had this idea for a program where children would pretend to be in the past,” said Laing, who has taught at the University since 1996. “I had spent three months in Colonial Williamsburg many years ago and it always lingered how exciting, energizing and inspiring it was for me to do these sorts of things myself.”

In 2003, Laing organized an outdoor event at Georgia Southern, Colonial Kids Fair, that encouraged people to participate in activities like crafts, dolls and quilts. Although the event proved successful, it was not enough. She decided to take over the Nessmith-Lane Continuing Education Building to create TimeShop, a unique time travel program.

TimeShop allows children to move from room to room pretending they are time travelers in England during World War II. The program generates excitement for both the children and the volunteers.

“A lot of the students who just showed up to do Colonial Fair enjoyed themselves so much that they volunteered to do TimeShop,” Laing said.

Students enrolled in the Theory and Practice of Living History class, also known as the TimeShop class, are essential to the success of TimeShop because they help develop characters and background materials.

“For many students, it’s their first research experience,” she said, “and, essentially, I say, ‘Pick a room and go find useful things we can apply to that room and the background materials.’ Then, in class, we discuss how to apply the research to improve the program.”

There are also student volunteers who have leadership roles. The students have also developed a club, The TimeShop Student Auxiliary.

“Once I get students into the program they are really enthusiastic and excited, and once they go through the program, they are mine for life,” Laing said.

This year’s TimeShop will visit Mont-Saint-Michel, in Medieval France.

TimeShop has grown each year, beginning with 60 children, then 100, and Laing expects at least 200 children this year. TimeShop is open to all 8- to 12-year-olds.

“We are always respectful of our subject … it would be mad to think that I could be otherwise coming from where I come from,” Laing said. “But kids won’t really understand the past and how it connects with them if we always treat the subject with kid gloves. Plus, we try to make the program stimulating rather than just loading them down with facts.”
University continues to aid hurricane victims

Group travels to region hit by Katrina to deliver supplies and help with cleanup efforts

Another hurricane season is nearing and the devastation wrought by Hurricane Katrina still marks the Gulf Coast and the lives of its people who are struggling to rebuild their lives.

In an effort to aid the continuing recovery effort, Georgia Southern’s Office of Student Activities and Volunteer Services organized a drive to collect and distribute items to those affected by the hurricane.

More than 40 organizations, businesses, churches and schools from the Statesboro community and the University collected more than 60,000 items, including non-perishable food items, clothing, water, cleaning supplies and toiletries.

“I am so impressed by how the community came together in support of one purpose,” Bill Pickett, University director of student activities, said.

A group from the University traveled to East Biloxi, Miss., to distribute the items and assist with cleanup efforts in December and during spring break.

The group worked with Hands On USA, a volunteer-staffed, non-profit organization dedicated to timely disaster response and relief. “We contacted them prior to taking the trip,” Kellie Pickett, assistant director of student affairs, said. “They coordinated with us a place to drop off the donations and also gave us some volunteer opportunities.”

The Picketts were joined by five Georgia Southern students on the trip: Angela Byrd of Metter, Ga.; John Bussert of Savannah; Jonathan Martinez of Dacula, Ga.; Adrien Stallings of Augusta, Ga.; and Moniquea Stanley of Augusta, Ga.

Once the group arrived in East Biloxi in early December, their first stop was bringing the donated items to the community center. “We all spent about two hours unloading the truck and then our group broke up,” Bill said. “One student stayed with me to finish unloading and Kellie took the others to do volunteer work at a house.”

“When we arrived at the home, we were assisting with mold removal, the house had already been gutted and the drywall removed. We worked with a special chemical on the framing and the baseboards,” Kellie said. “The neighborhood that we were working in was devastated, but a lot of the structure was still there.”

The group was touched in different ways by this experience. “There were a couple of things that stood out to me as most powerful. One was seeing the steps and knowing that had once been someone’s home,” Kellie said. “The other was when we arrived with the truck and seeing the faces of the people we were helping.”

“The most powerful for me was seeing the older historic houses and how they were destroyed,” Bill said. “Also, seeing household items or children’s toys scattered around in the debris. It made me think about how difficult the upcoming holidays were going to be on these families.”

First-year students honored for academic achievements

Two hundred thirty five first-year students were honored as inductees in the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society in February.

A large crowd of family and friends looked on as the students were recognized for earning a grade point average of 3.5 or better during their first year at Georgia Southern.

“Membership in Phi Eta Sigma recognizes the elements of an unimpeachable character, a body that is well cared for, and a well-disciplined mind,” said Christopher Caplinger, faculty advisor to the chapter, in addressing the group. “Once inducted, individuals are members for life. I congratulate these new members and urge them to get to know the Georgia Southern faculty, to be involved in research and to seek out new experiences for leadership and service during their years here.”

“We’re doing this induction, not at the end of your academic career, but at the beginning,” said Dr. Linda Bleicken, vice president of academic affairs and provost of Georgia Southern, “to encourage you to keep doing what you’re doing. We’re impressed with your performance at the University.” Bleicken also congratulated the families and friends of the inductees for their support of their scholars.
RESEARCH NEWS

Meteorite search takes professor to Antarctica

By Mark Holland

With a brutal wind gusting in their faces, eight people climb aboard their snowmobiles and fan out over the unforgiving terrain of Antarctica.

A few minutes later, Michael Kelley, a research scientist and adjunct professor in Georgia Southern’s Department of Geology and Geography, stops his Ski-Doo and calls out to the rest of the group.

Flanked by two of his fellow explorers, Kelley kneels to investigate a rock embedded in the ice that covers more than 97 percent of the most inhospitable continent on the planet.

Welcome to the Antarctic Search for Meteorites, or ANSMET, as it is known in the scientific community. Funded by the National Science Foundation’s Office of Polar Programs, ANSMET is an annual expedition that has recovered more than 10,000 meteorites from Antarctica in the past 30 years.

Kelley was part of the most recent ANSMET expedition, which gathered 237 meteorites during a six-week period in December and January.

“The expedition gave me a chance to see a variety of meteorite types in about as pristine a state as one is likely to find them,” Kelley said.

“Of course, they’ve passed through the Earth’s

Carnegie Foundation places Georgia Southern among Doctoral/Research schools

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching recently completed a multi-year restructuring of the labels it uses to categorize America’s colleges and universities.

In the restructuring process, Georgia Southern University rose from a Masters I category to Doctoral/Research University status.

“This reclassification is a very positive reflection on the University,” said President Bruce Grube. “It recognizes the fact that we are awarding an increasing number of doctorates, and that in addition to excellent instruction, we are committing more faculty and staff time and resources to both research and public service.”

The new version classifies 4,321 colleges and universities, up from 3,856 in 2000.

This is the fifth time the framework has been revised, this time because “the higher education landscape has become increasingly complex and multifaceted,” says Lee S. Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation.

According to the Carnegie classifications, 27 public universities, 47 private universities, and 8 private, for-profit universities met the requirements for the Doctoral/Research University category.
NCUR promotes undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative activity, done in partnership with faculty or other mentors, as a vital component of higher education. The organization enriches undergraduate teaching and learning by encouraging awareness of undergraduate research, scholarship, and creative opportunities as they exist in various disciplines and types of institutions.

Most students learn about NCUR through its annual three-day conference, a gathering of young scholar-presenters from a wide variety of institutions and from all academic disciplines. Through the conference, NCUR creates a unique environment celebrating undergraduate student achievement, provides models of exemplary research and scholarship, and helps to improve the state of undergraduate education.
When Savannah’s legendary drummer, Ernie Gadzos, passed away in June 2005, Fred Gretsch sought a way to honor his dear friend and longtime Gretsch Music Company employee.

At Georgia Southern, he found an inspiring method of keeping Ernie’s memory alive. He created the Ernie Gadzos Percussion Music Scholarship in Music with funding from the Gretsch Foundation.

“To honor Mr. Gadzos, Fred and Dinah Gretsch have given a generous contribution to endow a scholarship for a music student studying percussion at Georgia Southern,” said Billy Griffis, president of the Georgia Southern Foundation. “His gift of $50,000 will be held in perpetuity, with annual interest being used to award a scholarship each year to a deserving music student.”

“This gift will allow a student with musical promise to study with Georgia Southern’s top-notch percussion instructors and be part of several nationally recognized instrumental ensembles,” said Allen Henderson, chair of the music department. “The Music Department Scholarship Committee will select the recipient based on audition results and academic qualifications, and the scholarship will be renewable for four years.”

Ernie Gadzos began playing drums at the age of 18, traveling for 30 years with the Glenn Miller Orchestra, the Vaughn Monroe Orchestra and other big bands. He worked for several drum shops in Chicago, then in 1986, he and his wife moved to Savannah to join the Gretsch Music Company. He spent the last 20 years helping drummers and dealers from around the world find the right performance and recording drums for their specific needs.

Those interested in contributing to the Ernie Gadzos Percussion Music Scholarship may contact Henderson at 912-681-0144.

To learn more about this and other Georgia Southern scholarships, contact the University’s Financial Aid Office at 912-681-5413 or visit the Web site, http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/finaid/.
Planned giving benefits giver and recipient

By Brooke Smith

The act of giving to the Georgia Southern Foundation has long been an Eagle tradition. Charitable acts enable the University to advance beyond what state appropriations allow, making possible scholarships, endowed professorships and facility or equipment enhancements.

The two avenues of giving for alumni, parents of alumni and friends of Georgia Southern are current gifts or deferred gifts.

Current gifts are donations that are made in the current year and that the University may be able to use immediately. Deferred giving – also known as planned giving – has financial advantages for both the University and the donor, but are called deferred gifts because, although given today, the University will not realize their benefit until sometime in the future.

Through a combination of income conservation and tax savings, a planned gift may allow donors to fulfill their desire to give while enjoying certain financial benefits. “Planned giving offers flexibility, convenience, additional security and the satisfaction of giving,” said Foundation Director of Planned Giving Michelle Pittman. “Depending on the gift’s characteristics, donors are able to decide the best way to structure the gift to meet their personal financial goals.

“A will bequest is the most popular way of making a planned gift,” Pittman said. “These gifts may be a few hundred dollars or millions of dollars. A bequest made through a will may be either a specific sum or a percentage of the residuary estate.” Donors may designate specific colleges, departments and programs within the University to benefit from the bequest. They should be sure to contact the Foundation office to ensure that a bequest can be used as intended.

“If you are looking to make a gift with little current cost to you, then a gift of life insurance is another charitable option that may provide current tax savings,” Pittman said. “Sometimes a person may reach a point when life insurance does not have the financial significance for his family that it once did, so people may opt to make a gift of the policy to the Georgia Southern Foundation.”

A charitable gift annuity is another avenue of giving. “This is a simple agreement that allows donors to enjoy income and tax benefits that will enhance their future financial well-being,” said Pittman. “Under the agreement, a specific sum of cash, appreciated securities or other property held for more than one year are given. In return, the donor is guaranteed a fixed annual income for life (a second life can be included also). Part of the transfer is treated as a gift to the University, which provides tax benefits,” she said. Check with the Foundation for current rate information for annuities.

Charitable remainder unitrusted and charitable remainder annuity trusts are also income-producing gifts. “A donor of these particular planned gifts may take non-income producing assets – real estate or funds currently situated in low-rate certificates of deposit – and satisfy their charitable intent while receiving income distributions,” Pittman said. These two planned gifts differ only slightly.

The numerous planned gifts available are not limited to only those described here, but they represent some of the most popular for Georgia Southern donors. Georgia Southern can help create a gift plan that will best benefit the University, and at the same time fulfill personal financial goals.

An important non-monetary benefit gained from a planned gift is membership in the “Second Century Society” for Georgia Southern. If you have been taking steps in your estate planning process to include Georgia Southern please notify the Foundation so that it can welcome you into the “Second Century Society.”

For more information on making a planned gift to the Georgia Southern Foundation, contact Pittman at P.O. Box 8053, Statesboro, Ga., 30460-8053 or by calling 912-681-0880.

Recent Endowments

Vines-Peace Scholarship
Reeves-Peace Scholarship
Betty-Ware Wray College of Education Staff Award
Jane A. Page Distinguished Lecture Fund
Jim Spence Ornithology Scholarship
Ernie Gadzos Percussion Music Scholarship
Billy J. Lamb and Curry Colvin Math Education Scholarship
Goizueta Foundation Scholars Fund II
Gene and Jan Jernigan University Honors Program Scholarship
Allen E. Paulson Faculty Research and Development Endowment
Allen E. Paulson Chair in Materials Science
Allen E. Paulson Chair in Biomechanics
Allen E. Paulson Undergraduate Student Programs

Gene Bishop named to Board of Trustees

Newly named to the Foundation Board of Trustees is Gene Bishop of Dahlonega, Ga. Bishop is owner and president of Health Care Centers Inc. Pictured are, l-r, University President Bruce Grube, Trustees Chair Rod Meadows, Bishop and Vice President for Advancement Billy Griffis.

ON THE WEB: Find out more about your giving options at http://welcome.georgiasouthern.edu/foundation/givingoptions/plannedgifts.shtml
At 6-foot-3 and 250 pounds, Georgia Southern baseball player Greg Dowling is kind of hard to miss.

However, despite the first baseman’s imposing build and equally impressive statistics, the folks who are responsible for recognizing the best players in the Southern Conference managed to overlook him in 2005.

A year ago, Dowling became one of only 11 hitters in school history to bat .400, but the league’s coaches left him off of their all-conference team. The media followed suit when they denied him a spot on their all-conference team as well.

“I don’t know what happened,” said Dowling, who ranked fifth in the SoCon in batting average (.400) and seventh in RBIs (57). “I felt like I deserved to be all-conference, but it didn’t work out. Maybe I’ll make it this year.”

Actually, the senior from Marietta, Ga., entered the 2006 season as a candidate for much more than the All-Southern Conference team. He was one of 120 players in the entire nation named to the “watch list” for the Brooks Wallace Award, which is presented annually to college baseball’s player of the year.

Pre-season honors aside, Dowling has quietly become one of the most prolific hitters to ever wear a Georgia Southern uniform. Should he match last season’s performance, he will tie Brett Henley’s school record for most hits in a career, and climb to third place on the Eagles’ all-time RBI list.

Dowling prepared for his final season at Georgia Southern by playing in the prestigious Cape Cod League, which uses wood bats instead of the aluminum bats that college players use during the regular season.

Dowling’s team, the Orleans Cardinals, also included two other current Eagles, pitchers Dustin Evans and Everett Teaford. The Cardinals won the Cape Cod League championship.

“It was a great experience,” he said. “We were playing against future big-leaguers day-in and day-out, but I feel like I held my own.”

Dowling believes that playing with a wood bat may have made him an even more dangerous hitter.

“With an aluminum bat, you can miss-hit a ball and still hit it in the gap, or even out of the park,” he said. “With a wood bat, you’ve got to hit it right on the sweet spot if you’re going to do some damage. You focus more on centering the ball on the bat, which is what you need to be successful.”

Speaking of success, Dowling is confident the Eagles have all the ingredients they need to make a run at the SoCon championship and earn an invitation to the NCAA tournament.

In 2005, Georgia Southern was fifth in earned run average and eighth in fielding percentage.

“We have a lot of pitching depth, which is something we were missing at times last year, and no one works harder on defense than we do,” Dowling said. “I really think we have a great shot at making the tournament.”
Black motivates team with actions, not words

By Kenny Cofer

When Georgia Southern head softball coach Natalie Poole went recruiting in 2002, she was looking for a different style of player – a player with speed, someone who could cause problems for a defense.

Shanita Black fit that mold.

Black, a senior child and family development major from Fayetteville, N.C., was an impact player as a freshman. She batted .276 to go along with a team-leading 13 stolen bases.

While her freshman season was good, Black had a breakthrough season her sophomore year, leading her team in batting average, runs, hits, triples and stolen bases. She was named Second Team All-Southern Conference and her .545 batting average in the Southern Conference Tournament also earned her a spot on the Southern Conference All Tournament Team.

Last season, Black was again named All-Southern Conference, but this time she earned first team status, leading her team in batting average and stolen bases.

Whether it is a slap bunt or line shot over an outfielder’s head, Black’s offensive arsenal makes it difficult for her opponents to prepare for her, said head coach Natalie Poole.

“I can hear the frustration in the opposing coach’s voice when she reaches base a different way every time she gets up,” said Poole.

Black also succeeds in the classroom, averaging over a 3.0 grade point average while working toward a degree in child and family development. She loves to work with children and one day hopes to own her own daycare.

“I have always enjoyed working with children ever since I was young, most likely due to the fact that I have six nephews and nieces and started helping to care for them at a young age,” said Black. “I want to teach preschool or kindergarten children because they are at an age of ‘innocence’ and are at a vital age of their lives when their teachers can have such a positive influence on them.

“During the preschool and kindergarten years, children are introduced to the world and society when they step into those childcare centers and elementary schools, so they need that positive guidance and positive role model in their lives to direct them and lead them in the right path,” she added.

Although not outspoken, Black is one of the leaders on the team. “She is a quiet person, but she is an active leader,” said Poole. “When she speaks, people listen.”

“Yes, I am a quiet person and sometimes a woman of few words,” Black said, “but in our leadership classes for the upperclassmen on my team, we learned about two types of leaders: vocal leaders and leaders by example. I believe that I am a leader by example, because I feel that if I am not getting my job done on the field, I do not have much room to try to sell other people what to do, or to complain when others aren’t producing.

“That does not mean that I’m not an encourager and motivator, but I do not overstep my senior position by being a dictator,” she said. “When others make mistakes or when our team is not doing so well, I try to say the right thing.”

Her senior campaign, will, of course, be her last, and Black hopes to capture a Southern Conference crown. Still, she knows the day is near when soon she will be leaving the University.

“It is a privilege to be able to represent the University as a student-athlete,” Black said. “Being a student-athlete is not easy. It requires a lot of dedication, and physical and mental toughness.”

“There are many students who attend Georgia Southern, but only a select few that are student-athletes,” she said, “and when this semester is over and my collegiate softball career is over, I will never forget my experience as a GSU softball player. It is an honor and a privilege.”
New Eagles football coach
VanGorder names staff

In a search that stretched from Statesboro to Michigan, new Eagles head football coach Brian Van Gorder has assembled his staff and is preparing to begin spring drills.

VanGorder, the fifth full-time coach in Georgia Southern history, came to the Eagles after a year as the NFL Jacksonville Jaguars’ linebacker’s coach. He joined the Jaguars in January of 2005 following a four-year stint as defensive coordinator and linebackers coach at the University of Georgia.

Joining VanGorder are assistant coaches Darin Hinshaw (offensive coordinator/quarterbacks); Scott Fountain (offensive line/recruiting coordinator); Deion Melvin (defensive coordinator); Joe Danna (secondary); Jeff Beckles (wide receivers); Parker Wildeman (defensive line), John Wozniak (tight ends and special teams) Mark Collins as an assistant coach on defense. Chad Lunsford (running backs) rejoins the staff, having worked the past three seasons with the Eagles.

Hinshaw worked at Middle Tennessee State the past five years as running backs coach and co-offensive coordinator. Fountain spent the past two seasons as the offensive line coach at Middle Tennessee State. Fountain also coached for seven years at Central Florida and was a graduate assistant coach. He has also served as the assistant head coach and defensive coordinator at Missouri State the previous seven years. He also coached Western Illinois.

A former assistant coach at Central Michigan, Danna had stints as the secondary (2003-04) and wide receivers (2002, 2005) coach.

Beckles spent three seasons at Georgia as a graduate assistant coach (2002, 2004-05) working with the wide receivers. He was the wide receivers coach at Central Michigan in 2003.

Wildeman comes to Georgia Southern after coaching the past two seasons at Western Illinois. The defensive line coach for the Leathernecks had two stints in Macomb, one working with then-defensive coordinator VanGorder in 2000.

Wozniak joins the Eagles from LSU where he was a graduate assistant coach. He has also served at Oklahoma State and Knox College.

Lunsford worked with the Eagles’ slotbacks the previous three seasons.

Last year Collins served as the defensive coordinator at Elon. He also coached and played at former SoCon member East Tennessee State.

“There were a lot of attractive candidates out there but I think we found an experienced group that will be a great fit for myself and Georgia Southern,” said VanGorder.

The annual Blue-White Spring Game is set for April 22 at Paulson Stadium.

Eagles eager to tee off at new golf practice facility

The Georgia Southern golf program already ranks as a perennial national power, but a soon-to-be completed practice complex will give the Eagles one of the best facilities in the country.

The 25-acre Bennett-Ramsey Golf Center, located west of Statesboro, consists of a team clubhouse, a dedicated practice putting green, three green short game area, two tiered practice holes.

The Howard House clubhouse, in honor of Arthur Howard and his family, will total 6,000 square feet. The facility will consist of: coaches offices, locker room, conference room, kitchen, team lounge area, an indoor putting lab, club repair area, computer and study area for student-athletes and Hall of Fame entryway.

“This practice facility has been a dream of mine since the day I arrived here at Georgia Southern,” said head coach Larry Mays. “I realized how much potential the program had when I took the job. The University, weather, rich tradition of the golf team and the wonderful community support were all in place. The only missing piece was a great place to practice in which the team could call their own. Now with this facility we have that place and I see it being one of the top practice facilities in the country when completed.”

According to executive director John Mulherin, Robert Baker and his company, R.B. Baker Construction, not only cleared the 25 acres, but groomed and shaped the property as well.

“We’ve been working on this project for more than four years. We finally found a great piece of property and are very pleased with how the project fits our location. Holmes Ramsey and Christian Bennett allowed us to purchase the property at a very favorable price to us. We could not have accomplished any of this without the strong support of the community,” said Mulherin. “Paul Massey has been instrumental in the final shaping and infrastructure work. John Lavendar and Associates worked on the building maintenance and clubhouse.”

2006 COACHING STAFF

Darin Hinshaw – offensive coordinator/quarterbacks
Scott Fountain – offensive line/recruiting coordinator
Deion Melvin – Defensive coordinator
Joe Danna – Secondary
Jeff Beckles – Wide receivers
Parker Wildeman – Defensive line
Mark Collins – Assistant coach on defense
Chad Lunsford – Running backs
John Wozniak – Tight ends and special teams
Former Eagle finds pro success in Europe

By David Driver

Former Eagles standout Terry Williams got some advice almost from the moment he arrived in Hungary to start a pro basketball career.

Williams’ Serbian coach, Rajko Toroman, has coached several Americans in various European leagues, and he told Williams about one of those Yanks.

“He was a great player. But two days later (after getting to Europe) the player went back home,” Williams said. “You have to focus. You can’t worry about what goes on back home.”

That is easier said than done for Williams, who averaged 13 points and 4.5 assists last season as a second-team all-Southern Conference player.

Williams began this season in Debrecen, Hungary, a city three hours from the capital, Budapest, and a place with very few African-Americans. Hungary has about 10 million people, is roughly the size of Indiana and was under Communist rule until the early 1990s.

Williams spends a lot of time on his own, and his girlfriend back in the States wishes he were home. “If I want to make money and be a professional, I have to stay,” said Williams.

Other former Georgia Southern players who began this season overseas, according to eurobasket.com, were Frank Bennett and Jean Francois with the same team (Scottish Rocks) in the British Basketball League, and Julius Jenkins in Belgium.

Bennett averaged 19.3 points per game in his first eight contests, and Francois averaged 16.0 in his first nine outings.

Jenkins, who left Georgia Southern as the school’s all-time scoring leader, spent the previous two seasons in the second-best league in Germany and averaged 27.1 points per game in 2004-05 for RCE Nuernburg. He averaged 18.8 points per game in his first nine contests in Belgium.

Calvester Ferguson, who ended his Eagles career in 1991, played several years in Argentina and averaged 18.5 points and 8.1 rebounds for the Alma Juniors in Argentina in 2004-05.

Kashien Latham was on the roster for Birmingham in England to start the 2005-06 season. He played in Mexico during the summer of 2005, and with Al Ahili in the top league in Jordan during the 2002-03 season. “He is the type of guy we need in order to compete in this league,” Birmingham head coach Skouson Harker said when Latham signed last summer.

College prepared him well for living overseas, Williams said. “You have so much responsibility. It really prepared me, off the court, to live on your own,” he said of his time in Statesboro.

Living in a country with several centuries of history, according to Williams, is an eye-opening experience.

“You may not pay full attention, but then you are at places you read about in books back in the States. It is interesting,” said Williams.

“On the court, (college) really helped me because the style of basketball we play is pressure basketball.”

Terry Williams, on playing basketball in Europe

Williams averaged 18.3 points and 4.5 assists in his first four FIBA Europe games, which were against teams in the Czech Republic and Switzerland. He averaged 15 points and 5.7 assists in his first three Hungarian league games.

“We bring him here to (play the off guard). But he can play the one, and that is his future,” Toroman said. “His future is position one (at point guard). He has a body for the one, that is for sure. He can play the two.”

Williams came to Georgia Southern as a shooting guard, but moved to the point when he was a sophomore.

“On the court, (college) really helped me because the style of basketball we play is pressure basketball,” said Williams, who added that was the case at Georgia Southern. “Now, if a player isn’t as fast (in Europe), I have a little advantage. I knew coming over here they expected Americans to play well all of the time.”

College prepared him well for living overseas, Williams said. “You have so much responsibility. It really prepared me, off the court, to live on your own,” he said of his time in Statesboro.

Nominations being accepted for athletics Hall of Fame

Georgia Southern University Athletics is now accepting nominations for the 2006 Hall of Fame Induction Class.

The Hall of Fame selection criteria includes:

- a 10-year eligibility moratorium for all student-athletes and five years for coaches and administrators.
- Nominees must also have made a significant contribution to the success of Georgia Southern Athletics.
- Those wanting to nominate former Eagles can submit names via e-mail to Lanell Van-Landingham at Lanellv@georgiasouthern.edu. Please include Hall of Fame Nomination in the subject line. The deadline for nominations is June 1.
- The 2006 Hall of Fame Class will be inducted on November 3-4.
Research at Georgia Southern has long been synonymous with a dynamic process of discovery and a commitment to bettering the region and beyond.

Lately, though, a rising tide of student-faculty research partnerships has added new energy to the University’s collaborative and experiential learning atmosphere.
Research

Simply put, there’s a lot of cool stuff going on here.

Stories by Loretta Brandon
Mark Holland
Rosemary Carter

Photos by Frank Fortune
Is this type of engaged research new to Georgia Southern?

“Not necessarily,” said Julie Cole, director of the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs (ORSSP). “We are just putting into action – operationalizing – the strategic themes that have been part of our planning for many years. We are focusing on something that has been here all along, as evidenced by some of the major grants Georgia Southern has been awarded in recent years” (see page 27).

What has not always been there is a smooth process to help the faculty and increasing numbers of talented students find, obtain and manage competitive research grants. Given the multiple demands on faculty time, the University needed a way to support faculty members and their students throughout the grants process. When Cole came to Georgia Southern in 2003 to lead the ORSSP, she was asked to create and launch a support structure that would pave the way for more sponsored research activity.

The result is a multifaceted system that features a broad menu of services, from finding funding to managing funded projects. One of the newest services is the Proposal Development Initiative (PDI), a process that helps faculty members and students take research ideas all the way from initial concept to proposal submission. The PDI includes funding searches, support for collaborative teams of researchers, and writing and editing proposals. In cooperation with the College of Graduate Studies, the PDI sponsors Web conferences, workshops, roundtables, brown bag lunches and other opportunities for researchers to interact.

The University has seen significant growth in research dollars received over the past three years, and a report for the fourth quarter of 2005 demonstrates a 172 percent increase in research funding over that same period the previous year.

Cole also pointed out that collaborative research among faculty and students is growing at a rapid pace. “Georgia Southern-style research is varied, intellectual and responsive,” she said. “We are seeing increasing numbers of faculty and student teams actively engaged in projects that produce real-world solutions to real-life issues.”

**Putting money back into the process**

Georgia Southern is also making sure that support will flow back to the faculty and students to be reinvested in promising new research opportunities.

“Grant and contract funding comes into the University through the Georgia Southern University Research and Service Foundation (GSURSF), a University-connected research foundation that serves as the official recipient of grant awards,” said Cole, who is the foundation’s executive director. "A substantial portion of the foundation revenue is reinvested in internal awards – Catalyst projects and Strategic Research Investment Initiatives – that stimulate the growing research effort.”

Catalyst projects bring together interdisciplinary teams to focus on issues that are important to the region and to the broader global community. One Catalyst project has resulted
Scientists never know where they might find a natural product that can be effective in the fight against deadly diseases.

Some marine sponges, for example, are a source of dragmacidins, a recently discovered class of alkaloids that perform a wide range of biological and pharmacological activities.

Under the guidance of Michele McGibony, junior chemistry major Phoebe Pletcher is experimenting with several kinds of sponges in an effort to discover new dragmacidins and determine their chemical structures.

“There are a lot of different chemical compounds inside of sponges,” said McGibony, who is a professor in the Department of Chemistry. “What Phoebe is doing is seeing if these particular sponges have any compounds that can be used medically.”

Using three species of sponges provided by the researchers at the Gray’s Reef National Marine Sanctuary located off the coast of Georgia, Pletcher is attempting to isolate novel dragmacidins and determine if they are anti-cancer compounds or inhibitors of protein phosphatases.

“Protein phosphatases are a class of enzymes that govern various signaling pathways, including the regulation of metabolism and cell divisions, and they can be responsible for a number of diseases,” McGibony said.

A native of Cartersville, Ga., Pletcher slices the sponges into one-centimeter cubes before putting them through several processes that are designed to isolate the dragmacidins.

“The newly isolated materials are tested for biological and pharmacological properties to determine their potential as anti-cancer drugs that could slow down or stop the growth of cancerous cells,” Pletcher said. “We will also determine their potential in the inhibition of protein phosphatases.”

Pletcher’s work is supported by the Faculty Research Committee.
Student Jacob Thompson, right, has teamed with biology professor Lissa Leege to study potential threats to Georgia’s biodiversity.
Working to preserve Georgia’s flora

When you think of potential threats to the biodiversity of Georgia’s forests, deer and Japanese honeysuckle may be the last things that pop into your head.

In reality, though, these harmless-looking organisms may be pushing an endangered plant toward an uncertain future.

Graduate student Jacob Thompson is looking at the impact that white-tailed deer and Japanese honeysuckle are having on spring flora.

Primarily, he is concerned about the future of relict trillium. A low-growing plant with three leaves and a single red flower, this species of trillium is found in only 21 populations in the world.

“Herbivores such as deer and invasive plants such as Japanese honeysuckle are both known to reduce plant growth and reproduction,” said Lisa Leege, a professor in the Department of Biology and Thompson’s mentor on the project. “We are hoping to determine just how much of a threat deer-browsing and honeysuckle pose to populations of trillium.”

Based on a $20,000 grant from the state’s Department of Natural Resources and additional support from Georgia Southern’s Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology Paulson Student Research Awards, Thompson and Leege have constructed a series of five deer exclosures near Macon, Montezuma, Columbus and Fort Gaines. Placed in wooded areas that contain relict trillium and Japanese honeysuckle, each exclosure is approximately 82 feet long, 33 feet wide and eight feet high. By keeping deer away from some of the plants, the exclosures allow the researchers to measure how the plants inside the exclosures are doing compared to the plants outside.

“Deer populations have really increased in recent years,” said Thompson, who is from Moultrie, Ga. “That means there may be too much browsing going on, and that could have a negative effect on relict trillium, which is an important part of the forest’s biodiversity.”

Japanese honeysuckle, another favorite food of deer, is a problem for trillium, too.

“It looks real pretty, but it forms dense mats and ends up shading out a lot of the understory plants such as relict trillium,” Thompson said.

“Georgia Southern University’s most important comparative advantage is its culture of engagement, where students work side-by-side with faculty and staff, participating in active learning related to the acquisition and use of knowledge for the benefit of humanity. . . All are partners in the learning process, and the result is a campus culture of participation and personal attention.”

Georgia Southern Strategic Plan

in the Georgia Retail Index, an economic forecasting tool that serves the entire state. At a recent legislative breakfast where the index was unveiled, John Heavener, president of the Georgia Retail Association, had high praise for Kathleen Gruben, the faculty member who directs Georgia Southern’s Center for Retail Studies, and her student research team.

GSURSF also reinvests through its Strategic Research Investment Initiative (SRII), supporting high-impact projects and programs that are formulated by academic and unit leaders and endorsed by the deans. SRII projects are broad programs that blend the University’s strategic plan into research themes focused on regional needs.

This year the Faculty Research Committee added its support for research, providing $45,000 to fund collaborative proposals by 17 student-faculty mentor research teams.

Additional student-faculty research encouraged through COUR

In 2005 the College Office of Undergraduate Research (COUR) in the College of Science and Technology awarded the first Paulson Student Research Awards, funding proposals submitted by 12 undergraduates to pursue their one-on-one research with a collaborating faculty member.

“When I arrived here in July 2003, faculty members were very interested in finding a way to get an undergraduate research office going in the Paulson College of Science and Technology,” said Dean Anny Morrobel-Sosa. “Since then we’ve created a well-organized program that supports existing faculty-student research, encourages new faculty-student research and creates an annual symposium to showcase the research our students accomplish. I believe this to be the signature piece of this college’s contribution to the University’s move toward the next level of research.”

Since 2005 the College of Science and Technology has submitted two interdisciplinary proposals focusing on undergraduate research to the National Science Foundation. The first has been funded and will create a summer research program for undergraduates in biology and chemistry. The second, still pending, requests funds to enhance its undergraduate research program.

Ten students from the University have been selected to participate in the McNair Post-
As a kid growing up in the Central Georgia town of Kathleen, Trever Slack was fascinated by rocks: their colors, their shapes, their textures.

Now a senior geology major at Georgia Southern, Slack has channeled his childhood interest into a serious analysis of rocks found in the state’s Coastal Plain.

Working with Charles Trupe, who is a professor in the Department of Geology and Geography, Slack has been collecting data on fractures in Miocene sedimentary rocks that are between five million and 25 million years old. The fracture orientations will be analyzed to reveal some of the tectonic stresses the region has experienced.

To date, Slack has measured some 900 fractures at about 25 locations in Bulloch County.

“There’s very little geologic data on the southeastern Coastal Plain,” he said, “so the first thing we’re doing is adding data to the information to the existing set.”

The study has already yielded one surprise: newly discovered fossil evidence suggests that a significant part of the region was once under water.

“The presence of ghost shrimp burrows seems to indicate that at least some of the rocks were deposited in an intertidal or shallow marine environment,” Trupe said.

Speaking of water, much of the study involves sandstone, which is layered above the Floridan Aquifer, the source of most of the Coastal Plain’s water.

“The implications for groundwater issues in the region are significant because these fractures occur throughout the confining layers of the Floridan aquifer system,” Slack said. “When you have water flowing through the fractures, you can also have contaminants flowing through them.”

“By understanding how the fractures are arranged, we can help people predict where the contaminants are going to flow and how they’re going to affect the surrounding area.”

Slack’s work is funded by the Allen E. Paulson College of Science and Technology and its Paulson Student Research Awards.
Baccalaureate Achievement Program, a nationally funded effort that prepares students for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. McNair students presented their research to state legislators at Georgia Southern’s annual Wild Game Supper in Atlanta.

**Impact on faculty, students and the community**

Six student researchers who have been working with faculty mentors will travel to the National Conference on Undergraduate Research in Asheville, N.C., in April to present their work and findings. With travel support funded jointly by the ORSSP and the University Honors Program, these students will join hundreds of their peer undergraduates in sharing their research.

“There’s a dynamic energy in a research focus that engages both faculty and student,” says Cole. “Georgia Southern is on the leading edge of comprehensive universities across the nation that are moving beyond their regional boundaries and into national prominence. We are finding new methods of teaching and learning that get students out of the classroom and into the community.”

The new interim dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Saundra Nettles, also encourages research endeavors for both faculty members and students. The former chair of the Department of Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading in the College of Education, Nettles and colleagues from the University of Texas and University of Toronto are completing a $1.2 million research project on child and maternal health funded by the National Institutes of Health. Nettles hopes to extend her research efforts to the rural region surrounding Georgia Southern.

**Georgia retailers have new industry measure**

Georgia retailers brought a positive outlook into 2006 as they anticipated a sales increase over last year.

That’s among the findings in the new Georgia Retail Index, a measure produced by researchers at Georgia Southern University in partnership with the Georgia Retail Association. Georgia Southern’s Kathleen Gruben, a marketing professor who developed the index, said the study is based on an eight-item survey of retailers throughout the state. Study participants were asked about quarterly sales, their outlooks on the current quarter, inventory levels, their numbers of employees, advertising expenditures, operational costs and anticipated retail conditions six months down the road.

The research that led up to the index and the resulting survey was funded by a Catalyst grant from the Georgia Southern Research and Service Foundation and included student researchers from Gruben’s Retail Store Management course.

“With more than 20 percent of Georgia’s workers employed in retail, it’s vital that retail employers, and the public at large, be aware of what’s happening in the industry,” said John Heavener, president of the Georgia Retail Association. He praised Gruben, Georgia Southern’s Center for Retail Studies, and the student research team, for producing the index.

**SELECTED RECENT GRANTS FOR GEORGIA SOUTHERN RESEARCH:**

- **“Bird Habitat Relationships and Forest Management along the Altamaha River, Georgia”**
  From Georgia Power Corporation
- **“Distinguished Cancer Clinician and Scientist Program”**
  From Georgia Cancer Coalition
- **“Partnership for Reform in Science and Mathematics (PRISM) – Year Three”**
  From U.S. Dept. of Education through Georgia Institute of Technology
- **“Rural Nursing Services Education Outreach Program”**
  From U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration
- **“Ixodes Ticks and Borrelia Burgdorferi in the Southeastern U.S.”**
  From the National Institutes of Health
- **“Teacher Preparation Recruit Initiative”**
  From the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education U.S. Department of Education
- **“Georgia Family Link”**
  From the Children’s Trust Fund Commission
- **“Chemistry at Georgia Southern: Focus on Underrepresented Minorities”**
  From National Science Foundation’s Research Experiences for Undergraduates Program
Violence: The role of neighborhoods

As a trained criminologist, University of Michigan professor Christopher Gibson is interested in how youngsters start down the path to criminal behavior.

Gibson and his research assistant, graduate student Sara Morris, are seeking to understand how neighborhoods contribute to exposure to violence and whether that exposure is more likely to lead to negative behaviors among children in particular neighborhoods.

“I’ve become interested in exposure to violence and its consequences for children and adolescents,” said Gibson. “It is known that children living in particular neighborhoods are more likely to be exposed to violence than those living in others,” he said. “We are asking the question, Why and how do neighborhoods matter in the linkage between exposure to violence and negative behavioral outcomes for children?”

“We are also interested in finding out if parents are knowledgeable about their children’s exposure to violence and what characteristic might explain why some parents are more knowledgeable than others,” Gibson said.

For Morris, the opportunity to work on the project combined her interest in studying family relationships and exposure to violence among children. It also gives her valuable lessons for conducting research.

“I was asked to be a part of another project team and decided to work with Dr. Gibson on this specific project because of our mutual interests,” said Morris. “I’ve been interested in criminology as a field, with a specific interest in exposure to violence since I was an undergraduate. I plan to use this experience to help me in writing my thesis next year and in pursuing a Ph.D.”

Gibson’s research will employ data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN), a years-long interdisciplinary study of children in 80 different neighborhoods. Last summer, Gibson was one of about 20 individuals invited to the University of Michigan to meet the directors of the PHDCN and to learn how to use the data collected in the project.

This summer, Gibson and his colleagues plan to bring their study closer to home. Georgia Southern will collect data on Statesboro neighborhoods, which will also create an additional opportunity to involve students in social science research.

For more information, contact Christopher Gibson at gibsonc@georgiasouthern.edu.

Student-Faculty Research: Part of the Plan

“The focus on student-faculty research is a perfect complement to our strategic plan,” says Trey Denton, professor of management, marketing and logistics and co-chair of the University’s Strategic Planning Council. “This is one of the characteristics that define us as an institution, this willingness, this ambition to involve students in the active acquisition and use of knowledge. Our strategic plan defines our primary comparative advantage as our ‘culture of engagement.’

Denton says he believes that the faculty wants increased interaction with students in and out of the classroom, and that is why many professors choose to teach here as opposed to other institutions.

“Here we are allowed – and encouraged – to engage in joint research whenever and wherever possible,” he said. “We are not a research-only university where faculty members are under such pressure to publish, and we are not a static teaching-only university with little or no research or creative expectations.

“We are a hybrid. We are something different. We choose to do both activities well. We see them as symbiotic, each necessary for the success of the other. We merge our research and creative activities with the classroom and use the experience to help solve real world problems. Being a hybrid doesn’t in any way change the nature of Georgia Southern; it reinforces our nature,” Denton said.
For the past two years, psychology student Richard Preville has been exploring two types of research literature: one establishing the connection between facial expression and emotional empathy, and the other verifying the connection between personality and emotional empathy.

His question, after two years of study, is: What is the relationship between personality and facial expression?

“We know there is a difference between intellectual and emotional empathy,” Preville said. “I’d like to learn if facial expression accurately reflects the emotional empathy we feel, or if our facial expressions are more reflective of our personalities. When a person responds to you, does their facial expression exhibit empathy, or is their response a result of their personality?”

Working with Associate Professor of Psychology Daniel Webster as his faculty mentor, Preville designed a research project using electromyography to record the muscle and nerve activity of the face. Already familiar with the psychology department’s Biopac system, Preville knew he would need to purchase special electrodes to measure the small facial muscles and nerves in order to carry out his project. Psychology department Chair John Murray suggested that they ask the Office of Research Services and Sponsored Programs for help, and they were granted funding to purchase the needed equipment.

Preville is a senior looking toward graduate school, a doctorate and university teaching. Wherever he goes, he will likely continue the path of his current research, and he credits Webster with helping him get involved.

And the newly purchased electrodes? Webster says they’ll remain in the psychology department at Georgia Southern to serve future students — perhaps the ones who build on Preville’s research.
Property laws created by the collaborationist French government during World War II forced Jews to transfer their holdings to conform to the new Vichy regime, so they ultimately lost much of their real property. History major Emily Dabney, working with history faculty members Charles Crouch and John Steinberg, has been awarded an ORSSP grant to examine how extensive property confiscations in France actually were, and how successful repatriated Jews were in recovering their property. Funded by the grant, Dabney will travel to Paris during the summer of 2006 to conduct primary research in the Archives de Paris and the Mémorial de la Shoah. Shoah – literally meaning catastrophic upheaval – is the Hebrew term for the Holocaust.

“European archival research is very different from the United States,” said Crouch, who teaches the history of France and modern Europe. “The information is extremely sensitive, and many documents are closed for 100 years or more to protect surviving family members.” Crouch and Steinberg will send letters of introduction for Dabney to the Archive de Paris and Mémorial de la Shoah, and when she arrives, she will also be interviewed by officials to assess her academic credentials and interests.

“Most people applying to graduate school in history don’t have archival experience,” said Steinberg, a Holocaust historian. “We knew that if Emily were doing archival research this summer, it would make her more competitive among applicants for graduate programs.”

“Participating in a research project helped me develop a closer relationship with faculty,” said Dabney. “Professors in history know me, and it makes me feel much better about asking for letters of recommendation.”

Dabney, who graduated from Greenbrier High School in Augusta four years ago, credits her avid interest in European history to her birth and early education in Germany, where her father was stationed with the U.S. military. Working through the Center for International Studies at Georgia Southern, she has spent two summers studying abroad, one in Paris and one in Quebec. Between study and travel she speaks, reads and writes fluent French. She also has two years of instruction in German.

“If I had not studied languages as much as I have, I wouldn’t have this research opportunity,” she said. “I can’t say enough how important a second language can be.”
Georgia Southern will take part in “Solutions for Our Future,” a national public awareness project sponsored by the American Council on Education to demonstrate how American colleges and universities serve their communities and regions.

“Higher education, particularly with its applied research, plays a role in shaping our innovators and our future leaders,” says President Bruce Grube. “Applied research not only allows us to maintain America’s competitive edge, it allows us—as a community, as a state, and as a nation—to reap the benefits of the investment we make in higher education.”

A focus on research and its applications creates a dynamic campus culture that appeals not only to the students who are already here, but also to the high school students making their choices for college education.

“This is an exciting time to be at Georgia Southern,” says Julie Cole. “Teaching and learning is happening not only in the classroom, but in the community, too. Our students and faculty are finding ways to improve their lives and the lives of others.”

When nutrition major Ebony Harden came to her faculty mentor seeking direction for nutrition research opportunities, Dr. Padmini Shankar, associate professor of nutrition and food science, knew just the project. A board member of the Boys and Girls Club of Bulloch County, Shankar directed Harden to the nutrition education project she was implementing at the Boys and Girls Club.

“When 71 percent of the Boys and Girls Club’s 750 or more children coming from homes at or below the poverty level,” said Shankar, “providing nutrition knowledge and awareness is important for maintaining good health.” The body mass index of a sample of the K-5 group showed that 25 percent were in the normal weight range, 42 percent were overweight or obese, and 33 percent were undernourished.

This community nutrition intervention project includes several components: pre- and post-intervention assessment of the students’ knowledge, attitude, awareness, and behavior; age-appropriate nutrition workshops; educational workshops for parents, empowering them to feed their children nutritious foods; and post-workshop evaluation. In spring 2006, 12 students in Shankar’s independent research class, “Nutrition Education for Special Populations,” are helping to implement the project.

“Our goal is to make children more aware of nutritious foods choices,” said Shankar. “Nutrition education workshops focus on increasing fruits, vegetables, and whole grain consumption, and moderating intake of ‘junk’ foods. We give them charts to keep track of daily food intake and provide incentives to eat right. We will have healthy cooking demonstrations for Boys and Girls Club parents and will create opportunities for parent-child interaction around food.”

“The best time to instill good eating habits is when children are young,” says Shankar. “With this project we are laying the foundation for a lifetime of healthy eating habits.”
By Michelle Groover

Terry Harvin used to get his kicks on the football field.

Now he gets them on the radio.

Harvin (’91) is the host of the “Hometown Sports Show” on ESPN Radio FM 105.5 in Macon.

“When I describe the show on the air, I call it ‘ESPN Radio with a local flavor,’ Harvin said. “The emphasis of the show is local first, then state, then regional, then national.”

No sport is out of bounds – even poker. “If it’s a sport, we’re talking about it,” Harvin added.

Callers discuss sports played at all levels, from local high schools to Atlanta sports teams to Georgia colleges and universities, including Georgia Southern. “I talk about Georgia Southern all the time,” he said. “I’ve had Sam Baker, Erk Russell and Brian VanGorder on the show.”

Harvin is more than just a Georgia Southern fan. He is a former punter with the Eagles football team who has three national championship rings. “I played football from 1986 to 1990,” he said. “I played through Erk Russell’s last season and was part of (Tim) Stower’s first.”

Georgia Southern had an influence on Harvin outside of his sports interests. “I met my wife while I was a student, and my parents moved to Statesboro from Florida because of Georgia Southern,” he said.

Harvin was elected to the Alumni Board of Directors in 2000, and, in September, he will assume the Board’s presidency. “I was honored, excited and proud when asked to join the Board,” he said. “It was nice to be asked to do that and to represent the University as an alumnus, not just as a former football player.”

“Knowing that, I’ve always cared about Georgia Southern and tried to promote it the best that I can, wherever I am,” said Harvin. “And I certainly do it on my show. Everyone knows that I’m connected to Georgia Southern.”

Serving on the board has allowed him to watch the University excel. “Georgia Southern has done well taking the word ‘excellence’ to a new level,” he said. “It is a winning tradition, not only on the football field, basketball court or baseball diamond, but also academically.”

Harvin lives in Macon with his wife, Lori (Driggers ’94), and their three daughters.
**1970s**

**James Giddens** ('69) is pastor of the Skidaway Island United Methodist Church in Savannah. He was named the 2005 Distinguished Alumnus at Emory University’s Candler School of Theology.

**Mary Holt White** ('73) resides in Metter, Ga. A University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service agent in family and consumer sciences, she received the D.W. Brooks Award for Excellence in Public Service Extension Programs last October. She serves Candler and Emanuel Counties.


**Diane McConnell Settlemoir** ('71) lives on St. Simons Island, Ga., and can be reached at dmsettlemoir@aol.com.

**John A. Phillips Jr.** ('72), of Columbus is superintendent of Muscogee County Schools. He is president-elect of the Large City Schools Superintendents (LCSS) Organization, comprised of chief executive officers of the largest city school systems in the United States.

**Paul Reviere** ('73) is chair-elect of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Council on Accreditation and School Improvement (CASI). He is responsible for presiding over all meetings of SACS CASI and its board of directors, and represents CASI and the board of directors on the SACS Board of Trustees. He is a third-grade teacher at Lincoln County Elementary School and he and his wife, Ann, live in Lincolnton, Ga.

**Chip Howard** ('77) was named vice president and mortgage banking leader with Wachovia Mortgage. He has opened a new sales office in the mid-town Atlanta area and can be reached at chip.howard@wachovia.com.

**Gregg Wolff** ('77) won the E-Z-GO PING Georgia PGA Senior Championship/Senior CPC at Coosa Country Club in Rome, Ga.

**Micah Ward** ('79) is the special agent in charge of the Savannah Regional Drug Enforcement Office with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. His wife, Catherine (Conley '02), is county director of the Department of Family and Children's Services. The couple resides in Statesboro and can be reached at emward@nctv.com.

**1980s**

**Ben Moye** ('83) is president of Elliott Outdoor Advertising Inc. He and his wife, Sherri, live in Loganville, Ga., with children Adam, Katie and Jackson.

**Robert Braswell** ('84) was named commissioner of the Georgia Department of Banking and Finance.

**Stephen Weeks** ('85) is a director with Alltel. He and his wife, Lori, welcomed their new son, William Andrew, in July. The family lives in Little Rock, Ark.

**Betty Lou Letsinger Anderson** ('86) is a territory representative with Wyeth Pharmaceuticals. She lives in Alpharetta, Ga., with her husband, Dave, and children Kindle and Cole. She would enjoy hearing from friends at dnbl@bellsouth.net.

**Willie Haynes** ('86) is athletics director and a technology education instructor at Jenkins County High School in Millen, Ga. He retired from the United States Marine Corps in 2002 with 23 years of service. He is also the Toys for Tots coordinator for Jenkins, Evans, Screven, Emanuel, Bulloch, Effingham and Candler Counties. He and his wife, Candice, make their home in Rincon.

**Robert J. Christensen** ('87) recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from the Art Institute of Atlanta with a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree in media arts and animation.

---

**Alumni News**

Alumni keep active, connected through Eagle Club Network

Georgia Southern University’s Office of Alumni Relations brings alumni,boosters and friends together to strengthen athletic and academic support for the University through our Eagle Club Network. The primary goal of each Eagle Club is to support Georgia Southern and foster the traditions and goals of the University.

No dues are required to join an Eagle Club! The only cost is for food and beverages at each event you attend.

The dates for the 2006 Eagle Club tour are set, so check out the tour dates at: [http://alumni.georgiasouthern.edu/specialevents.htm](http://alumni.georgiasouthern.edu/specialevents.htm)

Mark your calendar and check back often for event details, or call the Office of Alumni Relations at 912-681-5691 for more information.
A cave is not just a hole in the ground. It’s a living museum.

So says J. Judson Wynne (’93), a wildlife ecologist with the USGS-Southwest Biological Science Center and a Biology Ph.D. candidate at Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff. Starting out as an archaeologist, Wynne turned his love of wildlife to a career of studying seldom-seen subterranean animal life. “That has been my passion ever since I got turned on to caving while studying animals associated with a large bat roost in a Belize cave,” he said.

Cave-dwelling animals – whether blind catfish, spiders or beetles – are the descendants of creatures that retreated from the surface during the last ice age, seeking the more stable climatic conditions of subterranean environments. Wynne wants to find and preserve for further study as many of these sites as possible.

“You can view cave-dwelling animals as relics of the past,” Wynne said. “They’re generally characterized by low population numbers and are often highly susceptible to disturbance. We’re dealing not only with relics of the past, but often highly sensitive taxa,” he said. “It’s fascinating to me how we can make these new species discoveries, piece together their life history and then find ways to protect these living museums in perpetuity.”

Since last September, Wynne has been taking his subterranean knowledge to new heights – developing above-ground technologies to find underground spaces. He is working with a NASA-funded team of geologists and physicists to find ways of detecting caves from the air, paving the way for identifying and eventually exploring caves on Mars.

“What we’re doing is looking at available thermal imagery related to areas containing caves,” said Wynne. “In addition to that, we’re also collecting ground-based measurements at these sites” by taking temperature, humidity and air flow measurements at several caves identified as Mars-like in structure.

“Meanwhile, the astrogeologists will be doing a thorough review of all Mars imagery and identifying those areas on the Martian surface most likely to contain caves,” Wynne added. “The astrophysicists will be developing models to simulate the thermodynamics of Earth caves using the data we collect, and then tweak those parameters to mimic the Martian atmosphere and surface conditions to give us an idea of how caves will behave thermally on the Martian surface.

“Once we figure out how we can do it on Earth, we will to apply these techniques to the Martian surface,” said Wynne.

Phase I, due to be completed by September 2006, is a concept study. “Once we do that, we likely begin the second phase, which we envision as being a more intensive collection of ground-based measurements and, at the same time, actually collecting thermal imagery either by a fixed-wing aircraft or helicopter over cave sites identified as Mars-like.”

The Martian surface is constantly bombarded by cosmic radiation, so the possibility of finding any evidence of life on the surface is diminished to “almost nothing,” said Wynne. “What caves offer is essentially a shelter to any evidence of past life or potentially current life forms. The most plausible approach is to find the big holes, send probes into those cavities and see what we can find.”

Another compelling possibility for caves is that they offer interplanetary explorers protection from the harsh Martian surface. “This cave detection project may also assist NASA in identifying areas suitable for astronauts to construct base camps for exploration,” he said.

Wynne has a special place in his heart for his grandparents, who made it possible for him to fulfill his dream of attending college and embarking on his career. About 10 years ago, he legally changed his last name from “Gregory” to “Wynne” in honor of his grandparents.

When Wynne isn’t scuttling about a cave floor, he is training for endurance and adventure races. “My training as an endurance athlete keeps me in the condition necessary to endure the challenges of working underground,” he said.
Alumni Resources

The Office of Career Services offers alumni continued support in career development beyond graduation at the same level of service that currently enrolled students receive. Services include:

- Career fairs
- Career advising
- On-campus interviews
- Online job postings
- Online résumé posting
- Résumé referrals
- Résumé critiquing
- Job search resources
- Computerized assessments
- Graduate school information

Career Services is located on the first floor of the Williams Center and is open Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m-5 p.m. For more information about how Career Services can assist alumni, please visit the Web site at http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/career/ or call 912-681-5197.

Mark Your Calendar!

Homecoming 2006
October 20-21
Call 912-681-5691 for more information

1990s

Dawn Hall Cartee (’90) is the vice president of academic affairs at Southeastern Technical College. She was recently selected as one of Georgia Trend magazine’s “40 Under 40” outstanding leaders for 2005. She and her husband, Jamey, reside in Statesboro.

Shelly A. Ford (’90) has joined the faculty of Augusta State University as a temporary instructor of theatre and scenic design.

Mark Pierce (’91) is a senior project manager with Hewlett Packard and a primary partner for InfraScience LLC in Atlanta.

Diane N. Van Wagner (’91) is a teacher at East Broad Elementary School in Savannah, where she lives with her children Joseph and Katharine.

Christopher Wright (’91) has a project management and leadership consulting firm, Tanden LLC. The company recently partnered with Elon University’s Executive Education Program to provide project management training services. Additionally, Tanden LLC was selected as a preferred education provider for the Atlanta chapter of the Project Management Institute.

Stephanie Brown (’92) and Phil Sadd were married in October 2005 and are living in Atlanta.

Jeffrey Miller (’92) is a manager with Coca-Cola Enterprises. He and his wife, Phyllis, are planning to open an indoor inflatable party and play center, The Bounce House Amusement Center. The couple has three children, Jordan, Julia, and Joshua. They reside in Canton, Ga., and would enjoy hearing from friends at thefivemillers@alltel.net.

Renee Burgess (’92) is a hairdresser and partner at Eclips Salon & Spa and lives in Arlington, Va.

Lainie Javetz Saul (’92) and her husband, Brian, welcomed son Jack Harris in September. The couple also has a son, Marc.

Scott Cannady (’93) is a pilot and captain with Airtran Airways. He and his wife, Jennifer, have a son, Jonathan, and reside in Peachtree City, Ga.

W. Austin Davis III (’93) is an ancillary services analyst with Post Properties Inc. and lives in Atlanta. He can be reached at wadavis71@aol.com.

Mark Harwell (’93) and his wife, Miranda, announce the October birth of their son, Jackson Mark.

Stephanie Jones (’93) and George Walker were married in February 2005. They live in Brunswick, Ga.

Melissa Morrison Wood (’93) and her husband, David, celebrated the birth of their daughter, Stella Abigail, in March 2005.

Danny Coleman (’94) started his own law firm in Alpharetta, Ga. He also has offices in Atlanta, Marietta, and Dunwoody. He can be reached through www.dcolemanlaw.com.

Clay Daughtrey (’94) is an associate professor and chair of the marketing department at Metropolitan State College of Denver. He and his wife, Jill, celebrated the May birth of their son, Rowan, who joins sisters Carlie and Hannah. The family makes its home in Commerce City, Colo. They would enjoy hearing from friends at daughtrc@mscd.edu.

Chad Davis (’94) and his wife, Theresa, proudly announce the September birth of their daughter, Isabel. Chad is an attorney. The family lives in Marietta, Ga., and can be reached at jcdavis94@yahoo.com.

Patrick Grizzard (’94) and his wife, Susan, make their home in Cumming, Ga.

Suzanne Martin Ratliff (’94) and her husband, Jeffery, reside in Milledgeville, Ga., where she is a manager with Martin’s IGA. Suzanne was recognized by her high school with its community service award for her involvement with the local Make-A-Wish Foundation and other community organizations. She would enjoy hearing from friends at nsmartin@alltel.net.
Each day, psychology student Eddie Lott ('95) was on the receiving end of instruction. After classes, he would leave campus and practice martial arts.

By graduation, he decided to open his studio in Statesboro, and now this world champion taekwondo practitioner finds himself in the reverse role of teacher to a variety of students, including some former professors.

“ATA (the American Taekwondo Association) has helped me grow into a confident adult who stands before six or seven groups of people every day teaching taekwondo and other fitness classes, who regularly speaks and performs in front of large groups, and who competed for and won a world title at the largest taekwondo tournament in the world,” Lott said.

He has placed in state and world championships before, but 2005 was a special year, highlighted by an ATA world title for forms. Lott holds the rank of fifth-degree black belt.

Lott credits his psychology degree with helping him as a taekwondo instructor. “My background in psychology helps me to do my job better,” he said. “It’s one of those things that I can’t fully explain, but I know that it helps me understand human behavior, motivate students, accept differences in people, and find ways to help create change in their lives.”

In addition to switching from student to instructor, he maintains close connections with Georgia Southern through many professors and their children.

Current students Travis Cook, Stacy Roark and Mandy Hart also serve as instructors at the studio.

Lott married Jamie Cathey ('99), who is a second-degree black belt and serves as business manager for the studio. They have a son, Braden, and can be reached at ata@frontiernet.net.
Thomas Sollosi (’96) is stationed at Camp Adder near An Nasiriyah, Iraq, with the 48th Brigade Combat Team. He is an infantryman with Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment. "I have been awarded a Combat Infantryman’s Badge, and hope to return home with my company in May 2006," he writes.

Damon Woodson (’96) and his wife, Jennifer, announce the September birth of their daughter, Persephone Kathleen.

Keisha Burney Cook (’97) is a teacher in the Muscogee County school system. She and her husband, Kevin, live in Columbus, Ga.

Jennifer Edwards (’97) is a district public health liaison with the State of Georgia South Central Health District. She resides in Dublin, Ga.

Steven Fowler (’97) is a detective with the Henry County Police Department. His wife, Alyson (Parrish ’96), is a teacher and special education chairperson at Unity Grove Elementary School. The couple and their sons, Zachary and Miles, make their home in McDonough, Ga.

Mitchell Mobley (’97) has been admitted to the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University.


Wylene Michelle Aycock (’98) is in private practice as a licensed psychotherapist with offices in Savannah and Garden City, Ga. She specializes in couples’ and women’s issues. She also provides counseling to federal prisoners. “I would like to hear from friends at mathrpst@aol.com,” she writes.

Pamela Waters Brinck (’98) is a human resources manager with Viracon. She and her husband, Norm, live in Statesboro.

Angela Lott Carlson (’98) is a regional business analyst with Publix Supermarkets Inc. She and her husband, John, make their home in Jacksonville, Fla. They can be reached at lottangela@hotmail.com.

Jessica Lorenzen (’98) and Lee Wade were married in June 2005. She is a staff accountant with Friedmans Jewelers in Savannah. The couple lives in Pooler, Ga., and can be contacted at lorenzen21@msn.com.

Berry Moseley (’98) is working on her master’s degree in public administration with a focus on environmental health at George Mason University. “If anyone is in the D.C. area, please drop me a line at berryrocksdc@yahoo.com,” she writes. “A special thanks to Nancy Shumaker and Darin Van Tassell for your impervious devotion to one post-graduate.”

Jill Webb Carter (’99) and her husband, Jordy (’94), celebrated the September birth of their son, Jack Brinson. The couple also has a daughter, Sara Kate, and lives in Metter, Ga.

Dustin Dunham (’99) is an insurance agent with the Bulloch County Farm Bureau. He and his wife, Casey, live in Statesboro.

Stacey Ellis Hodges (’99) works with Jim Ellis Atlanta-Saab. She and her husband, Greg, live in Alpharetta, Ga., with their daughter, Ellen Grace. They can be reached at staceyehodges@hotmail.com.

Rachel Nall (’99) is a temporary instructor in the Department of Educational Leadership, Counseling and Special Education at Augusta State University.

Rodney Owens (’99) is an operations manager with Genesis International Delivery. He and his wife, Tammy, reside in Houston, Texas.

Allison Spillman (’99) and Kory Tokar (’02) were married in January 2005. They reside in McRae, Ga.

2000s

Amanda Lamb (’00) and Kevin DiSalvo were married in June and live in Guyton, Ga.

Brett Lassiter (’00) is an executive recruiter with RemX Financial Staffing in Atlanta. “I help individuals find permanent positions in the accounting/finance field,” he writes. He can be reached at brettla@remxfinancial.com.

Marla Jennifer Moore (’00) is an accountant supervisor with EdVenture Partners and lives in Daphne, Ala.

Jamekia Powers (’00) lives in Savannah, where she is the assistant personnel director at Georgia Regional Hospital. She would enjoy hearing from friends at jptgsu@yahoo.com.

Beth Eley Clifton (’01) is a third-grade teacher at W.C. Britt Elementary. She and her husband, Chad, live in Snellville, Ga.

Jason Hinely (’01) is a reliability engineer with Weyerhaeuser Company. He and his wife, Jincy, reside in Rincon, Ga.

Jennifer Honess (’01) is an audio technician with WCAU NBC 10-TV in Bala Cynwyd, Pa. She lives in Philadelphia and would enjoy hearing from friends at jenhoness@comcast.net.

Sherry DeLoach Lester (’01) was named the 2005-2006 Long County High School Teacher of the Year. She and her husband, Kelly, live in Ludowici, Ga.

Kuwuan McMillan (’00) and Vontressia Lawson (’01) were married last year. Kuwuan is a technical support analyst with UPS. Vontressia is a senior lab analyst with the Dekalb County Water and Sewer Division.

Joshua Strait (’01) works with BFG Communications in Hilton Head Island, S.C. He worked on the team that produced the graphic design for the movie “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.”

Patty Virginia Cox (’02) is a teacher at Wrens Middle School. “Because of Georgia Southern’s outstanding teacher training program and the College of Education, I was named Teacher of the Year 2004-05 after only one year of teaching,” she writes. “Thank you GSU!” She lives in Louisville, Ga., and can be reached at cjox@jefferson.k12.ga.us.
Miesha Southward Fagan ('02) is a juvenile correctional officer with Claxton Regional Youth Detention Center. She, her husband, Raqueles, and their son, Jamarri, live in Statesboro.

Erin Schaeberle Harper ('02) and her husband, Jeffrey, celebrated the July birth of their son, Jeffrey Allen II. The family lives in Woodstock, Ga.

Heather Johnson ('02) and Christopher Griener were married in June. The couple resides in Swainsboro, Ga.

Johnny McDonald Jr. ('02) is a deputy sheriff with the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office. He lives in Louisville, Ga., and can be reached at johnny_mcdonaldjr@yahoo.com.

Brandon Parker ('02) and his wife, Natalie, proudly announce the July birth of their daughter, Matheson “Matti” Claire. The family makes its home in Reidsville, Ga.

Sanpri Purdy ('02) is a physical therapist at Carolinas Healthcare System in Charlotte, N.C. In August 2005, she received her master’s degree in physical therapy from the University of Central Florida.

Alicia Hilley Coleman ('03) is a case manager with Source Care Management, where she works with elderly and disabled people. She and her husband, Mark, have a daughter, Brianna, and live in Lincolnton, Ga.

Elishia Ingram ('03) is a mentor coordinator with the Commission on Children and Youth in Rome, Ga. “I thoroughly enjoy working with children and serving as a child advocate,” she writes. “This career path has allowed the experience to give back to the community that helped raise me and to work with at-risk students from all ages.”

ALUMNI PROFILE

Artistic license

Art director Tim Earls brings Hollywood movie sets to life

Tim Earls recently has been a space voyager, encountered aliens and took on an impossible mission. After all that, he is taking a much deserved hiatus.

Earls (’93), plays a major role in the design of sets for TV shows and movies like “Babylon 5,” “Mission Impossible III,” and “Star Trek: Voyager.” As an art director, he creates and maintains the overall visual consistency of art elements in a production, including the design, construction and coloration of the sets.

“One of the art director’s primary functions is translating the production designer’s vision into built environments and existing locations,” Earls said. “To do this, the art director functions as the leader of the art department, gathering together set designers, illustrators, set decorators and other assistants, scheduling and delegating tasks to the crew and liaising with construction.”

Other shows he has worked on include “Judging Amy,” “Terminator 3,” “Flightplan” and “Poseidon.”

“As visual arts director for the ‘Babylon 5’ series and its TV movies and spin-off ‘Crusade,’ I was able to really exploit my design abilities and influence the visual direction of the franchise,” Earls said. “Plus, I had the pleasure to sit and talk with some of television’s most notable actors including Bruce Boxleitner, Edward Woodward and Ephrem Zimbalist Jr.

“Star Trek: Voyager” has been by far my most enjoyable experience,” the Canyon Country, Calif., resident said. “The entire production crew, especially the art department, was like a big family.”

Tim Earls (’93)
Art Director

“Star Trek: Voyager” has been by far my most enjoyable experience,” the Canyon Country, Calif., resident said. “The entire production crew, especially the art department, was like a big family.”

The first motion picture he worked on as art director was “Flight of the Phoenix.”

“I was hired for my aviation knowledge,” Earls said, “and was responsible for the redesign of the cockpit and coordinating authenticity and continuity between the various flying and static C-119s we used.

“I’m now on hiatus catching up on some personal projects, including a book, which may reach fruition this year,” he said.

In his leisure time, Earls enjoys more earthly pursuits: illustrating books and magazine articles and participating in the sport of fencing. He has begun to take piano lessons, too.
Epstein keeps Olympians going strong

Melissa Epstein never set foot in the Olympic Village at Torino, Italy, but a little bit of each American Winter Games medal belongs to her just the same.

Epstein (’05), is an athletics training fellow at the U.S. Olympic team’s Colorado Springs, Colo., site, and helped to keep the athletes healed and healthy as they prepared for the 2006 Games.

Epstein completed her Master of Science Degree in kinesiology last spring and began her year-long fellowship in August. Prior to coming to Georgia Southern, she earned her bachelor’s degree from Indiana University.

“We (fellows) function on a daily basis as athletics trainers,” Epstein said. “Each of us is assigned a specific team. We are at practices with the team, then do clinics with all resident sports or campers – any kind of athlete that comes into the clinic. You help them with an evaluation and determine the course of treatment – whatever they need,” she said. “I get a wide variety, working with just about every kind of athlete you can think of.”

Epstein started working with the women’s wrestling team, then rotated to a different sport. She started working with the weightlifters in January.

Her time is split between rehabilitating damaged tissues and preventing injury. “When I was working with wrestling, there was a lot more treatment because of the nature of that sport,” said Epstein. “There were more acute injuries. Now that I’m treating the weightlifters, it’s more preventive – a lot of maintenance work, shoulder work and core work.”

Once her fellowship is done, she will be in the job market, and is leaning toward returning to the collegiate environment. “I go back and forth on that,” she said. “I miss the college setting, but there are a couple of settings I’ve never worked in – high schools or clinics. But I worked baseball a lot of college years and really enjoyed the college setting.”

The experience of researching and writing for her master’s thesis was a valuable experience, Epstein said. “Looking back, I went from thinking, ‘How can I possibly do this?’ to completing it and presenting last year at the National Athletic Training Convention.”

Her work with University kinesiology professor Bryan Riemann also ranks highly. “You don’t get any better than that when it comes to research,” she said. “When you’re working with someone like that, you’re working with the best.”

Mandy Johnson (’03) and John Couch (’03) were married last year. John is an outside account manager for Southeastern Freight Lines. Mandy is an inside account manager with BlueLinx Corporation. The couple makes their home in Marietta, Ga.

Graham Miller (’03) and Marisa Connors were married in May and reside in Talking Rock, Ga.

Eli Boorstein (’04) is a copy editor with the Marietta Daily Journal.

Jacob Dierdorff (’04) is an assistant manager with Ryan’s Restaurant Group Inc. He lives in Anderson, S.C.

Ginny Jones (’04) is pursuing a degree in Christian counseling at Asbury Theological Seminary.

Lindsey Smalley (’04) and Daniel Holzman (’04) were married in October. They live in Dallas, Ga.

In Memoriam

ALUMNI

STUDENTS

FACULTY/STAFF
What do a Coca-Cola vice president, an insurance executive and a pastor have in common? They are all products of Macon’s Willingham High School.


McDaniel (’68) describes south Macon as the blue collar, working class side of town. “South Macon had no identity until Willingham High School, an all-male public high school, was established in 1958,” McDaniel says. “I wanted to write a book about the guys who grew up poor, graduated from Willingham High, and tell how they became successful in life.

“Some truly amazing men came out of Willingham – not just wealthy, powerful and influential men – but men who have lived highly successful lives,” he adds. “I also wanted to write a book to honor the success stories of these 25 men while also honoring the men and women who worked hard and raised their children well.”

Besides the author, two of the 25 men featured in the book are Georgia Southern alumni: Connell Stafford and James Lambert.

Stafford (’70) was former U.S. Sen. Sam Nunn’s top assistant. Later Stafford worked for Coca-Cola in government relations, and now works for Troutman Sanders Public Affairs Group in Atlanta.

Lambert (’69) owns Allen and Lambert Insurance Agency in Macon. He is also a volunteer pilot with Angel Flights, which flies people at no cost for medical treatment that they cannot receive where they live.

McDaniel has found success of his own. After college, he coached at the high school level for 10 years, was an admissions officer at Mercer University, and became the senior associate pastor at Mabel White Memorial Baptist Church in Macon. Today he serves as public information director with Mid Georgia Ambulance Service.

McDaniel and his wife, Cynthia (Hilliard ’69), met while both were students at the University. “I gave my future wife an engagement ring on Sweetheart Circle,” McDaniel says.

The couple, who still live in Macon, has two children and six grandchildren.
Each year, a group of veterinary students performs checkups on the residents of Georgia Southern's Wildlife Education Center – eagles, snakes and everything in between. Here, vet student Lucy Marlow checks the blood pressure of a blue-tongue skink.
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 starting March 31 through the University Store at 1-800-861-7059 or www.gsustore.com. We expect the book will be ready to ship to customers in mid-November.”